

Committee on Specific Commitments

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE NINTH MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON SPECIFIC COMMITMENTS

Note by the Secretariat

1. As stipulated in WTO/AIR/1062, the following items are proposed for discussion at the ninth meeting of the Committee on Specific Commitments, to be held on 27 April 1999.

I. SCHEDULING GUIDELINES

2. As the comments made by delegations during the first discussion on document S/CSC/W/19 were made on a preliminary basis, it is suggested that the Committee should conduct a second reading of the text, section by section.

II. CLASSIFICATION

A. GENERAL ISSUES

3. It is suggested that under this item the Committee should consider two questions: the objective of the exercise and its modalities.

(a) Objective of the exercise

4. At the last meeting of the Committee, the Chairman recalled that the object of the exercise was not to discuss points of classification for their own sake, but rather to contribute to the solution of concrete problems and in particular to improve MTN.GNS/W/120, in order to promote the clarity and legal security of future commitments. He also recalled the conclusion drawn by the former Chairman of the Committee in April 1998, that "there was agreement on the need to examine and if necessary revise W/120 in the light of developments in scheduling, in trade and in the understanding of Members". The further work on classification issues will therefore continue to focus on the possibility of refining or replacing the definitions of sectors and sub-sectors contained in W/120, in somewhat similar manner to the replacement of the relevant part of W/120 by the model schedule developed for basic telecommunications.

(b) Modalities of the exercise

5. It was agreed at the last meeting that the classification exercise would be based on proposals made by Members. It was noted, however, that the suggestions made by Members during the exchange of information and summed up in Job No. 5353/Rev.1 were not in general detailed enough to constitute a basis for technical work. Specific proposals have been put forward by Australia and the USA on the classification of environmental services. However, if a sufficient number of proposals by Members is not forthcoming the exercise will lose momentum and it may be necessary to consider alternative ways of providing inputs to the process.

III. OTHER BUSINESS
