

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA

Distinguished delegates who have preceded me have made abundant reference to the dangers inherent in the protectionist environment in which our economies have been since the middle of the last decade, with the threats that they imply for the open trading system of the General Agreement.

Similarly, mention has been made of serious payments difficulties affecting the economies of most developing countries, in particular those which like mine are net importers of petroleum; those difficulties are attributable to declining demand for most of our export products and to the slump in the prices offered to us.

While it is true that the Declaration proposed for us for adoption at the end of our work mentions all these concerns and many others, calling on the CONTRACTING PARTIES to commit themselves, inter alia, to reduce trade frictions, overcome protectionist pressures and promote the liberalization and expansion of trade within the GATT system, my country would nevertheless have wished this opportunity to be taken first of all to evaluate progress at mid-term in implementing the results of the Tokyo Round, which we had completed in April 1979, as regards both tariff reductions and the dismantling of non-tariff barriers.

Indeed, it would seem at first sight that while most of our exported raw materials enjoy more or less assured access to the markets of almost all the industrial countries in terms of tariffs, on the other hand the non-tariff measures applicable to them are constantly becoming more subtle, more insidious and more skilfully devised one than the other.

We would have wished to speak of all these aspects. Just as we would have liked to mention in more detail the problem of tariff escalation, and lastly the effective protection that affects market access for our processed or semi-processed products. It would seem, however, that the intention is rather that we should discuss these in 1984. We take note.

Zaire, which is an important supplier of forestry products and non-ferrous minerals and metals, was among the countries which supported the proposal to examine in GATT problems falling under the competence of the

General Agreement relating to tariffs, non-tariff measures and other factors affecting trade in the sectors of these product groups. We would like to think that this Ministerial meeting will instruct the Council to under-take, in the near future and on the basis of a specified time-frame, the necessary work for achieving greater liberalization of trade in these sectors.

Before concluding, we should like to make a pressing appeal to our industrial-country partners to accelerate fuller and more vigorous implementation of Part IV of the General Agreement.

Lastly, Zaire joins with other countries in calling for strengthening of the technical assistance afforded to developing countries by the secretariat, while urging it to avoid monotony and routine, but rather to show constantly renewed imagination in order to help our countries to derive maximum benefit.