

03.11.2005 - 16:18 Uhr

## Press release G10 farmers organisations

Brugg (ots) -

After intensive discussions with governmental and WTO officials in Geneva, we farm organisations from the G10-countries of Japan, Korea, Norway and Switzerland, express our grave concerns about the development of the WTO negotiations in agriculture. Exporting countries like G20 and USA have continued to put forward aggressive negotiating proposals such as drastic tariff reductions, tariff capping, and limitation on the number of sensitive products while importing countries requests for reflecting non-trade concerns and providing flexibility in market access have not been properly accommodated. We are also deeply concerned about the recent proposal of the EU including tariff capping and deep cuts in tariffs. These proposals do not consider the special situation of the agriculture in the net food importing countries.

Only 10 % of the total world food production is traded internationally. WTO rules should be clear and transparent for the international trade of agricultural products, but not endanger agriculture and its multifunctionality. Each country should have the right to produce food for national consumption. Modalities should be balanced and fair to ensure the coexistence of different forms of agriculture. We therefore strongly oppose excessive market access and the capping of tariffs. The tariff capping will only hit a few countries, like the G10 members, who are already among the biggest importers per capita of agricultural goods, while countries which are distorting the world markets the most will remain untouched. We also underscore the need for an appropriate number of sensitive products and a flexible treatment of these products to sustain the special role of agriculture to provide food security, maintain viable rural communities and attractive landscapes.

We urge our governments to work for an acceptable and balanced WTO agreement that takes fully into account the non-trade-concerns mentioned above. The new agreement should not go beyond the July 2004 package. The process towards an agreement must be transparent and democratic and include all member countries of the WTO. In order to avoid fatal results at the Hong Kong Ministerial Meeting, it is the US and the G20 that should give in substantially to narrow the differences in positions between exporting and importing countries. We urge our governments not to make any further concessions unless the following demands are met:

Tariff capping is not acceptable

Each country must be allowed to designate an appropriate number of sensitive products. These products must be treated with a great deal of flexibility

We can not accept drastic cuts in tariffs

Special Safeguards must be maintained for both developing and developed countries

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