

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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## STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. M. NGAPORO ELENGA, MINISTER FOR TRADE OF THE CONGO

I should like first of all to associate myself with all earlier speakers and congratulate you, on behalf of my country and on my own behalf, on your election as Chairman of this Ministerial session of GATT.

I should also like to address my congratulations to Mr. Arthur Dunkel, Director-General of GATT, who has so carefully prepared the work of this session.

Lastly, I should like to thank the Swiss authorities for the welcome they have extended to us.

I have listened attentively to all the ministerial statements made since the session opened. Overall, they have recognized a general deterioration in trade relations which is jeopardizing the multilateral trading system: deterioration of the terms of trade of developing countries, deterioration of their trade and payments balances, increase in their external indebtedness; tendency to introduce protectionist trade policies; non-application of Part IV of the General Agreement which recognizes the need to promote the trade of developing countries.

In this situation, should we close our eyes and content ourselves with ministerial statements? That would be the case if this situation resulted from the laws of nature, and one could then ask oneself why we have come to Geneva.

In fact, however, this situation is a consequence of the trade policies carefully framed and applied by the developed countries.

Listening to all the various statements, one might well think that no country has had occasion to take restrictive measures.

- Who must, therefore, undertake to put an end to them?
- Who then will undertake to liberalize international trade?
- Who then must undertake to open the national market to international competition?
- Who then must undertake to open the national market to products of developing countries?

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May I be allowed to express a fear - fear of failure of the thirty-eighth session of GATT if it were to be limited merely to the statements we have heard since the beginning of the session.

We do not want to accuse anyone; but we must persuade the developed countries which have taken measures detrimental to the multilateral trading system to undertake to eliminate them and apply a trade policy consistent with the spirit of GATT.

There is no reason to lose confidence in the trading system established by GATT.

This system to which the developing countries attach importance for their economic development, must observe the following fundamental principles:

- non-discrimination
- opening of markets
- equity.

Like all speakers who have preceded me, I should like to underline the following items of the agenda:

1. Subsidies:

In our view they should come within the GATT legal framework, and not strangle our economies and result in deterioration of the terms of trade.

2. Application of safeguard measures:

This must not infringe the principle of the most-favoured-nation clause, to the exclusion of any criteria of selectivity.

3. The dispute settlement procedure:

This should be strengthened and should abide by the principles of justice while giving particular importance to the conciliation procedure.

Lastly, given the importance of the issues we have to examine, it would be desirable for us to meet more frequently. That would allow us to seek solutions in good time and not wait for crises to develop and become more severe.