

***GLOBAL SYSTEM OF TRADE PREFERENCES  
AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (GSTP)***

GSTP/C.P./XVII/3  
28 May 2004

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**The Committee of Participants  
Resumed Seventeenth Session  
Geneva, 28 May 2004**

LAUNCHING OF THE THIRD ROUND OF GSTP NEGOTIATIONS

*Decision by the Committee of Participants  
Resumed 17<sup>th</sup> Session – 28 May 2004*

Having fully considered the report and recommendations of the GSTP *Ad Hoc* Technical Working Group;

Desirous of expanding trade among developing countries especially at the interregional level;

Convinced that the promotion of trade among developing countries would contribute to strengthening world trade as a whole;

Noting the recommendation on the GSTP in the Joint Communiqué of the XII Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Fifteen held on 27-28 February 2004 in Caracas, Venezuela;

Noting further the recommendation on the GSTP in the Marrakech Declaration on South-South Cooperation adopted at the High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 16 to 19 December 2003;

Acting pursuant to paragraph 1 (a) of Article 7 and paragraph 1 of Article 6 of the Agreement on Global System of Trade Preferences Among Developing Countries (GSTP);

The Committee of Participants hereby:

Part A

1. **Decides** to sponsor the Third Round of GSTP Negotiations aimed at invigorating and furthering the objectives of the GSTP Agreement with emphasis on the principle of mutuality of advantages **in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Agreement.**
2. **Establishes** the GSTP Negotiating Committee, open to participation by interested Participants to the GSTP Agreement, **that will undertake preparatory work and supervise the overall conduct of the negotiations. The Negotiating Committee shall consider and complete the tasks, in sequence, as follows:**

**Task 1: To examine the possibility of clarifying, or improving if necessary, the provisions of Article 9 of the GSTP Agreement and in this context, other relevant provisions as appropriate. The Negotiating Committee shall conclude this task through a decision to be taken by the Committee of Participants in accordance with the criteria set out in Article 7.2 of the GSTP Agreement and no later than 31 December 2004.**

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**Task 2: Upon the conclusion of Task 1, to develop the modalities and approaches of market access negotiations as well as to conduct the negotiations.**

**The Negotiating Committee shall base its work on the Recommendations attached to the Report of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Working Group as contained in Annex 1. The Negotiating Committee is hereby authorized to establish such subsidiary bodies as may be necessary to facilitate its tasks. It shall establish a reasonable period for concluding its preparatory work.**

3. **Invites members of the Group of 77 and China to accede to the Agreement on the GSTP. Subject to the procedures for accession under Article 28 of the Agreement and in order to facilitate their accession, interested members of the Group of 77 and China are invited to participate in the Third Round of GSTP negotiations and attend meetings of the Negotiating Committee.**
4. **Decides that the Negotiating Committee shall hold its opening meeting no later than **November 2004**. It shall regularly submit progress reports to the Committee of Participants.**
5. **Further decides that the Third Round should be concluded no later than **November 2006**. Before the formal conclusion of the negotiations, the Negotiating Committee shall conduct an overall assessment of the results of the negotiations in the light of the principle of mutuality of advantages and of Article 9 of the Agreement.**
6. **Agrees to ensure equitable, meaningful and mutually advantageous contributions to the System **in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Agreement**.**

#### Part B

7. **Decides to meet in special session at the Ministerial level, on the occasion of the UNCTAD-XI in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on 18 June 2004 to muster political support to strengthening and invigorating the effectiveness of the GSTP system and the launching of the Third Round of GSTP negotiations.**
8. **Mandates the President of the Committee to take the necessary action in this regard, in consultation with the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China, the Government of the host country and the secretariat of the UNCTAD.**
9. **Approves the attached draft declaration on the launching of the Third Round of GSTP Negotiations for formal adoption by the special session of the Committee of Participants in Sao Paulo, Brazil.**