

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
Second Session
Geneva, 18 and 20 May 1998

50TH ANNIVERSARY
19 May 1998

WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AND COMMEMORATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Summary of the Information Meeting held on 16 April 1998

1. A second information meeting was held on 16 April 1998 under the Chairmanship of Mr. J.E. Chabert, Chairman of the WTO Task Force for the 1998 Ministerial Conference. Representatives from the Swiss authorities were also present, namely: Mr. M. Kummer (Swiss Mission to the WTO), Mr. D. Louis (Protocol, Canton of Geneva) and Commissaire Vaudroz (Geneva Police Department).
2. At a meeting of the General Council (2 and 14 April 1998), it was agreed that the Second Session of the Ministerial Conference would take place on 18 and 20 May 1998 and the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary on 19 May. This was due to the fact that certain Heads of State or Government were able to attend only on 19 May 1998.
3. The following subjects were mentioned at this meeting:

Schedule of meetings for the Ministerial Conference

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| 18 May 1998 a.m. | Opening session to be held in the Assembly Hall of the Palais des Nations. In addition to delegations this session will be open to the Press, NGO representatives and a certain number of invitees and guests. |
| 18 May 1998 p.m. | Working sessions will be held in the new Council Room at Centre William Rappard (CWR). These sessions are limited to delegations only. |
| 20 May 1998 a.m. | Working session to be held in the new Council Room at CWR. |
| 20 May 1998 p.m. | Closing session to be held in the Assembly Hall of the Palais des Nations. The Press, NGOs and invitees may also attend. |

Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary (Assembly Hall of the Palais)

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| 19 May 1998 | Depending on the number of Heads of State or Government attending, the commemoration may take place morning and afternoon or afternoon only. Details will be given to delegations as soon as the arrangements have been finalized. |
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If the commemoration of the 50th Anniversary is held in the afternoon only, a working session of the Ministerial Conference may be held at the CWR in the morning of 19 May.

As for the opening and closing sessions, the commemoration may be attended by the Press, representatives from the NGOs and invitees.

This above schedule is subject to modification.

Video link

4. It should be noted that, for the opening and closing sessions and for the 50th Anniversary commemoration there will be video links from the Assembly Hall to Room XII (NGOs), Room H3 (Press Centre), the new Council Room at CWR, Room W and, if necessary, to Room D. For the working sessions which are held at CWR there will be a video link, if necessary, to Room W and Room D.

Participation of least-developed countries

5. With regard to the participation of delegates from least-developed countries to the Ministerial Conference, the Secretariat has contacted several potential donors and hopes to have replies very shortly.

Registration forms

6. Delegations are requested to return the registration forms to the WTO Secretariat as soon as possible to facilitate the preparation of the badges.

Social events

7. In the light of the change in the programme, the following events are scheduled:

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| 18 May 1998 | Lunch for Ministers or Heads of Delegations (+ 1) at the Intercontinental Hotel at 1 p.m. This will be hosted by the Chairman of the Ministerial Conference. |
| 19 May 1998 | Lunch for Heads of State or Government hosted by the President of the Swiss Confederation. The venue has not yet been decided. |
| 19 May 1998 | A reception hosted by the Swiss authorities for all participants will be held at the Musée de l'Automobile from 7 p.m. |

Identity badges

8. All participants will receive a badge which will be prepared once the Registration Form has been processed. They will be valid for the duration of the Conference only. The badges will allow access to all meetings at the Palais des Nations and the CWR, and to all social functions. The colours as presently used will be maintained (e.g. red for Heads of Delegations, blue for delegations, white for the Secretariat, etc.).

Security and traffic restrictions

9. At the meeting, Geneva police authorities informed delegations that security arrangements will be strict. Access to traffic around the areas where the Conference is being held will be restricted. Traffic will be diverted and some border points of neighbouring France will be closed. Details and itineraries will be provided as soon as possible.

Parking at Palais des Nations and CWR

10. Several car parks will be made available for participants. At the Palais they will be in the vicinity of the Assembly Hall. In addition to the car park at CWR, additional parking arrangements will be made. The police authorities will provide details in due course and delegates will be informed accordingly.

11. Parking stickers will be attributed to each delegation according to the number of participants from their delegations.

Shuttle service

12. A shuttle service will be in operation between the main hotels, Palais des Nations and CWR. **In order to arrange this service, delegates are requested to inform the Secretariat as soon as possible of the name of the hotels where their delegations are staying. (A form is attached for this purpose.)**

13. For the reception on Tuesday, 19 May 1998, at the Musée de l'automobile, the Swiss authorities will arrange a navette service. Delegations should therefore also indicate on the form how many persons would use this service or whether they would use their own means of transport.

Visas

14. The Swiss authorities informed delegations that they could not waive visa requirements for delegates to the Ministerial Conference. They advised delegates to take the necessary steps with the Swiss Embassy or Consulate responsible for issuing visas to their capital without delay.

15. A list of countries that require visas for France and Schengen countries is attached as an Annex to this document.

VAT exemption and customs duties

16. The Swiss authorities informed delegates that accredited delegates would, in principle, benefit from diplomatic privileges and immunities. They will, for instance, be granted access to the duty-free shop on completion of the necessary form.

17. Laptop computers can be brought through customs without any special formalities as they are considered as personal belongings. However, any other equipment which is sent in advance by airfreight will be subject to the usual procedures.

Airport arrivals and departures

18. Arrangements can be made to meet Ministers on arrival. Delegations should contact Mr. Daniel Teyssere at the airport (telephone 717 71 03 or fax 717 71 17).

19. For protocol arrangements, delegates are invited to contact the Geneva Protocol Office (telephone 319 22 03 or fax 311 21 55), which will transmit requests to the relevant authorities.

20. The Swiss authorities informed delegates that arrangements would be made to meet Heads of State or Government or Heads of Delegation on arrival, but delegations should contact the persons mentioned above as appropriate.

21. One or two members of the WTO Secretariat will be present at the airport on Sunday, 17 May 1998 to help with any questions.

Number of seats per delegation

22. Several delegates asked whether they could be informed in advance about the number of seats to be attributed to each delegation. At the time of the information meeting no list had been established. Only a few Registration Forms had been received so far and until the Secretariat had more information about the attendance of delegations it was difficult to allocate the number of seats per delegation. However, the Secretariat will take measures to ensure that delegations have the information as soon as possible, even if only a provisional list can be provided at this stage.

23. At this time, it can be confirmed that a minimum number of three seats will be available for delegations on the ground floor of the Assembly Hall in the Palais des Nations. Additional seats are available in the Gallery of the Assembly Hall. The meetings can also be seen in the CWR via video links.

24. Delegates from Member countries as well as Observers would be allocated a certain number of seats on the ground floor of the Assembly Hall at the Palais des Nations. Additional seats will be available in the gallery, and there will also be the possibility of following the Conference at the CWR via the video links.

Ministerial statements

25. Statements for the Plenary Opening and Closing sessions should be submitted to the Secretariat as far as possible in advance. They will be translated and circulated in the three official languages not later than the day after they are submitted.

26. The texts should be submitted in electronic form, together with a hard copy. The WTO Secretariat uses MS Office 97 (Word) and WordPerfect text-processing programs, but other word processors are acceptable.

The agenda and format for the 50th Anniversary commemoration on 19 May has not yet been established. Arrangements will be communicated as soon as possible.

Office space at the Palais des Nations

28. Office space in the Palais des Nations will be attributed only to delegations which do not have missions in Geneva.

Telecommunications

29. Steps are being taken to increase the telecommunication capacity to facilitate the use of mobile phones.

Liaison officers

30. A number of Liaison Officers will be recruited for the duration of the Conference to assist delegations. A Liaison Officer will be assigned to each delegation not having a mission in Geneva. For delegations with representatives in Geneva one Liaison Officer will assist five or six delegations. Each Officer will have a mobile phone to help coordinate with the other delegations, etc.

31. At the suggestion of a delegation, a list will be prepared and circulated prior to the Conference giving the names of hotels and contact persons.

32. A third information meeting will be convened during the week beginning 4 May 1998.

ANNEX

WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AND COMMEMORATION
OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

VISAS

List of Countries Requiring a Visa for France Transmitted by
the Consulate General of France in Geneva

Afghanistan	Ecuador	Lithuania
Albania	Egypt	Lybian Arab Jamahiriya
Algeria	El Salvador	Madagascar
Angola	Equatorial Guinea	Malawi
Antigua and Barbuda	Eritrea	Maldives
Armenia	Estonia	Mali
Australia	Ethiopia	Marshall Islands
Azerbaijan	Fiji	Mauritania
Bahamas	Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Mauritius
Bahrain	Gabon	Micronesia
Bangladesh	Gambia	Moldova
Barbados	Georgia	Mongolia
Belarus	Ghana	Morocco
Belize	Grenada	Mozambique
Benin	Guatemala	Myanmar
Bhutan	Guinea	Namibia
Bolivia	Guinea-Bissau	Nauru
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Guyana	Nepal
Botswana	Haiti	Nicaragua
Bulgaria	Honduras	Niger
Burkina Faso	Hong Kong, China	Nigeria
Burundi	India	Northern Marianna Islands
Cambodia	Indonesia	Oman
Cameroon	Iran	Pakistan
Cap Verde	Iraq	Palau
Central African Republic	Jamaica	Palestine
Chad	Jordan	Papua New Guinea
China	Kazakstan	Peru
Colombia	Kenya	Philippines
Comores	Kiribati	Qatar
Congo	Kyrgyzstan	Romania
Costa Rica	Kuwait	Russian Federation
Côte d'Ivoire	Lao People's Democratic Republic	Rwanda
Cuba	Latvia	Sao Tome and Principe
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	Lebanon	Saudi Arabia
Djibouti	Lesotho	Senegal
Dominica	Liberia	Seychelles
Dominican Republic		Sierra Leone
		Solomon Islands

Somalia
South Africa
Sri Lanka
St. Kitts and Nevis
St. Lucia
St. Vincent and the
Grenadines
Sudan
Surinam
Swaziland
Syria
Taiwan

Tajikistan
Tanzania
Thailand
Togo
Tongo
Trinidad and Tobago
Trust Territory of
Pacific Islands
Tunisia
Turkey
Turkmenistan
Tuvalu Islands

Uganda
Ukraine
United Arab Emirates
Uzbekistan
Vanuatu
Venezuela
Vietnam
Western Samoa
Yemen

Former Yugoslavia
Former Zaire (Democratic
Republic of the Congo)
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Please return by fax as soon as possible to:

Fax No. 0041 22 739 57 73 - Mr. J.E. Chabert, WTO

WTO MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE AND COMMEMORATION
OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY

18, 19 and 20 MAY 1998

DELEGATION:	
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NAME OF HOTEL:	
Tel No.	
Fax No.	

Contact person at your Mission:	
Tel No.	
Fax No.	

Do you require transport to the reception at the Musée de l'automobile on
19 May 1998?

Yes ☐

No ☐

How many members of your delegation will require transport?
