

efforts in focusing initially on achieving consensus on the instruments to be used for reducing support and protection, the Ministers were concerned that many important political issues remained to be tackled before even the structure of an outcome could be settled. They therefore believed it was essential to move the negotiations to the next important phase when decisions could be taken on a common framework, with transparent methodologies, within which to negotiate substantial and progressive cuts in agricultural support and protection. Addressing these decisions cannot again be left until the eleventh hour.

6. The Ministers expressed concern that if substantive negotiations were not engaged as a matter of urgency it would not be possible to bring the Uruguay Round to an early successful conclusion. The experience of 1990 demonstrated that it would be simply unrealistic and counterproductive to expect complex agriculture negotiations to be concluded in a few weeks in order that countries could commit themselves to final results in other important areas of the Round. In these circumstances, the Summit Leaders must instruct their negotiators to take the necessary preparatory decisions at an early enough stage for the Round to be brought to a successful conclusion.

7. Therefore, the Cairns Ministers urged Summit Heads of Government to give new instructions to their negotiators and to commit themselves personally, to monitor progress and intercede as necessary in order to ensure that much needed momentum is created and maintained. The time is now past for a mere repetition of good intentions, which regrettably have not been fulfilled in the past. It is high time for substance to substitute for words and for meaning to be given to commitments by Governments to fulfil the objectives established when the Uruguay Round was launched at Punta del Este in 1986, as developed at the Mid-Term Review: to establish "a fair and market oriented trading system"; to achieve the objective of "progressive and substantial reductions in support and protection"; and to establish "strengthened and more operationally effective GATT rules and disciplines." Success in achieving these objectives rested above all in the exercise of political will in a liberalising direction by the leaders of the G-7 countries.

8. The Cairns Ministers underlined their own continued preparedness to play their part in advancing the negotiating process across all areas of the Uruguay Round. On agriculture, they remain ready to negotiate flexibly, as they have in the past, and will support efforts to achieve an outcome as soon as possible, provided it is comprehensive in product coverage and equitable. The central concern for the Cairns Group is to secure an irreversible commitment to fundamental change in the policies affecting agricultural trade, paving the way towards the