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CONTRACTING PARTIES
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ROMANIA

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The Forty-Fifth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES is of special importance: it is called upon not only to review GATT's activities over the past twelve months but also, first and foremost, to analyse the main developments that have lately characterized the multilateral trading system based on the principles and rules of the General Agreement, and above all, to assess the efforts made by our countries in the multilateral negotiations of the Uruguay Round following the mid-term review.

Like others, my delegation welcomes the overall growth of trade in 1989 and the encouraging prospects for the immediate future. It must nevertheless be noted that this growth is not distributed equally: it must become universal, with each country contributing. It is in the interests of all countries to achieve broad economic collaboration without restrictions or obstacles, to establish new economic relations based on equal treatment and mutual advantage, and to refuse to have recourse to economic and political preconditions and pressures. The final goal of all of these steps is to enable each national economy to progress, while ensuring the balanced development of all countries and of the world economy, as well as free international trade without obstacles or discrimination.

At the same time, the economic growth achieved in the developed countries must be extended to developing countries as well, to give them an opportunity to overcome the serious difficulties they are facing. This objective calls for resolute action worldwide: in the context of the GATT, it should take the form of specific measures to promote greater participation of the developing countries in the world economy, and in particular, in international trade. The developed countries should not leave the developing countries to one side, but rather should offer them greater and improved access to their markets, assist in the search for a global solution to the debt problem, eliminate excessive monetary fluctuations and increase the flows of finance and technology.

My delegation would like to express its satisfaction over the work and success -- which did not come easily, we must admit -- of the mid-term review of the Uruguay Round multilateral trade negotiations. We should like to mention here not only the important decisions adopted by our

Ministers on the immediate implementation of a number of specific agreements -- even if only on a provisional basis -- but also the wide-ranging decisions concerning the pace, nature and objectives of the negotiations during the second half of the Round. In particular, I would draw attention to the constructive efforts made to strengthen the confidence of contracting parties in the multilateral trading system through the establishment of the improved dispute settlement system and of the Trade Policy Review Mechanism, which should give better protection to the interests of small and medium-sized countries.

My delegation shares the views expressed by others concerning the intensive work done during the stage of the negotiations that followed the mid-term review. Yet we are still far from having achieved the goals we set ourselves, particularly for areas and problems of special concern to the developing countries. I should also like to recall the need to provide an appropriate climate for the negotiations of the Uruguay Round and thereby ensure their credibility. Full respect for commitments on standstill and rollback play a decisive rôle in this connection. Participants that fail to take this course in conformity with the letter and the spirit of the Ministerial Declaration of Punta del Este bear heavy responsibility for the final results of this Round. At the same time, the Surveillance Body should intensify its activities and, speaking with the authority of a common voice, convince the contracting parties which continue to apply measures incompatible with the General Agreement to begin immediately to eliminate them gradually, starting with those that hinder the exports of developing countries.

Renouncing the discriminatory measures still applied by some contracting parties, respecting the commitments undertaken at Punta del Este and reaffirmed during the mid-term review, and implementing most-favoured-nation status in a stable and unconditional manner, are all factors that would contribute to the smooth course of trade and of the liberalization process launched in connection with the current Round of multilateral trade negotiations. GATT, as the multilateral forum for international trade, should pay greater attention to efficacy in eliminating illegal measures and practices, especially in order to put an end to the tendency of certain contracting parties to solve their economic problems through unilateral and discriminatory measures applied outside the General Agreement. Membership of GATT implies that trade problems will be solved on the basis of equality of treatment and multilateral discipline. The General Agreement should therefore fully assume its proper responsibility for universal respect for these rules and disciplines and do even more to ensure in trade relations the sovereign equality of all States participating in world trade.

GATT should also make an effective contribution to protecting the legitimate interests of less-developed contracting parties. In this connection, it is extremely important to preserve and bind the differential and more favourable treatment for developing countries in all areas of the

multilateral trade negotiations, in conformity with the Ministerial Declaration of Punta del Este and the Montreal final document: this treatment should be expanded and extended to the new areas of negotiation included in the Uruguay Round.

In this connection, the Romanian delegation fully endorses the conclusion set out in the GATT Secretariat's annual report that, when assessing considerations of reciprocity in the trade negotiations, developed countries should think about taking into account the advantages they themselves derive from more rapid growth in the less-developed and indebted countries.

In conclusion, we should like to express the hope that the desire to succeed recently expressed by the representatives of so many countries here, will be reflected in the results of the Uruguay Round, a process that has to answer the concerns of all trading countries and give the multilateral trading system the means to continue to underpin economic growth.

Romania is prepared to make every effort, along with other contracting parties, in order to achieve this goal.