

**Committee on Agriculture  
Special Session**

**TWENTY-SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE**

Report by the Chairman, Ambassador Tim Groser, to the Trade Negotiations Committee

**I. STATUS OF WORK**

1. The Special Session of the Committee on Agriculture, which is conducting the agriculture negotiations under the Doha Ministerial Declaration (TN/C/M/1) and the Decision Adopted by the General Council on 1 August 2004 (WT/L/579), met on 19 November 2004 on the basis of the agenda set out in WTO/AIR/2434 of 5 November 2004. This meeting was preceded by an informal Special Session on 16 November.

2. At the informal Special Session, a number of Members made statements concerning the selection of issues for discussion and their priority. There was also a first reading of a number of issues from the Agreed Framework including: tariff quota administration; base for any possible tariff quota expansion; tropical products; methodology for product specific AMS caps; and base/reference periods in the context of domestic support commitments.

3. At the formal Special Session on 19 November, I indicated the direction in which we would proceed with our work. A number of delegations took the opportunity to comment on the process. The formal Special Session established the Sub-committee on Cotton and adopted its terms of reference (TN/AG/13). I also stated that I would be holding consultations on the development issues referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Special Session by the General Council (the Special and Differential Treatment section of paragraph 1.d of WT/L/579 refers).

**II. OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

4. The set of issues discussed so far at the Special Session represented only a preliminary list of the many items of technical work that arise from the Agreed Framework. It was clear from the discussions that the number, complexity and sensitivity of the issues addressed and the differences in views expressed by Members mean that much more work will be needed on these as well as on a wide range of other matters in order to develop modalities.

**III. FURTHER WORK**

5. The formal Special Session noted the dates for five "Agriculture Weeks" between February and July 2005.

6. The next formal Special Session will take place on Friday 17 December. It will be preceded by an informal Special Session on Wednesday 15 December for a first reading of the tariff reduction formula and the Blue Box. In addition, informal open-ended consultations will be held on Monday 13 and Tuesday 14 December to discuss the special safeguard mechanism, the methodology for product specific AMS caps and the base/reference periods in the context of domestic support commitments. I may also hold other consultations during the week to look further into some other specific issues.

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