

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2658
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2003
MEETING OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON AGRICULTURE ISSUES
T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether developing countries including India are trying to seek a consensus on three areas of special importance in agriculture;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether these issues were taken up at a meeting of developing countries held recently at Nyon near Geneva; and
- (d) if so, the deliberations made there on these issues?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI S.B. MOOKHERJEE)

(a) to (d): India has been continuously making efforts to build coalitions with other Members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) holding similar interests and concerns as India regarding protection of domestic farmers and landless agricultural labourers and for securing improvements in market access in products of export interest. India along with Cuba, Dominic Republic, Honduras, Indonesia, Korea, Nigeria, Turkey, Peru, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Venezuela have made a submission to the WTO Committee on Agriculture on various aspects of special and differential treatment for developing countries across all the three pillars in the negotiations, namely, market access, domestic support and export competition.

India, along with over 75 WTO Members which include the EC and Japan, have advocated using the Uruguay Round approach to further tariff reductions. Further, along with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), India had co-sponsored a meeting at Nyon near Geneva on 25 June 2003, of like-minded developing countries to discuss issues of common interest, namely, the instruments of Special Products (SP products), and the new Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM), proposed for developing countries to enable them to address food security and rural development and/or livelihood concerns. This meeting also considered domestic support modalities for developed countries in order to better address the distortions in world agriculture markets, and sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures being used by some major trading partners to deny market access in products of export interest to developing countries.

The negotiations are scheduled to be concluded by 1 January 2005.