

X.           SAFEGUARDS

46.           The Cairns Group recognises the importance of adequate safeguards during the transitional period. The full range of existing mechanisms in the GATT, including balance of payments and safeguards provisions, are fully applicable to the agricultural sector. The pace of liberalisation, and the methods used to achieve liberalisation, can themselves be designed to cushion countries from immediate competitive effects. Additionally, the Cairns Group is ready to explore the concept of a special safeguard mechanism, applicable only during the transitional period, providing for a temporary interruption to agreed tariff reductions where non-tariff measures have been converted to tariffs.