

- Will the MTN seek to reform and update the existing trade rules or will it favour a static, narrow and legalistic view of the trading framework embodied in GATT? It would be naive and reckless to believe that the credibility and effectiveness of the multilateral trading system could be restored if we do not seek to address new issues as they impact on trade. Let's remember that two of the most important achievements of the Tokyo Round, the Government Procurement Agreement and the Technical Barriers Code, were areas not traditionally covered by GATT. The elaboration of these instruments benefited importantly from extensive and productive contributions from a number of developing country delegations.

Will the preparations of the new MTN proceed in the same spirit of co-operation as for previous rounds held under the auspices of the GATT? It is useful to bear in mind that just as no contracting party can be forced to accept agreements resulting from multilateral trade negotiations, other contracting parties cannot be denied the possibility to negotiate mutually beneficial trade advantages. Canada has long believed that the national interests of all countries are best served by a full participation in these negotiations. The alternative to the opportunity to influence the shaping of trade ground rules is to accept that these rules will effectively be established unilaterally, and perhaps arbitrarily, by the strongest trading partners in dealing with problems as they arise.

Mr. Chairman, these are some of the key questions which, in the view of the Canadian delegation, need be answered positively and in a forward looking manner if we are to discharge properly our collective responsibilities.

Finally, Canada believes that, in addition to defining further the content of the MTN agenda in which high priority must be accorded the 1982 Work Programme, this Session must also begin to explore the nature of the preparatory mechanism which should be put in place in the near future. We believe a preparatory committee must soon be established to develop clear recommendations on how negotiations on all agenda items should be conducted. Such a committee, in our view, should identify methods and procedures for negotiations with the full and active support of existing GATT committees and groups.