

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

G/L/276
20 November 1998

(98-4661)

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: GENERAL COUNCIL OVERVIEW OF WTO ACTIVITIES (1998)

Report by the Chairman

The present report by the Chairman of the Committee on Agriculture, Ambassador Nestor Osorio Londoño, is submitted on his own responsibility as agreed by the Committee.

The Committee on Agriculture held four regular meetings in 1998: on 19-20 March, 25-26 June, 30 September to 1 October and 17-18 November (Secretariat summary reports of these meetings G/AG/R/13 to 16 refer).

In accordance with Article 18.1 of the Agreement on Agriculture, the Committee, at each of its meetings, reviewed progress in the implementation of commitments negotiated under the Uruguay Round reform programme. This review process was undertaken on the basis of notifications submitted by Members in the areas of market access, domestic support and export subsidies and the provisions of the Agreement relating to export prohibitions and restrictions. In 1998 the Committee reviewed 232 notifications in these areas compared with 242 in 1997. At each of its meetings the Committee reviewed the overall position with respect to notification obligations under Article 18.2 and other relevant provisions of the Agreement. The current situation is summarized in Annex I to this report.

The Committee also addressed a wide range of general and specific matters relevant to the implementation of commitments that were raised under the provisions of Article 18.6 of the Agreement. A number of the matters thus raised have been the subject of informal consultations.

At its March meeting the Committee reviewed the list of least-developed and net food-importing developing countries, as required by its November 1995 decision (G/AG/3). As there were no requests for inclusion in the list it was decided that the review be held over until the Committee's March 1999 meeting. The follow-up to the Marrakesh Ministerial Decision as a whole was monitored by the Committee pursuant to Article 16.2 of the Agreement at its November meeting, including the follow-up to the recommendations of Singapore WTO Ministerial meeting on food aid and other matters related to this Decision. On this occasion, the international intergovernmental observer organizations were invited to provide, as appropriate, updated assessments of the impact of the implementation of the Agreement on Agriculture on developing countries generally and, in particular, on least-developed and net food-importing developing countries and other relevant information.

At its November meeting, the Committee also undertook the annual consultations under Article 18.5 of the Agreement on Agriculture with respect to the participation of Members in the normal growth of world trade in agricultural products within the framework of the commitments on export subsidies.

Under the arrangements adopted at the March, 1997 meeting of the Committee the process of analysis and information exchange ("the AIE process") agreed to by the Singapore Ministerial Conference (paragraph 12 of G/L/131 and WT/MIN(96)/DEC, paragraph 19 refer) has been undertaken through informal open-ended meetings. Five such meetings were held in 1998. Members discussed topics in a wide range of areas, including special safeguards, direct payments under production limiting programmes, direct payments decoupled from production, AMS commitments, effects of inflation on domestic support reduction commitments, state trading enterprises, export subsidies, export restrictions and taxes, food security, other non-trade concerns and the multifunctional nature of agriculture, issues of interest to developing countries, and techniques of trade liberalization. The discussions were based on informal papers submitted by Members. In addition, a number of factual Secretariat background papers have been provided in order to facilitate the work of the AIE process. These informal papers are listed in Annex II to this report. Following each of the AIE meetings the Chairman made a factual summary report to the Committee at its regular meetings which is included in the Secretariat summary reports of these meetings (G/AG/R/13 to 16 refer).

The following international intergovernmental organizations have regular observer status in the Committee: FAO, IMF, the International Grains Council, the OECD, UNCTAD, the UN World Food Programme and the World Bank. No consensus was reached with regard to applications for observer status which had been under consideration by the Committee since March 1997, by the ACP Secretariat, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Inter-American Institute for Agriculture Cooperation (G/AG/W/29/Rev.1).

The Committee adopted the following schedule for the Committee's regular meetings in 1999: 18-19 March, 24-25 June, 29-30 September and 17-18 November.

Annex I – Regular notifications pertaining to the 1995 to 1997 years made under the Agreement on Agriculture

	MA:1 One off	MA:2 Imports under tariff quotas			MA:5 Special safeguard			DS:1 Domestic support			ES:1 Export subsidies			ES:2 Total exports		
		1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997
Angola	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA
Antigua & Barbuda	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Argentina	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X			X	X		X	X	
Australia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bahrain	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X*	X	X*				NA	NA	NA
Bangladesh	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)		(NA)				NA	NA	NA
Barbados	X				X						X			NA	NA	NA
Belize	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Benin	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	X	NA			NA	NA	NA
Bolivia	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Botswana	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X		X			X	X		NA	NA	NA
Brazil	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Brunei Darussalam	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Bulgaria		NA	NA		NA	NA		NA	NA		NA	NA		NA	NA	
Burkina Faso	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)		X*			X	NA	NA	NA
Burundi	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)		(NA)				NA	NA	NA
Cameroon	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Canada	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	
Central African Rep.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)		(NA)				NA	NA	NA
Chad	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	X*	NA	X*	X*	NA	NA	NA
Chile	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Colombia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Congo	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Costa Rica	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	X*	X*	X	X	X	X	X	X
Côte d'Ivoire	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Cuba	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X		X	X		X		
Cyprus	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X*	X	X	X	X	X	
Czech Republic	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA
Djibouti	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)		(NA)				NA	NA	NA
Dominica	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA				X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Dominican Republic	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA				X			NA	NA	NA
EC	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X	X	X	X	X	
Ecuador	X	NA			NA	X		NA	X		NA	X		NA	NA	NA

Annex I – Regular notifications pertaining to the 1995 to 1997 years made under the Agreement on Agriculture (cont'd)

	MA:1 One off	MA:2 Imports under tariff quotas			MA:5 Special safeguard			DS:1 Domestic support			ES:1 Export subsidies			ES:2 Total exports		
		1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997
Egypt	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
El Salvador	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	X	X	NA	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Fiji	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	NA	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Gabon	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	X	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	NA
Gambia	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	X	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	NA
Ghana	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	NA
Grenada	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	NA
Guatemala	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X*	(NA)	(NA)	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Guinea Bissau	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Guinea, Republic of	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Guyana	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	NA
Haiti	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	X	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	NA
Honduras	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hong Kong, China	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Hungary	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Iceland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
India	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Indonesia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Israel	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Jamaica	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Japan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Kenya	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Korea	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Kuwait	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X*	(NA)	(NA)	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Lesotho	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Macau	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Madagascar	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Malawi	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Malaysia	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Maldives	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mali	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Malta	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	(NA)	(NA)	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Mauritania	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mauritius	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Mexico	X	X		X				X		X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA

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	MA:1 One off	MA:2 Imports under tariff quotas			MA:5 Special safeguard			DS:1 Domestic support			ES:1 Export subsidies			ES:2 Total exports		
		1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997
Mongolia	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	NA
Morocco	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Mozambique	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)				NA	NA	NA
Myanmar	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)	(NA)				NA	NA	NA
Namibia	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X		X			X	X		NA	NA	NA
New Zealand	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nicaragua	X				X						X			NA	NA	NA
Niger	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA
Nigeria	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Norway	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pakistan	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Panama	X	NA	NA	X	NA	NA	X	NA	NA		NA	NA	X*	NA	NA	X*
Papua New Guinea	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA			NA	NA	NA
Paraguay	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X		X	X		NA	NA	NA
Peru	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA				X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Philippines	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Poland	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Qatar	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA	X		NA	NA	NA
Romania	X	X			X	X		X	X		X	X				
Rwanda	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)		NA			NA	NA	NA
Saint Kitts & Nevis	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		NA			NA	NA	NA
Saint Lucia	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Saint Vincent & Gre.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Senegal	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Sierra Leone	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)					NA	NA	NA
Singapore	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Slovak Republic	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Slovenia	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Solomon Islands	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)		NA			NA	NA	NA
South Africa	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Sri Lanka	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Suriname	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA							NA	NA	NA
Swaziland	NA	NA	NA	NA										NA	NA	NA
Switzerland-Liechtenstein	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Tanzania	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)					NA	NA	NA

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	MA:1 One off	MA:2 Imports under tariff quotas			MA:5 Special safeguard			DS:1 Domestic support			ES:1 Export subsidies			ES:2 Total exports			
		1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	1995	1996	1997	
Thailand	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA
Togo	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)					NA	NA	NA	NA
Trinidad and Tobago	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	NA
Tunisia	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	NA
Turkey	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Uganda	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)					NA	NA	NA	NA
United Arab Emirates	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA			NA			NA	NA	NA	NA
United States	X	X	X	X	X			X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Uruguay	NA	NA	NA	NA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Venezuela	X	X	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Zambia	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	(NA)	(NA)		X	X	X	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zimbabwe	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	X*	X*	X*							

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Notifications may be submitted according to various bases (calendar, crop, fiscal years, etc.) as stipulated in G/AG/W/2/Rev.4. The symbols used in the tables are as follows:

- (a) A **blank** indicates that the requirement is applicable to the Member concerned, but that no notification has been received up to the cut-off date.
- (b) "NA" indicates that the requirement was not applicable for a given Member during the implementation period considered.
- (c) "(NA)" is used in conjunction with the Table DS:1 (Domestic Support) notification requirement in the case of least-developed country Members. While all Members are required to notify on an annual basis, the least-developed country Members may notify every second year.
- (d) "X" denotes that a notification has been received and "X*" that the notification has been received but is still under preparation. Subsequent addenda or corrections to notifications are not counted as additional notifications.

Annex II

AIE: PROCESS OF ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE

Informal Papers Presented by Members

- AIE/1: by Australia on Administration of Tariff Quotas - 13 May 1997
- AIE/2: by the United States on Circumvention of Export Subsidy Commitments - 16 May 1997
- AIE/3: by the United States on Data Supplied Through Notifications - 16 May 1997
- AIE/4: by Australia on "Green Box" Domestic Support - 16 May 1997
- AIE/5: by New Zealand on Tariff Quota Administration - 12 August 1997
- AIE/6: by Pakistan, Peru and the Dominican Republic on Issues of Interest to Developing Countries - 19 September 1997
- AIE/7: by the United States on Administration of Tariff-Rate Quotas – 22 October 1997
- AIE/8: by Uruguay on Implementation of Tariff Commitments - 24 October 1997
- AIE/9: by Australia on Tariff Quota Administration: First-Come, First-Served (FCFS) – 29 October 1997
- AIE/10: by the United States on Article 6.5: Direct Payments Under Production-Limiting Programs - 31 October 1997
- AIE/11: by the United States on State Trading Enterprises: Single Desk Buyers and Single Desk Sellers - 31 October 1997
- AIE/12: Communication by Cuba - 18 December 1997
- AIE/13: by the United States on Special Agricultural Safeguard: Data and Analytical Issues - 19 January 1998
- AIE/14: by the European Community on Direct Payments under Production-Limiting Programmes - 20 January 1998
- AIE/15: by Australia on Article 6.5: Direct Payments under Production-Limiting Programs - 27 January 1998
- AIE/16: by Australia on State Trading Enterprises (Single Desk Buyers and Single Desk Sellers) - 27 January 1998
- AIE/17: based on New Zealand's comments (20 January 1998) on the US paper on State Trading Enterprises (AIE/11) - 5 February 1998
- AIE/18: based on New Zealand's comments (20 January 1998) on the Secretariat Background Paper on Export Subsidies (AIE/S3) - 5 February 1998
- AIE/19: by the United States on Domestic Support Policy Reform (the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996) - 4 March 1998
- AIE/20: by New Zealand on Article 5: Special Safeguard Provisions - 5 March 1998
- AIE/21: by Canada on Sectoral Trade Liberalization - 17 March 1998
- AIE/22: by Norway on Non-Trade Concerns in a Multifunctional Agriculture - Implications for Agricultural Policy and the Multilateral Trading System – 2 June 1998
- AIE/23: by Canada on Annex 2: Domestic Support Measures Exempt from Reduction Commitments - 2 June 1998
- AIE/24: by Canada on Export Restrictions and Taxes - 2 June 1998
- AIE/25: by Japan on Non-Trade Concerns on Agriculture - 2 June 1998
- AIE/26: by the United States on Annex 4: Equivalent Measurement of Support - 2 June 1998
- AIE/27: by Australia: Reforming Domestic Support for Agriculture - 5 June 1998
- AIE/28: by New Zealand - Side Effects of Agricultural Policies and Production – 9 June 1998
- AIE/29: by the EC - Domestic Support Policy Reform: the Role of Article 6.5 Direct Payments - 19 June 1998
- AIE/30: by India - Issues of Interest to Developing Countries - 23 June 1998
- AIE/31: by Brazil - Trade Liberalization: Sectoral and "Across the Board" Initiatives - 6 July 1998

- AIE/32: by Argentina – Non-Trade Concerns in the next Agricultural Negotiations – 27 July 1998
- AIE/33: by South Africa – The Effect of Inflation on Reduction Commitments – 29 July 1998
- AIE/34: by the United States – Non-Trade Concerns and Agriculture – 2 September 1998
- AIE/35: by Australia – Decoupling Domestic Support – 4 September 1998
- AIE/36: by Australia – Non-Trade Concerns – 4 September 1998
- AIE/37: by the United States – Article 13 - Due Restraint Provisions – 15 September 1998
- AIE/38: by the United States – Domestic Support – Response to AIE/23 and AIE/27 – 15 September 1998
- AIE/39: by the Republic of Korea – Non-Trade Concerns in Net Food-Importing Countries – 22 September 1998
- AIE/40: by the European Communities – Multifunctional Character of Agriculture – 28 September 1998
- AIE/41: by South Africa – The Negative Effects of Export Subsidies on Developing Countries – 26 October 1998
- AIE/42: by Iceland – External Reference Price Adjustment – 27 October 1998
- AIE/43: by Uruguay – Tariff Peaks and Tariff Escalation for Agricultural and Agri-Food Products and their Effects on Developing and Least-Developed Countries – 4 November 1998
- AIE/44: by India – Food Security – An Important Non-Trade Concern
- AIE/45: by Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia – The Future Treatment of Domestic Support Commitments in the Case of Transition and Post-Transition Economies – 18 November 1998

Secretariat Background Papers

- AIE/S1: Tariff and Other Quotas - 9 September 1997
- AIE/S1/Rev.1: Tariff and Other Quotas - Revision - 26 May 1998
- AIE/S2: Domestic Support - 28 October 1997
- AIE/S3: Export Subsidies - 3 November 1997
- AIE/S4: Tariff Quota Administration Methods and Tariff Quota Fill – 6 November 1997
- AIE/S4/Rev.1: Tariff Quota Administration Methods and Tariff Quota Fill - Revision -10 June 1998
- AIE/S5: Ad valorem, Specific and other Tariffs - 6 February 1998
- AIE/S6: Special and Differential Treatment Provisions Relating to the Agreement on Agriculture - 16 February 1998
- AIE/S7: Studies on the Implementation and Impact of the Agreement on Agriculture on Developing Countries - 24 February 1998
- AIE/S8: NFIDC Decision - Actions Taken Within the Framework of the Decision as Notified by Members - 27 May 1998
- AIE/S9: Green Box Measures - 17 June 1998
- AIE/S10: Agricultural Trade Performance by Developing Countries - 19 June 1998
- AIE/S11: Uruguay Round Agricultural Tariff Reductions for Selected WTO Members According to Stage of Processing - 23 June 1998
- AIE/S12: Special Agricultural Safeguard - 9 October 1998