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EC COMMISSION WELCOMES GATT WORKING PARTY ON RUSSIAN MEMBERSHIP

The GATT Council has decided today to open up a Working Party on Russia's application to join the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Sir Leon Brittan, EC Commissioner for External Economic Affairs, welcomed the news:

"The EC very much welcomes Russia's application to join the GATT. This is confirmation of the Russian government's desire to integrate its economy into the open trading system. The very fact of launching this process is a good sign both for the vitality of the GATT and for the Russian economy. GATT members are required to sign up to very specific rules. The Working Party now established will be charged with examining the trade regime of the applicant and the precise terms on which accession can take place."

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