

European Communities

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Working Documents

1982-1983

27 October 1982

DOCUMENT 1-860/82 /rév.

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

tabled by Mr van Aerssen

on behalf of the Committee on External Economic
Relations

with request for an early vote

pursuant to rule 42(5) of the rules of Procedure

to wind up the debate on the Oral Question

Doc. 1-804/82

on the GATT Ministerial Conference in November 1982

PE 81.630 /rév.
Or. De.

The European Parliament,

- A. having regard to economic problems throughout the world, such as rising inflation, unemployment and balance of payment disequilibrium, high interest rates, major exchange rate fluctuations and stagnating world trade,
 - B. convinced that the fundamental reasons for this situation lie in insufficient adaptation of economic structures, in an unwillingness to invest and a lack of demand and in a weakening of the international financial system which strengthen protectionist trends and national intervention policies,
 - C. convinced that these cannot be eliminated by national measures alone but only through regional and international cooperation,
 - D. having regard, in the light of this, to the importance of the GATT Ministerial Conference,
 - E. having regard to its resolutions of 14 May 1982,¹
1. Reaffirms its support for the principles of GATT and for the maintenance of an open world trade system and in addition urges all contracting countries to honour fully the obligations entered into under the Tokyo Round;
 2. Affirms its demand for growing protectionism in all its forms to be combated, points out however that these trends are a reaction to declining economic growth and shrinking world trade and hopes that the Community will develop a policy, which takes into account these trends, to be used in the GATT negotiations. All agreements restricting world trade should be disclosed to all parties in GATT;
 3. Supports the Commission's guidelines which are already known with regard to the preparation of the GATT Ministerial Conference but hopes that greater attention will be paid to international monetary questions, in particular the rapid growth in international debt;

¹ OJ No. C 149 of 14 June 1982, p. 117 et seq.

Developing countries

4. Stresses the need to make the importance and advantages of GATT clearer to the developing countries and to convince them that GATT does not represent an agreement which is only advantageous to the industrial countries, but that it offers a framework within which their trade problems can be examined and solved;
5. Stresses, in this context, that in the developing countries' own interests it is important, with their growing share in world trade, that they keep to the GATT rules and with the rights also accept corresponding obligations. Greater clarification is needed, in particular of relations between GATT and UNCTAD;

Agriculture

6. Supports in principle the goal of open world trade for agricultural products but is aware that this goal can only be achieved gradually and that the underlying political and economic realities in the agricultural sector must be taken into account;
7. Is convinced that there can only be meaningful discussion of the problems in this sector when all the contracting countries' national measures for agriculture have first been made transparent;
8. Calls on the Commission, therefore, to defend the Common Agricultural policy against the subsidy policies of most of the major exporting countries;
- 8a. Urges the Commission to propose in the forthcoming GATT Ministerial Conference, a conference between the major exporting countries of agricultural products aimed at lowering both subsidies and protective barriers to trade;
- 8b. Calls upon the Commission to begin negotiations with the United States in the framework of GATT for a similar voluntary restraint in their exports of cereal substitutes (corn gluten feed), following the voluntary restraint agreements between the Community and some lesser developed countries (including Thailand and Indonesia) on exports of manioc to the Community;

Safeguard clause

9. Notes that, although various countries are resisting a selective use of the safeguard clause (under Article XIX of GATT), in reality numerous measures are already being taken to achieve selectivity;
10. Calls on the Commission, therefore, to make greater efforts to achieve a consensus, both among the Community countries and the other GATT countries so that the safeguard clause, which is an important instrument, does not become worthless through divergent and opaque national measures;

Rates of duty and non-tariff barriers to trade

11. Stresses, in the framework of the reductions in customs duties agreed in the Tokyo Round, the importance of an early harmonization of customs nomenclature and customs tariff statistics;
12. Advocates a further reduction in non-tariff barriers to trade, which still seriously restrict world trade;

Settlement of disputes

13. Notes that improvement of the procedure for settling disputes in GATT should be examined but also that more use should be made of the possibility of settlement through bilateral agreements;

Other matters

14. Supports the initiatives in GATT to examine the possible inclusion of the services sector which has an increasing share of foreign trade, but draws attention, inter alia, to the difficulties of statistical surveys and reciprocal concessions;
15. Notes that the inclusion of investments in GATT is an extremely controversial matter in the contracting countries, considers however that appropriate studies would be useful as they could contribute to transparency and promote world trade;
16. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission and the Council of the European Communities.

