

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

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General Council

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PREPARATIONS FOR THE 1999 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE

Proposals Regarding Trade in Services

Communication from Colombia

The following communication, dated 7 September 1999, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Colombia.

Background

Article XIX of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) provides that "Members shall enter into successive rounds of negotiations, beginning not later than five years from the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement and periodically thereafter, with a view to achieving a progressively higher level of liberalization".

Proposals

1. In the negotiating process, the principle set out in GATS Article XIX.2 must be respected, namely that "there shall be appropriate flexibility for individual developing-country Members for opening fewer sectors, liberalizing fewer types of transactions, progressively extending market access in line with their development situation ...".
2. Continue the negotiations concerning national regulations, emergency safeguard measures, subsidies and government procurement relating to services.
3. Review the exemptions to most-favoured-nation treatment granted for a period of more than five years in accordance with the Annex on GATS Article II Exemptions.
4. Negotiate liberalization on the basis of the current contents of the Schedules of specific commitments.