

**Committee on Trade and Development  
Special Session**

**SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON  
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT**

Report by the Chairman, Ambassador Ransford Smith (Jamaica),  
to the Trade Negotiations Committee

**I. STATUS OF WORK**

1. Since the report to the Fifth Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) held on 4 to 6 December 2002, the Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Development (CTD) met formally on 3 and 20 December 2002, as it sought to finalize the required report to the General Council. Numerous informal meetings were also held on the main outstanding elements of the report – (i.e.) the Agreement-specific proposals and the "Way Forward". However, the Special Session was unable to finalize its report and thus meet the extended deadline of 31 December, 2002 for making clear recommendations for a decision to the General Council.

2. It will be recalled that in July 2002, the General Council had instructed the Special Session to proceed expeditiously to fulfil its mandate, as contained in paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration and paragraph 12 of the Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns, in order that clear recommendations for a decision could be made to the General Council by 31 December 2002. The General Council gave further instructions regarding *inter alia*, the consideration of Agreement-specific proposals, the analysis and examination of cross-cutting issues, the establishment of the Monitoring Mechanism, consideration of proposals on institutional arrangements and on technical and financial assistance and training, and on consideration of how special and differential (S&D) treatment may be incorporated into the architecture of WTO rules.

3. At the General Council's meeting on 20 December 2002, a statement was made by the Chairman indicating the status of work. Attention was drawn to a draft of the report to the General Council (TN/CTD/W/25) which had been prepared on the Chairman's own responsibility, and which was under consideration by the Special Session. The Special Session was given additional time - until the next General Council meeting (10 and 11 February 2003) - to finalize its report.

4. During this period three new submissions were received – Egypt (TN/CTD/W/24), European Communities (TN/CTD/W/26), and the United States (TN/CTD/W/27 – to be issued).

**II. OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

5. The main outstanding issue is the finalization of the Special Session's report to the General Council. This entails reaching agreement on a package of Agreement-specific proposals, and deciding on the "Way Forward" (i.e.) the structure and time lines for further work.

A. AGREEMENT-SPECIFIC PROPOSALS

6. In the final weeks of 2002, the discussions on Agreement-specific proposals in the Special Session were largely based on twenty-two proposals that were identified by the Chairman as appearing to be, in his judgement, and on the basis of the discussions in the Special Session, most amenable to agreement. It was emphasized that the identification of these proposals was without prejudice to the consideration of the many other proposals submitted by Members. To facilitate discussion and move the process forward, compromise language was provided by the Chairman on these twenty-two proposals. Consensus was reached, at an informal meeting, on four of these Agreement-specific proposals.

7. Discussions on the Agreement-specific proposals are continuing. The discussions now take into account, in regard to some proposals, new language submitted by the African Group and by the LDCs in January 2003. The objective is to be able to agree on an acceptable harvest of Agreement-specific proposals by next week's meeting of the General Council. Whether this can in fact be achieved will depend on the extent to which Members are prepared to decamp from entrenched positions and move towards common ground that takes account of both the expressed concerns and the stated interests of other Members. In the days immediately prior to the finalization of this report to the TNC, there has been some evidence of increasing flexibility which could augur well for the process.

B. THE "WAY FORWARD"

8. There has been in fact little discussion on the "Way Forward" since the December 2002 General Council meeting, given that the discussions have focussed on the Agreement-specific proposals. In order to finalize the report to the General Council, it is intended to pursue intensive discussions on this important issue, since it is vital that agreement be reached on the various questions pertaining to the "Way Forward".

**III. FUTURE WORK**

9. At the fifteenth Special Session of the CTD 2003, which is scheduled to be held immediately prior to the General Council meeting of 10 and 11 February, the report to the General Council will be considered. The Special Session will report on the work carried out, and progress made in implementing the mandate contained in paragraph 44 of the Doha Ministerial Declaration and paragraph 12 of the Decision on Implementation-Related Issues and Concerns, and pursuant to the General Council's instructions of 31 July 2002. It is expected that the General Council will take decisions on any recommendations made to it, and on the further work of the Special Session.

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