

European Community

News Release

STATEMENT OF THE DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE VERSAILLES SUMMIT

Gaston Thorn, President of the Commission of the European Communities, issued the following statement on Monday 7 June 1982 at the conclusion of the Versailles Economic Summit:

"On the subject of (commerce, trade) I emphasized that world economic recovery could not take place without maintenance of an open system of international trade.

Thus, the GATT ministerial conference which will take place in November 1982 will be a meeting of crucial importance.

But success of this conference depends on three conditions:

- A) The first concerns the fundamental imbalance between Japanese exports of manufactured products and its imports, which are comparable to Swiss levels, although Switzerland is but 1/10 the size of the Japanese economy. Recent measures undertaken by Japan demonstrate an awareness of this need and represent a considerable step in the right direction. But these measures are equal to neither the need nor the hopes of the EEC, which is awaiting from Japan a political commitment to adopt a coordinated series of measures corresponding to the gravity of the reality.
- B) The second problem concerns the increasing trade tensions between the EEC and the United States in the last few months, particularly in the steel sector and agricultural products. These quarrels feed a process of escalation which risks getting beyond our control and weakening our cohesion. This is why I said to our American friends, "let us cool it, it is time".

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C) The third condition to be met to assure the success of the GATT ministerial conference concerns support of the growth and import capacity of developing nations. I will come back to the theme of developing nations in a minute.

It is obviously not my place to explain or comment on the reactions of other Heads of State but I have the impression that the approach I have just outlined was generally well received.

NORTH/SOUTH

I attach great importance to the agreement we were able to reach concerning relations with the countries of the South.

You know the importance the Community accords to the North/South dialogue for political as well as economic reasons. However, until now western nations have been unable to come to an agreement on the answer to give to developing countries concerning global negotiations.

I am therefore very pleased by the rapprochement which has taken place between us here at Versailles and which allows us to hope for a start to these negotiations in the near future. I am all the more pleased that, having benefited from experience, we have been careful to eliminate all ambiguities between us by going to the root of the problems which separated us.

Nonetheless the process which begins here will have effect only in the long term. At this moment, because of the world crisis, the situation of a great number of developing countries is, becoming, quite simply, desperate.

We cannot ignore this because as always the crisis is hurting most those who have least, because the situation is aggravating the risks of international tensions, and, finally, because our chances of pulling out of this crisis are linked to those of the developing nations.

Thus it is excellent that we have been able to agree on some essential directions in the short term, particularly those which aim to strengthen the influence and intervention capacity of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund".