

URUGUAY ROUND

OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

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AGREEMENTS EXPECTED BY END OF YEAR AS NEGOTIATORS START THE "FINAL SPRINT"

Senior negotiators are making a determined push to achieve a final package of results in the Uruguay Round before the end of the year. On 7 November, the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) decided that, starting 11 November, the chairmen of all seven negotiating groups would be conducting continuous and simultaneous negotiations to establish agreements. By the end of the month, the TNC should be in a position to consider results across the board.

In taking stock of the negotiations, the TNC Chairman at official level, Mr. Arthur Dunkel, concluded that the widely shared perception among negotiators that November was "the best available window of opportunity" for governments to make deals remained as strong as ever.

Mr. Dunkel identified specific points on which decisions should be taken right away. Recent work in Geneva and in the capitals, he explained, had enabled him and the chairmen of the negotiating groups to produce an annotated negotiating agenda "for our final sprint."

He pointed out that negotiations were taking place against "a world economy in urgent need of stimulation and greater growth, a world economy in which radical economic reforms are occurring in a large number of countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Central Europe, not to speak of the Soviet Union, reforms which involve adoption of the basic GATT philosophy." He said that the Uruguay Round offered "an historic opportunity to establish a strengthened multilateral trading system, broader in scope and more universal in membership."

Ambassador El Ghali Benhima of Morocco, speaking on behalf of developing countries, said that government must urgently take the necessary decisions because time was "running out quickly - even dangerously." In this regard, the developing countries could be counted on to give their full cooperation, he said.

The text of Mr. Dunkel's statement follows.

STOCKTAKING OF THE URUGUAY ROUND NEGOTIATIONS
BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE
AT OFFICIAL LEVEL

This is the fifth meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee since the Brussels Ministerial Meeting of December last year. From now on, we will be meeting more frequently and at short notice. Indeed, the Committee has a critical rôle in ensuring the conclusion of the Uruguay Round well before the end of this year.

In July, I had laid out a negotiating strategy for the second half of this year. The essence of that plan was - and still remains - that governments use October and November as the "deal-making stage" of the Round. In proposing this I had based myself on a widely shared perception among negotiators that November is our best available window of opportunity for this purpose. I know that this perception is even stronger today.

Let me, therefore, take stock of where we are in the negotiating process and, more importantly, try to identify the points on which decisions must be taken now. I am doing so in order to direct the negotiating process towards ensuring a balanced, equitable and generally acceptable final package of results. Needless to say, I am working hand-in-hand with the Chairmen of all the Negotiating Groups. Needless to say also, I will, and they will, spare no efforts to ensure transparency in the process.

As you will find out, this stock-taking will be more specific than any we have undertaken before. This is possible only because the work which has been done in the most recent past -- in Geneva as well as in capitals -- has been useful. However, the Chairmen of the Negotiating Groups have informed me that progress so far has not been such as to offer a sufficient basis for compromise solutions on the essential substantive issues. This causes me -- and should cause you -- serious concern. It is no secret that I had set early November as our goal for putting forward a complete revision of MTN.TNC/W/35/Rev.1, a document which, one year ago, was meant to bring Ministers to conclude the Round in five days of intensive negotiations. Today, I propose not five days, but several weeks, to achieve the same goal. I know that your governments are ready for this challenge.

Let us, therefore, get down immediately to business. To do so means, first of all, to avoid the trap of looking at the negotiating process solely in terms of the negotiating structure. In other words, attention should be more and more addressed to the basic elements of the global package which is our goal. These elements are:

- (i) market opening, a traditional and central part of all multilateral trade negotiations;

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- (ii) rule-making, which in this Round means (a) establishing multilateral rules and disciplines in areas of increasing trade importance; (b) strengthening existing rules in order to underpin and secure the higher levels of market opening and competition which will be achieved; and (c) putting in place a dispute settlement system capable of dealing with future challenges to the multilateral system;
- (iii) bringing agriculture and textiles and clothing under improved multilateral rules and disciplines; and
- (iv) the institutional support necessary for implementing and securing the results of the negotiations.

I am going to take these four elements one by one. Let me, however, remind you that they have to be considered against the needs of the world economy -- a world economy in urgent need of stimulation and greater growth, a world economy in which radical economic reforms are occurring in a large number of countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Central Europe, not to speak of the Soviet Union, reforms which involve adoption of the basic GATT philosophy.

The Uruguay Round offers us, therefore, an historic opportunity to establish a strengthened multilateral trading system, broader in scope and more universal in membership.

MARKET ACCESS

Market access cuts across virtually the entire negotiating agenda: manufactured products, tropical products, natural resource-based products, textiles and clothing and agriculture. Market access negotiations involve not just the reduction and elimination of tariffs and non-tariff measures at the border, but also corresponding commitments at the level of domestic policies that distort trade and competition. It is therefore central to the balance that every government would like to achieve in the overall package.

The immediate problem is to set the scene for an effective negotiating process involving broad-based exchanges of concessions on the basis of the most-favoured-nation principle, taking into account the particular needs of developing countries.

One trigger to start the process lies in an early agreement on modalities, including tariffication, for negotiating market access as part of the reform programme being negotiated in agriculture.

A second trigger is agreement on modalities for liberalizing trade in textiles and clothing, and for integrating this sector into the GATT. The opening up of markets through the reduction of existing barriers is a key element of the negotiations in services. This is the purpose

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behind the initial commitments negotiations which will be an integral part of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

RULE-MAKING

The establishment of multilateral rules and disciplines in areas of increasing trade importance brings me to two key subjects of the Uruguay Round -- Services and Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, including Trade in Counterfeit Goods (TRIPS).

In Services, governments must adhere to the application of unconditional most-favoured-nation treatment as a general obligation and sharply restrict exemptions. This applies especially to such important service sectors as maritime transport, basic telecommunications, and audiovisual services, as well as to the movement of personnel related to the supply of a service.

Technology and creativity have become, like services, a critical factor in international economic relations and competition. The TRIPS negotiations have brought within grasp an international consensus on a very wide range of issues concerning the impact of protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights on international competition. To bring this work to fruition three basic decisions have to be made. First, the level of protection must be adequate; this will require significant changes in national legislation in all countries. Second, governments must be convinced that the new consensus will be operational; this will require an effective multilateral dispute settlement mechanism and a commitment to use it as the means of settling disputes on TRIPS matters. Third, for a number of governments which are mainly importers of technology, the commitments in this area will have to be viewed in the context of the overall results of the Round.

A central part of the negotiating agenda concerns strengthening of existing rules and disciplines in the GATT system. In anti-dumping, the main task is now to find an acceptable compromise between the objective pursued by many governments of strengthening existing rules in such areas as the determination of the existence of dumping and injury, and the objective pursued by others of introducing new rules to ensure that the enforcement of legitimate anti-dumping measures is not circumvented.

In the area of subsidies and countervailing measures the key question is whether the negotiators are ready to accept, in return for improved disciplines on the use of subsidies in general, that some subsidies which are not meant to have any trade distorting effects may be non-actionable (i.e., neither countervailing measures nor multilateral countermeasures will normally be taken against them). The second key question is the scope of special treatment for developing countries. If a satisfactory solution is found to these two issues, participants will have got parameters indispensable for resolving other outstanding problems.

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In the safeguards negotiations, the three main outstanding issues are: "quota modulation" (i.e., whether in an overall import quota, the share allocated to countries found to be contributing more to global injury could be lower than the share allocated to them on the basis of recent trade patterns); the time period allowed for phasing out "grey area" measures such as voluntary export restraints and orderly market arrangements; and the provisions which would preclude the use, for safeguards purposes, of measures other than those provided for in the agreement.

Texts of revisions to seven GATT Articles are awaiting adoption -- on Articles II:1(b), XVII, XXIV, XXV:5, XXVIII, XXXV -- as well as a revised text for the Protocol of Provisional Application. These would contribute greatly to the strengthening of the GATT system. With the same objective in view, governments also have before them proposals to improve the functioning of the provisions relating to measures taken for balance-of-payments purposes.

Concerning Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS), though there are different opinions on a TRIMS agreement, the questions which must be addressed are: the specification of measures inconsistent with Articles III and XI of the GATT; the establishment of disciplines on export-performance requirements; the transitional arrangements needed in respect of measures to be eliminated; and the institutional support for any further work in this area.

Still in the broad area of rule-making, and effective implementation, governments have to put in place a reinforced and credible dispute settlement system for dealing with future challenges to the multilateral trading system. The degree to which the dispute settlement process should be automatic and binding, and the linked question of doing away with unilateral measures, are two major questions to be resolved. A third key question is the application of the dispute settlement process across the board to the package of the Uruguay Round results, particularly if all the results must be accepted as a single undertaking.

I could not leave this fundamental area of rule-making without drawing your attention to another major challenge that negotiators will have to confront -- and this is the relationship between basic improvements sought in a number of rules and disciplines contained in the GATT treaty on the one hand, and, on the other, the special rules and disciplines being considered as part of the reform programmes in agriculture and in textiles and clothing.

AGRICULTURE, TEXTILES AND CLOTHING

Let me now turn to agriculture. At the TNC in February this year I noted participants' agreement to negotiate specific binding commitments in each of the three areas of domestic support, market access and export competition, and to reach an agreement on sanitary and phytosanitary issues. Major elements of the reform programme have emerged through the intensive work carried out since then, including broad consensus on the

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product coverage of the agriculture negotiations. As agreed, special and differential treatment will apply in respect of developing countries. In addition to the fundamental point concerning market access to which I have already alluded, three further political decisions are key to bringing all the elements together and finalizing the package: the direct payments to be exempted from reduction commitments on domestic support; the policy coverage of reduction commitments in the export competition context; and, the amount, base period and duration of commitments to reduce support and protection.

In textiles and clothing, the central problem is the so-called "economic package", consisting of the product coverage of the agreement, the percentages for integration of products in stages, growth percentages for quotas on products not yet integrated, and the duration of the agreement. Successful conclusion of the textiles and clothing negotiations will bring this sector within GATT rules and disciplines after decades of managed trade. Trade in this sector amounts to almost a tenth of world trade in manufactures and is of crucial importance to a large number of participants.

INSTITUTIONS

I now come to the last of the four elements of the negotiations -- the institutional support necessary for implementing the results. A very well coordinated approach is essential in respect of the infrastructure that will be put in place to fulfil the requirements of notification, monitoring, surveillance, and dispute settlement arising from a large number of Uruguay Round agreements. Agriculture, textiles and clothing, TRIPS, TRIMS and services come immediately to mind and there are others as well.

As you would have noticed, I have tried, in my presentation, to bring back our negotiating process to its basic aims. However, as we all know, in a multilateral trade negotiation with the degree of ambition and foresight that this Round has every detail matters. This is why I have established, in cooperation with the Chairmen of the negotiating groups, a document elaborating an annotated negotiating agenda for our final sprint.

And now a word about the negotiating strategy for November. Starting from Monday, 11 November, the seven chairmen will be conducting continuous and simultaneous negotiations in this building with a view to establishing agreed texts in the individual areas. By the end of this month, and on the understanding that nothing is final till everything is agreed, we must be in a position to consider in the Trade Negotiations Committee the results achieved across the board.

In any case, the TNC remains on call and will be required to review the process at any time during this period if deadlocks occur. This is, of course, in addition to the functions which the GNG and GNS have been charged to perform in terms of their mandates.

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