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ΑΝΑΚΟΙΝΩΣΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΟΝ ΤΥΠΟ • INFORMAZIONE ALLA STAMPA • MEDEDELING AAN DE PERS**

Brussels, 5 August 1988

Mr De Clercq declares "The new US trade legislation could have
negative consequences for international trade"

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"I regret that the United States have chosen to adopt trade legislation which contains several protectionist elements and which increases the possibilities of recourse to unilateral action", stated Mr De Clercq, Commission Member for External Relations and Commercial Policy, following the adoption by the Senate of the Trade Bill and the US President's announcement that he intends to sign the legislation. While I am pleased that the legislation authorises the US President to negotiate in the framework of the Uruguay Round, I do not think that at this delicate phase of the multilateral negotiations, the adoption of such trade legislation is consistent with the responsibilities assumed by the United States in promoting these negotiations.

"One could well question", Mr De Clercq added, "if the United States are really committed to the success of these multilateral negotiations. The Community, as well as the United States' other trading partners, have throughout the long legislative process made known their position and their concern over the proposed legislation and have drawn the attention of the US authorities to the negative consequences this would have for international trade. I am concerned", Mr De Clercq went on to say, "because henceforth the US have at their disposal a panoply of measures, whose unilateral nature has been strengthened and which can be triggered quasi-automatically. Moreover, the legality of these measures with respect to the GATT and the Punta del Este standstill undertaking could be questioned. This legislation is likely to lead to strong reactions from the United States trading partners.

For its part, the Community maintains its intent to have recourse to GATT if it judges that the provisions of the new legislation endanger its interests. The application of this trade legislation is particularly important and for this reason, the Community will follow with all due attention the development of the situation and it goes without saying that the Community reserves the right to take such action as is appropriate to defend its commercial interests. I will take this matter up with my colleagues during the next meeting of the Council of Minister in September", Mr De Clercq finally stated.