

# URUGUAY ROUND

## OF MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

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### CONSULTATIONS CONTINUE IN GENEVA IN EFFORT TO FREE MONTREAL PACKAGE

Consultations aimed at securing adoption of a full "mid-term" package of decisions at a high-level meeting of the Trade Negotiations Committee (TNC) in the first week of April, have been under way in Geneva for the past four weeks.

The consultations, conducted by Mr. Arthur Dunkel, Director-General of GATT and Chairman of the TNC at official level, cover the four subject areas in which agreement was not reached by Ministers at the TNC meeting held in Montreal, December last, namely: textiles and clothing, safeguards, agriculture, and trade-related aspects of intellectual property protection.

Commenting after the first cycle of consultations had been completed, Mr. Dunkel said:

"While it is too early to expect a breakthrough on what are, after all, some of the most fundamental and difficult questions facing the international trading system, it is clear to me that the necessary political will exists to ensure that we get agreement in April. Negotiators recognize the urgency and importance of the tasks facing them and seem prepared to begin to move their positions. Such

movement is vital if we are to consolidate the considerable progress made by Ministers in December. The remaining weeks before April will be difficult, but I am optimistic about the outcome."

The Trade Negotiations Committee met at Ministerial level from 5-9 December, in Montreal. Ministers reached agreement on decisions affecting the future conduct of work in eleven of the fifteen Uruguay Round negotiating areas. Included in these decisions were a package of tropical product trade concessions, detailed measures to reform the GATT disputes settlement procedure and a new national trade policy review mechanism in the GATT; all of which could be implemented immediately. However, it was agreed that all results would remain "on hold" until a further TNC meeting in the first week of April 1989. During the intervening period, Arthur Dunkel was asked to conduct high-level consultations on the four remaining items on which Ministers could not agree.

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