

Committee on Specific Commitments

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS TO THE COUNCIL FOR TRADE IN SERVICES

1. Since its last report to the Council for Trade in Services, the Committee on Specific Commitments held three formal meetings between 1 November 2000 and 30 September 2001. The reports of these meetings are contained in documents S/CSC/M/18, 19 and 20. The Committee's work in this period focused on two items: the revision of the scheduling guidelines and classification issues.

2. At its meeting on 1 November 2000, the Committee considered the organization of its work and, in the light of the best endeavours deadline of March 2001, decided to give priority to the completion of the revised guidelines for the scheduling of commitments under the GATS. Following intense consultations on the draft of the revised guidelines conducted by the Chairperson, the Committee was able at its 22 March 2001 meeting to agree on a revised text, which it recommended to the Council for Trade in Services for its adoption as a non-binding set of guidelines. The Council for Trade in Services adopted a Decision to that effect at its meeting of 23 March 2001. The text of the Guidelines for the Scheduling of Specific Commitments under the GATS and the Decision taken by the Services Council on its adoption are contained in documents S/L/92 and S/L/91 respectively.

3. The Committee continued its work on classification issues regarding five services sectors: environmental services; energy services; legal services; postal and courier services; and construction services. Discussions were without prejudice to the inclusion of any other sector, whose classification Members might want to revise, and to the positions of Members as to the outcome of this exercise. During the reporting period, discussions of the sectors took place in informal and formal modes, on the basis of existing or revised proposals submitted by Members which focused on possible amendments to the existing Secretariat's services classification list (document MTN.GNS/W/120). As in the past, regular accounts of the informal discussions on the sectors were given by the Chairperson to the Committee and are contained in the reports of the formal meetings referred to above. Members also continued their discussion of "manufacturing on a fee or contract basis", on the basis of a paper prepared by the Secretariat and questions posed by the Chairperson. At its May meeting, the Committee agreed on this issue not being a matter of priority at that stage.
