

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

RESTRICTED

G/AG/W/11

11 October 1995

(95-3037)

Committee on Agriculture

Original: English

STATEMENT MADE BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT
AT THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON
28-29 SEPTEMBER 1995

My intervention today comes as a follow-up to the decision taken by the Committee at its June meeting, wherein it agreed that the Committee will revert to the Ministerial Decision in September prior to the review foreseen for the November meeting. Following the organization of work agreed by the Committee (document G/AG/1), the November meeting will monitor actions taken within the framework of the Decision on Net Food-Importing countries on the basis, *inter alia*, of notifications submitted to the Committee and pursuant to Article 16:2 of the Agreement.

Although I would like to start with launching an appeal to the developed countries to submit their notifications in accordance with Article 16:2 in due time for the November meeting, we believe that it is incumbent upon us to prepare as of now for this review meeting in order to get things moving, as it is always hard to make the first step.

In June my delegation had made a number of suggestions on how to make the Ministerial Decision operational, which were circulated as a Committee document G/AG/W/5. The point is that, if we in the meantime can work on some of them, that will certainly enable us to reach some concrete results by November.

I have in mind mainly the following:

The first point is with regard to the definition of net food-importing countries, where we have in our previous statement suggested "the self-election approach". The reason why we have thought of this proposal has been on one hand because of its practicability. On the other hand, because of the time constraint we are in fact working in, which we feel will make it both difficult and futile to be dragged into negotiating a set of criteria.

Nevertheless, we certainly can think of some proposed guidelines prepared by the Chairman to that purpose. Yet, these and other possible options that others may propose will necessitate that the Chairman take matters in hand and conduct some informal meetings from now to the November meeting on this issue with a view to finalizing it by then.

The second point concerns the reviewing of the level of food-aid commitments. That without doubt has to be thoroughly undertaken at some point in time as mandated by paragraph 3(i) by the Decision. This will not be an easy task, thus we believe that the preparatory process for this review, which is ultimately going to be taken up by the Ministers in Singapore, has to be initiated at the November meeting. Here we will also have a number of ideas to propose for consideration, which we believe Mr. Chairman, can best be taken up informally. We would also like to call on WTO in cooperation with relevant organizations particularly FAO, WFP, as well as Multilateral Financial Institutions to prepare a paper for the November meeting on the steps required to implement the decision.

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As to the type and amount of technical assistance provided by relevant international organizations in this respect, I think the best way to proceed is to invite those relevant international organizations, especially those with observer status at the Committee, such as FAO, WFP to report on their technical assistance to NFICs.

Furthermore, it would be most appreciative if the Director-General in his consultations with the Managing Director of the IMF and the President of the World Bank in the October meeting in Washington and within the framework of Global Coherence could address the issue of NFICs and the relevant paragraphs of the decision referring to the MFIs and their thinking on how to make it operational and how they are handling it. We would certainly highly value and appreciate his interest in this issue and we might even expect that he could report back to the Committee by the November meeting on the outcome of his consultations in this regard.