



Resolution submitted by the Delegation of Japan on Regional Economic Integration.

Noting the development of interdependence and the deepening of globalisation in the international community;

Noting the current trends towards economic integration in various regions of the world, including the Asia-Pacific region;

Reaffirming the important role which the WTO plays in promoting and strengthening the multilateral trading system;

Recalling the discussion at the Third Ministerial Conference in Seattle, the United States of America, from 30th November to 3rd December 1999;

Recalling that, in the Leaders' Declaration of APEC Economic Leaders Meeting held in November 2000, it was reaffirmed that the launch of a new WTO round in 2001 was necessary and that regional and bilateral trade agreements should serve as building blocks for multilateral liberalisation in the WTO;

Resolves to:

1. Encourage all countries to promote regional economic integration by strengthening economic cooperative relationships within each region, recognizing that the development of regional economic integration such as the conclusion of regional and bilateral trade agreements will enhance the interdependent relations brought about by the promotion of economic and people-to-people exchanges, and in turn benefit the entire world not only economically but also politically.
2. Call upon all countries to develop existing and emerging regional trade agreements so as to be consistent with WTO rules and disciplines, bringing benefits to the entire world.
3. Call upon all WTO members to exert utmost efforts for the launch of a new round of trade negotiations in 2001 so that the WTO can continue to play a central role in the world economy into 21st century, recognizing the need to strengthen both multilateral trading system and regional economic integration at the same time and bearing in mind that regional economic integration is not a substitute for multilateral trading system but a supplement for it.