

Negotiating Group on Market Access

NEGOTIATING GROUP ON MARKET ACCESS

Report by the Chairman, Ambassador Girard, to the Trade Negotiations Committee

I. STATUS OF WORK

1. Since the last meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee on 3-4 October 2002, the Negotiating Group has met once, on 4-5 November 2002. A substantive meeting was held with the discussion centered largely on proposals on modalities which were introduced by the EC, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand and Oman. On non-tariff barriers (NTBs), the Negotiating Group agreed that the Secretariat should prepare a common format to be used by participants when notifying NTBs. Such a process of notification had been agreed to at the previous meeting of the Negotiating Group held on 12-13 September 2002. A letter, dated 10 October 2002, was sent by me to that effect with the request that such notifications be made by participants before 31 January 2003. On environmental goods, the Negotiating Group agreed that the Secretariat should prepare trade statistics on the list of environmental goods contained in the annex to Japan's proposal on modalities circulated as TN/MA/W/15 and Corr.1. The Secretariat studies entitled 1) "WTO Members' Tariff Profiles - Revision" (TN/MA/S/4/Rev.1); 2) "Formula Approaches to Tariff Negotiations - Revision" (TN/MA/S/3/Rev.1); and 3) Market Access Issues Related to Products of Export Interest Originating from Least-Developed Countries (TN/MA/S/7) were also considered by the Negotiating Group at that meeting.

II. OUTSTANDING ISSUES

2. It is hoped that additional proposals on modalities will be submitted during the course of December 2002. In early 2003, participants will be provided with a consolidated overview of the proposals which have been submitted until 31 December 2002 pursuant to paragraph 2 of the "Programme of Meetings for the Negotiations on Market Access..." adopted by the Negotiating Group on 19 July 2002 (TN/MA/3). Participants will further need to begin the exercise of clarifying the scope of NTBs to be addressed in this Negotiating Group as well as their treatment.

III. FUTURE WORK

3. The Negotiating Group is scheduled to establish its calendar of meetings up to 31 May 2003.
