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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES - REGIME FOR THE IMPORTATION, SALE
AND DISTRIBUTION OF BANANAS

Communication from Saint Lucia

The following communication, dated 21 February 1996, from the Permanent Representation of Saint Lucia to the WTO to the Permanent Delegation of the European Commission, the Permanent Missions of Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and the United States, and the Chairman of the DSB, is circulated at the request of the Permanent Representation of Saint Lucia.

The Government of Saint Lucia wishes to convey to you its request to be joined in the consultations with the European Communities by Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and the United States pursuant to Article 4 of the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes, Article XXIII of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994, Article 6 of the Agreement on Import Licensing Procedures (to the extent that it relates to Article XXIII of GATT 1994), Article XXIII of the General Agreement on Trade in Services, Article 19 of the Agreement on Agriculture (to the extent that it relates to Article XXIII of GATT 1994) and Article 8 of the Agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (to the extent that it relates to Article XXIII of GATT 1994) regarding the EC régime for the importation, sale and distribution of bananas established by Regulation 404/93 (OJ L 47 of 25 February 1993, p. 1), and the subsequent EC legislation, regulations and administrative measures, including those reflecting the provisions of the Framework Agreement on bananas, which implement, supplement and amend that régime.

Article 4 of the Understanding on Rules and Procedures Governing the Settlement of Disputes specifically provides that during consultations Members should give special attention to the particular problems and interests of developing country Members.

The share of banana exports in the agricultural exports of Saint Lucia amounts to 90 per cent. A fall in the returns on bananas would have far-reaching and negative consequences for the economy of Saint Lucia. Any modifications to the EC banana régime which significantly reduce the provisions in favour of Saint Lucia would jeopardize our access to our sole export market and give rise to a disastrous situation and economic collapse would be inevitable. Saint Lucia, therefore, has a substantial trade interest in the consultations requested by your Government.

I look forward to receiving your early reply to this request and to fixing a mutually convenient arrangement for the holding of joint consultations on this matter, which is of such fundamental importance to my country.