

PRESS RELEASE

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1685th meeting of the Council
- GENERAL AFFAIRS / AGRICULTURE -
Brussels, 20 and 21 September 1993

Presidents: Mr Willy CLAES
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Mr André BOURGEOIS
Minister for Agriculture

of the Kingdom of Belgium

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Willy CLAES
Mr André BOURGEOIS
Mr Robert URBAIN

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Foreign Trade and European Affairs

Denmark:

Mr Bjørn WESTH
Mr Jorgen ØSTRØM MØLLER
Mr Nils BERNSTEIN

Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs
State Secretary for Agriculture

Germany:

Mr Klaus KINKEL
Mr Jochen BORCHERT
Mr Günther REXRODT
Ms Ursula SEILER-ALBRING
Mr Franz-Josef FEITER

Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs
Federal Minister for Food, Agriculture and Forestry
Federal Minister for Economic Affairs
Minister of State, Foreign Affairs
State Secretary, Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Forestry

Greece:

Mr Michalis PAPACONSTANTINOU
Mr Christos KOSKINAS
Mr Evangelos BASSIAKOS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture
State Secretary for Agriculture

Spain:

Mr Javier SOLANA
Mr Vicente ALBERO SILVA
Mr Javier GOMEZ NAVARRO
Mr Carlos WESTENDORP

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Minister for Trade
State Secretary for Relations with the European Communities
State Secretary for Trade

Mr Miguel Angel FEITO HERNANDEZ

France:

Mr Alain JUPPE
Mr Jean PUECH
Mr Gérard LONGUET
Mr Alain LAMASSOURE

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries
Minister for Industry and Foreign Trade
Minister with special responsibility for European Affairs

Ireland:

Mr Charlie MCCREEVY
Mr Joe WALSH
Mr Tom KITT

Minister for Tourism and Trade
Minister for Agriculture
Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach with special responsibility for European Affairs

Italy:

Mr Beniamino ANDREATTA
Mr Alfredo DIANA

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for the Co-ordination of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies
Minister for Foreign Trade

Mr Paolo BARATTA

Luxembourg:

Mr Jacques POOS
Ms Josée JACOBS

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture

Netherlands:

Mr P. KOOTJMANS
Mr Piet BUKMAN

Ms Yvonne VAN ROOY
Mr Piet DANKERT

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries
Minister for Foreign Trade
State Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Portugal:

Mr José Manuel DURAO BARROSO
Mr Arlindo CUNHA
Mr Fernando FARIA DE OLIVEIRA

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Trade and Tourism

United Kingdom:

Mr Douglas HURD

Ms Gillian SHEPHARD
Mr Ian LANG
Mr Tim SAINSBURY

Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs
Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Secretary of State for Scotland
Minister of State, Department of Trade and Industry

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Commission:

Sir Leon BRITTAN
Mr René STEICHEN

Vice-President
Member

URUGUAY ROUND - CONCLUSIONS OF THE JOINT COUNCIL

1. Following a detailed rundown by the Commission on the state of the negotiations in the Uruguay Round, the Council held a thorough examination of all the factors which must be taken into account in the different chapters of the negotiations if, in accordance with the conclusions of the Copenhagen European Council, they are to be completed by the end of the year to the Community's satisfaction, with a comprehensive and balanced outcome.

In addition, the Council had to hand a Commission document defining the guidelines for completion of the negotiations, the Commission's reply to the French delegation's series of questions on agricultural matters as well as a report on discussions within the SCA. The Council also had before it memoranda from the Spanish, French, Greek, Irish, Italian, Portuguese and United Kingdom Governments.

The Council reaffirmed its conviction that the conclusion of the Uruguay Round before 15 December 1993 on satisfactory terms for all the partners was an essential prerequisite for international economic recovery and should have a positive impact on the Community's economic development, particularly the employment situation in the Member States.

2. The Council endorsed the Commission's determination to secure the necessary improvements in the nascent overall agreement in order to safeguard the Community's essential interests. The Council welcomed the Commission's indication that it had already set in train exploratory talks with its GATT partners.

As regards market access for goods and services, particularly financial services and shipping, the Council urged the Commission to hold out for a broader package to

which all partners would subscribe on the basis of the progress achieved in July and invited all those taking part in the negotiations to come forward with additional offers, even conditional ones, so that a solid basis for this agreement might be established.

As regards the textiles sector, the Council confirmed that the integration of the textiles and clothing trade in the GATT had to be achieved through stricter rules and greater discipline and invited the United States and the other partners, including exporting countries, to put forward offers which met the Community objective of tariff harmonization.

The Council reaffirmed that the new multilateral trade system would not be complete, credible or lasting unless the World Trade Organization were set up as the sole centre for monitoring compliance with the commitments to be entered into.

The Council also discussed the other aspects of the negotiations, including intellectual property, strengthening of the rules and greater discipline, subsidies, steel, aeronautics and the audiovisual sector.

It recalled the approach of the GATT Trade Negotiations Committee to this matter, viz. that no part of the negotiations could be regarded as having been successful unless the whole was acceptable to all participants. It regarded the progress made hitherto as inadequate and the contributions of the third countries concerned as unsatisfactory, and noted that serious problems for the Community continued to exist.

It asked the Commission to press ahead with the negotiations on the basis of the general guidelines in the Commission document, together with those which had emerged in the course of the discussions.

3. As regards agriculture, the Council examined whether the Blair House pre-agreement was compatible with the agricultural policy following its 1992 reform.

The Council noted the Commission's replies to the specific points raised by the French and several other delegations. The following items were discussed in this context: peace clause, safeguard clause, cereal substitute products, assessment of commitments at term, grouping, disposal of stocks, growth of the world market.

In the light of this discussion, a number of general guidelines for the Commission were laid down.

With regard to market access in agriculture, the Council confirmed that the Community's offer made earlier in Geneva formed an integral part of the Community position.

For those sectors in which the common market organization arrangements have not yet been amended, the Council and the Commission undertake to adopt such provisions as are necessary to maintain farm incomes and Community preference. The conditions and agricultural and financial principles which have been applied throughout the agricultural sector will be taken into account in those sectors. Account will also be taken of the context of the Uruguay Round.

The Council emphasized the importance of obtaining tariff treatment from third countries allowing of a true opening-up of their agricultural markets.

The Community must ensure that its international commitments are compatible with the CAP. Accordingly the Council confirmed its view that the outcome of the agricultural part of the Uruguay Round could not, either directly or indirectly,

be allowed to jeopardize the durability of the common agricultural policy, nor stand in the way of compliance with its basic principles, particularly Community preference. The Council went on to emphasize that the Community's role of exporter had to be maintained and that its place on the international market in agricultural products had to be secured.

In the light of these guidelines, the Commission will conduct its forthcoming discussions with the Americans and multilaterally, with the aim of finding an agreement acceptable to all parties.

4. The Council agreed to monitor constantly the progress of the negotiations in the appropriate bodies and the Commission will report afresh on 4 October 1993.
