

COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

PRESS RELEASE

8925/90 (Presse 142)

1429th Council meeting
- Agriculture -
Luxembourg, 8 October 1990

President:

Mr Vito SACCOMANDI

Minister for Agriculture
of the Italian Republic

8.X.1990

kin/MI/mn

The Governments of the Member States and the Commission of the European Communities were represented as follows:

Belgium:

Mr Paul de KEERSMAEKER State Secretary for European Affairs
and Agriculture

Denmark:

Mr Laurits TOERNAES Minister for Agriculture

Germany:

Mr Ignaz KIECHLE Federal Minister for Food,
Agriculture and Forestry

Mr Walter KITTEL State Secretary,
Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture
and Forestry

Greece:

Mr Michaelis PAPACONSTANTINOU Minister for Agriculture

Spain:

Mr Carlos ROMERO-HERRERA Minister for Agriculture

France:

Mr Louis MERMAZ Minister for Agriculture

Ireland:

Mr Michael O'KENNEDY Minister for Agriculture and Food

8.X.1990

kin/MI/mn

Italy:

Mr Vito SACCOMANDI

Minister for Agriculture

Mr Francesco CIMINO

State Secretary for Agriculture and
Forestry

Luxembourg:

Mr René STEICHEN

Minister for Agriculture and Viticulture

Netherlands:

Mr Piet BUKMAN

Minister for Agriculture, Nature
Conservation and Fisheries

Portugal:

Mr Arlindo CUNHA

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and
Food

United Kingdom:

Mr John Selwyn GUMMER

Minister of Agriculture,
Fisheries and Food

°

°

°

Commission:

Mr R. MAC SHARRY

Member

8.X.90

kin/MI/mn

GATT/MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS (AGRICULTURE)

The Council held a detailed discussion on the Commission proposal concerning the Community offer for the Uruguay Round negotiations in agriculture.

During the discussion many delegations stressed the need for more information both on the effects of the proposed measures and on the back-up measures thought necessary to satisfy the farmers' expectations.

The Council agreed to continue and develop the study and clarification of the problems raised during the discussion and to this end will resume its examination of the Commission proposal at its next meeting scheduled for 15 and 16 October 1990.

In the meantime the General Affairs Council scheduled for 10 October will take stock of all the proceedings concerning the present stage of the Uruguay Round negotiations.

Bruxelles, le 9 octobre 1990.

Memo 47
Non attribuable

433

Agriculture Council - Luxembourg, 8 October

Theme of Council: discussion of Commission's offer on agriculture in the context of the Uruguay Round

After a three hours working lunch for ministers, the President of the Council, Mr Saccomandi, proposed an adjournment of the meeting until Monday 15 and Tuesday 16 October in Luxembourg. This was agreed.

Mr Saccomandi explained that many delegations wished more time to clarify aspects of the Commission proposal and to engage in further discussions with their Governments. Several delegations wanted to know what "comensatory measures" would be proposed by the Commission to alleviate the hardship of farmers.

At a news conference Mr Saccomandi said that on Wednesday October 10 in Luxembourg Trade ministers would examine agriculture along with 14 other GATT subjects. The Trade ministers, he said, would note that the Agriculture ministers were still examining the Commission farm offer, and that the decision on agriculture would be taken by the Council of Agriculture ministers next week.

The Commissioner responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Ray Mac Sharry, said that he was reasonably confident that the Commission's proposal would be accepted by the Council. He noted that one day he was criticised for his proposal being too lax; while the next day he was under criticism for the proposal being too severe. "I believe I have get the balance right", he said. "Just right down the middle".

Mr Mac Sharry also made it clear that in November or December he would present proposals for redistributing existing resources within the Common Agricultural Policy as part of a policy reshaping, and that these proposals would form part of next year's price package, not part of the GATT proposals.

For further information, please contact:
J. Cooney (236 50 99)

Bruxelles, le 8 octobre 1990

NOTE BIO (293) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

433

Agriculture Council - Luxembourg, 8 October (J. Cooney)
(Faxed from Luxembourg)

At the opening of the special Council of Agriculture Ministers this morning, Mr Raymond Mac Sharry presented the proposals of the Commission defining the European Community's offer to reduce agricultural support and protection in the context of the Uruguay Round.

The Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development explained that the 30% cut in overall internal support from 1986-1996 for the main products and 10% for others not covered by the Aggregate Measurement of Support struck the right balance between the interest of Community farmers and the Community's international obligations in the Uruguay Round.

Regarding the undertaking to quantify the effects of its proposals on export refunds, Mr Mac Sharry made it clear that this proposal simply means that the Community will spell out more clearly its proposals as they impact on export subsidies. "The Commission", he stressed, "is not proposing a specific commitment on these subsidies".

Recognizing the difficult situation facing Agriculture Ministers, Commissioner Mac Sharry said that the sacrifices resulting from the Uruguay Round would have to be distributed in an equitable fashion. Otherwise they would not be politically or socially acceptable. "We will have to develop a fresh approach to ensure that the policy can be more responsible to the needs of EC producers, especially those least well able to adapt to the new situation", he said.

Referring to the importance of achieving a successful conclusion to the Uruguay Round, Commissioner Mac Sharry said this would require concessions by all trading partners. The EC could not have agreement at any price. The EC's trading partners would have to match the Community's offer in agriculture and other areas.

Following the Commissioner's presentation, the ministers individually began to give their reactions to the proposal. The initial reaction was negative.

Amitiés.

J. COONEY

Bruxelles, le 9 octobre 1990

NOTE BIO (293) (Suite 1 et fin) AUX BUREAUX NATIONAUX
CC AUX MEMBRES DU SERVICE DU PORTE-PAROLE

Agriculture Council - Luxembourg, 8 October (J. Cooney)

Theme of Council: discussion of Commission's offer on agriculture in the context of the Uruguay Round

After a three hours working lunch for ministers, the President of the Council, Mr Saccomandi, proposed an adjournment of the meeting until Monday 15 and Tuesday 16 October in Luxembourg. This was agreed.

Mr Saccomandi explained that many delegations wished more time to clarify aspects of the Commission proposal and to engage in further discussions with their Governments. Several delegations wanted to know what "comensatory measures" would be proposed by the Commission to alleviate the hardship of farmers.

At a news conference Mr Saccomandi said that on Wednesday October 10 in Luxembourg Trade ministers would examine agriculture along with 14 other GATT subjects. The Trade ministers, he said, would note that the Agriculture ministers were still examining the Commission farm offer, and that the decision on agriculture would be taken by the Council of Agriculture ministers next week.

The Commissioner responsible for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mr Ray Mac Sharry, said that he was reasonably confident that the Commission's proposal would be accepted by the Council. He noted that one day he was criticised for his proposal being too lax; while the next day he was under criticism for the proposal being too severe. "I believe I have get the balance right", he said. "Just right down the middle".

Mr Mac Sharry also made it clear that in November or December he would present proposals for redistributing existing resources within the Common Agricultural Policy as part of a policy reshaping, and that these proposals would form part of next year's price package, not part of the GATT proposals.

Amitiés.


C. STATHOPOULOS

