

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

WT/GC/W/305
13 August 1999

(99-3431)

General Council

Original: Spanish

PREPARATIONS FOR THE 1999 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Results of the Working Group on Transparency
in Government Procurement

Negotiations for a Multilateral Agreement on Transparency
in Government Procurement

Proposal under Paragraph 9(b) of the Geneva Ministerial Declaration

Communication from Venezuela

The following communication, dated 2 August 1999, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Venezuela.

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last two years, the Working Group on Transparency in Government Procurement has carried out an extensive study which is contained in the Informal Note by the Chair (Job 2934). The Note includes the principal elements that should form part of a possible agreement on transparency in government procurement within the WTO framework. In the course of its discussions the WGTGP has analysed in great detail the fundamental elements which its Members believe, taking into account all their individual national policies, make up a coherent, suitable and comprehensive system of transparency.

It is widely recognized that there are issues on which further study is needed in order to find a consensus. These include the definition and scope of the term "government procurement", procurement methods, domestic review procedures, the fight against bribery and corruption, and the applicability of WTO dispute settlement procedures. Nevertheless, in all likelihood the WGTGP will manage to overcome these technical problems by the end of this year. Furthermore, we have the impression that there could be a majority opinion in favour of negotiating a multilateral transparency agreement within the WTO.

II. PROPOSAL

Consideration should be given to a mandate for the Seattle Ministerial Conference stating the following:

- (a) That the stage of studying government procurement practices has been completed and the negotiating stage should commence;
- (b) That the elements set out in Job 2934, Informal Note by the Chair, constitute a sufficient basis for initiating the negotiation of a suitable agreement on transparency in government procurement.