

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 1999 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Views on Paragraph 10 of the Geneva Ministerial Declaration

Communication from Turkey

The following communication, dated 9 July 1999, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Turkey.

Scope

1. Turkey is committed to comprehensive negotiations. Our understanding for the comprehensive agenda includes, in addition to mandated negotiations, such new issues as trade facilitation and competition. Additionally, we believe that implementation issues in general, and particular concerns of developing Members with respect to implementation need to be dealt with in a substantive manner in the Seattle Declaration. Also, a particular emphasis should be placed in strengthening measures for the purpose of ensuring a significant integration of LDCs into the multilateral system.

2. It is important for Turkey that the scope and the content of each negotiating subject, apart from those of mandated subjects, be unambiguously defined and specifically included in the Ministerial Declaration. Thus, before the negotiations are undertaken, each WTO Member will know precisely what the content of each negotiating subject would include, and what specific topics would be negotiated. In other words, after negotiations are formally initiated, no additional, complementary or side issues should be introduced into the negotiation of a subject other than those which are to be clearly defined in the Ministerial Declaration.

Time-frame

3. The duration of the forthcoming negotiations will hinge, to a great extent, on the scope of the negotiating agenda. In order to attain early and balanced results to the benefit of all the parties, we think that it is important not to be over-ambitious in bringing additional issues into the negotiations. Based on the experience with a number of multilateral rounds of world trade talks in the past, we hope that it would not be unrealistic to set a time-frame of three years for the completion of the forthcoming round.

Structure of work

4. With respect to the organization of work, we think that the establishment of a Trade Negotiations Committee with a single authority to oversee the entire negotiating process will provide a sound and practical framework. This type of arrangement, in our view, will be more result-oriented and will facilitate the forthcoming negotiations. We believe that the successful practice in this regard during the Uruguay Round has set a good precedent. The Trade Negotiations Committee can delegate the related work to the existing individual committees when deemed appropriate, or may set up new committees when necessary on the basis of their expertise and competence over the issues.

Negotiating principle

5. We believe that negotiations should result in a single undertaking. Individual agreements should not be adopted for implementation until all agreements are ratified under a single undertaking. We think the single undertaking method lends itself to a balanced approach and a more effective trade-off process between sectors since under this formula WTO Members must come to an agreement on all areas included in the negotiating agenda before implementation. Therefore, Turkey is committed to a single undertaking formula, which takes due account of divergent interests and provides reasonable safeguards in protecting concerns of all Members.
