

COMMUNICATION FROM COLOMBIA¹

Maritime Transport Services

The following communication has been received from the delegation of Colombia, with the request that it be circulated to the Members of the Council for Trade in Services.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Maritime transport services are an essential input for trade in goods. Over 80 per cent of goods traded are transported by this means. Hence, the effective liberalization of this service should result in the elimination of cartels that fix prices and frequencies, and consequently in lower tariffs and an improved service.

2. The results of the WTO Negotiating Group on Maritime Transport Services (NGMTS) proved unsatisfactory since a critical mass of market access commitments was not achieved. Nevertheless, ground was gained in the negotiation process for the liberalization of this service since the Decision on Maritime Transport Services, adopted by the Council for Trade in Services on 28 June 1996 (S/L/24), states that “negotiations will be resumed on the basis of existing or improved offers”.

II. PROPOSAL

3. Negotiations in this sector shall aim to abolish its characteristic market access barriers, such as limits on foreign equity, nationality requirements for the ownership of national flag vessels, cargo reservation and restrictions on international transit between national ports.

4. The entry into force of Article II of the GATS and the Annex on Article II Exemptions for this service.

5. Scheduling of market access commitments on the basis of the three pillars of the “Model Schedule” drawn up by the NGMTS, namely, international maritime transport (freight and passengers, excluding cabotage), maritime auxiliary services and access to and use of port facilities.

¹ Colombia reserves the right to amend this proposal at any time. This communication does not constitute an offer by Colombia in relation to this sector.

DRAFT SCHEDULE
MARITIME TRANSPORT SERVICES International transport (freight and passengers) CPC 7211 and 7212, less cabotage transport
MARITIME AUXILIARY SERVICES <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Maritime cargo handling services (not including direct activities of independently organized dockers)- Storage and warehousing services CPC 742 (as amended)- Customs clearance services- Container station and depot services- Maritime agency services- Maritime freight forwarding services
PORT SERVICES <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pilotage2. Towing and tug assistance3. Provisioning, fuelling and watering4. Garbage collecting and ballast waste disposal5. Port Captain's services6. Navigation aids7. Shore-based operational services essential to ship operations, including communications, water and electrical supplies8. Emergency repair facilities[9. Anchorage, berth and berthing services]
