

International Monetary Developments and Coordination

10. Under the Plaza and Louvre agreements, our countries agreed to pursue, in a mutually reinforcing way, policies of surveillance and coordination aimed at improving their economic fundamentals and at fostering stability of exchange rates consistent with those economic fundamentals.

There has been progress in the multilateral surveillance and coordination of economic policies with a view to ensuring internal consistency of domestic policies and their international compatibility. The procedures to be used have been more clearly defined and improved in cooperation with the International Monetary Fund.

11. The coordination process has made a positive contribution to world economic development and it has also contributed greatly to improving the functioning of the International Monetary System. There has also been continued cooperation in exchange markets.

It is important to continue, and where appropriate, to develop this cooperative and flexible approach to improve the functioning and the stability of the International Monetary System in a manner consistent with economic fundamentals. We therefore ask the Finance Ministers to continue to keep under review possible steps that could be taken to improve the coordination process, exchange market cooperation, and the functioning of the International Monetary System.

12. We welcome the decision to complete the work on the ninth review of the International Monetary Fund quotas with a view to a decision on this matter before the end of the year.

We note that the question of a resumption of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) allocation remains under consideration in the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund.

13. Within the European Community, the European Monetary System has contributed to a significant degree of economic policy convergence and monetary stability.

Improving Economic Efficiency

14. We will continue to promote measures in order to remove inefficiencies in our economies. These inefficiencies affect many aspects of economic activity, reduce potential growth rates and the prospects for job creation, diminish the effectiveness of macroeconomic policies and impede the external adjustment process. In this context, tax reforms, modernization of financial markets, strengthening of competition policies and reducing rigidities in all sectors including energy, industry and agriculture are necessary. So are the improvement of education and vocational training, transportation and distribution systems and further policies aimed at giving more flexibility and

mobility to the labour market and reducing unemployment. Within the European Community, the steady progress towards the completion by the end of 1992 of the program contained in the Single Act has already given a strong momentum to economic efficiency.

15. The decline of saving in some of our countries in this decade is a cause for concern. This lower level of saving can contribute to high real interest rates and therefore hamper growth. Inadequate saving and large fiscal deficits are associated with large external deficits. We recommend, within the framework of policy coordination, policies to encourage saving and remove hindrances where they exist.

16. Financial activities are being increasingly carried out with new techniques on a worldwide basis. As regards insider trading, which could hamper the credibility of financial markets, regulations vary greatly among our countries. These regulations have been recently, or are in the process of being, strengthened. International cooperation should be pursued and enhanced.

Trade Issues

17. World trade developed rapidly last year. Yet protectionism remains a real threat. We strongly reaffirm our determination to fight it in all its forms. We shall fulfill the Punta del Este standstill and rollback commitments which, inter alia, require the avoidance of any trade restrictive or distorting measure inconsistent with the provisions of the General Agreement and its instruments. We agree to make effective use of the improved GATT dispute settlement mechanism and to make progress in negotiations for further improvements. We will avoid any discriminatory or autonomous actions, which undermine the principles of the GATT and the integrity of the multilateral trading system. We also are pledged to oppose the tendency towards unilateralism, bilateralism, sectoralism and managed trade which threatens to undermine the multilateral system and the Uruguay Round negotiations.

18. The successful negotiation of the Trade Negotiations Committee of the Uruguay Round in Geneva last April, thereby completing the mid-term review, is a very important achievement. It gives a clear framework for future work in all sectors including the pursuit of agricultural reform in the short term as well as in the long term. It also gives the necessary framework for substantive negotiations in important sectors not yet fully included in GATT disciplines, such as services, trade-related investment measures and intellectual property.

Developing countries participated actively in these negotiations and contributed to this success. All countries should make their most constructive contribution possible.