

Results of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations

The Deputy Prime Minister, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, today announced that the "Tokyo Round" of multilateral trade negotiations (MTN) has now been substantially concluded in Geneva.

Ambassador Grey is signing a series of agreements on non-tariff barriers and other matters and has indicated that he will be submitting the texts to the Government of Canada for its consideration. The texts of these agreements are now being made public. In some cases, the agreements are subject to textual amendments arising from last minute changes agreed in Geneva and as a result of subsequent legal review and rectification.

In the case of Canada, the tariff negotiations with our main trading partners, the United States, the European Community and Japan have only just been completed. The tariff schedules are still subject to minor change which may result from legal review and rectification. In addition, changes may also occur as a result of negotiations yet to be completed with certain countries. In the circumstances, the participants have agreed that the detailed results of the tariff negotiations cannot be made public at this time.

Following consideration of the MTN outcome by governments, the participating countries are expected later in the year to signify their formal acceptance of the various MTN results.

These multilateral trade negotiations, which were launched in Tokyo in 1973, involved nearly 100 countries. The objective of the negotiations was to achieve the expansion and greater liberalization of world trade and the improvement of the international trading framework, including better rules and procedures for dealing with unfair trading practices. The negotiations focussed on both tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade, and on agricultural and fisheries as well as industrial products. The negotiations were complex and protracted. Participants were required to take difficult decisions in moving to the agreed conclusions.

The results of these negotiations, from Canada's point of view, represent a significant step forward in dealing with non-tariff as well as tariff barriers. New, expanded and more certain export opportunities are being opened up which will bring benefits to every part of the country and all sectors of the economy. The Canadian tariff will be reduced for most products, but gradually and to an extent which takes into account the competitive strengths and potential of various sectors. These reductions will also lower input costs for Canadian industry as well as lowering the cost of a broad range of consumer goods. The outcome of the MTN will provide the basis for the further development of an efficient and more competitive Canadian economy in the 1980's and 1990's.