

- The MTN result provides for a strengthened dispute settlement mechanism. Under the new mechanism, it will no longer be possible for a country to block the adoption of a dispute settlement recommendation by a panel of experts. This is an important benefit for all small and medium-sized economies. Under the new system, the use of rules rather than economic power will be strengthened with regard to settling trade disputes.
- The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) contains important commitments by developed countries to open their services markets. An important element for the developing countries is that each country determines what its schedule of commitments will be. This means that developing countries may tailor their commitments to reflect their individual levels of economic development and domestic political sensitivities, and need not match the liberalization commitments undertaken by more advanced economies.

#### Special Ministerial Decisions

- The Final Act includes two Ministerial Decisions that act as safeguards for the least-developed countries. These are: the "Decision on Measures in Favour of Least-Developed Countries"; and the "Decision on Measures Concerning the Possible Negative Effects of the Reform Programme on Least-Developed and Net Food-Importing Developing Countries."
- The first Decision states that the least-developed countries, while complying with the general rules set out in the Final Act, "will only be required to undertake commitments and concessions to the extent consistent with their individual development, financial and trade needs, or their administrative and institutional capabilities." The Decision also continues to allow the MFN principle to be violated by allowing for GSP schemes that give developing countries market access at lower than MFN tariff rates.
- The second Decision recognizes that, during the reform programme leading to greater liberalization of trade in agriculture, the least-developed and net food-importing developing countries may experience negative effects in terms of the availability of adequate supplies of basic foodstuffs from external sources on reasonable financial terms. To prevent undue hardship, the Decision states that "Ministers accordingly agree to establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure that the implementation of the results of the Uruguay Round on trade in agriculture does not adversely affect the availability of food aid at a level which is sufficient to continue to provide assistance in meeting the food needs of