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April 14, 1999

Santafe de Bogota, March 29, 1999-04-15

FELIPE JARAMILLO, Esq.
International Negotiator
Ministry of Foreign Trade
Santafe de Bogota

Dear Sir:

In light of the trade announcement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Trade regarding the prospects of the FTAA (Free Trade Area for the Americas), I wish to express my opinion with respect thereto:

Nowadays, globalization and internationalization of economies is present in the global reality, with the establishment of trade blocs in the world, such as the European Union and ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

The countries of America, especially, the United States understood the necessity and appropriateness of uniting into a single market.

From my personal point of view and as a student of international trade, I think that the FTAA will be a reality only when the requirements previously established in the meetings and in the serious and responsible position of the United States with respect to this initiative, are complied with.

As is well known, the United States initiated the proposal on establishment of the FTAA, I think more in the interests of this country for the purpose of obtaining more consumers and markets and in light of the growing development of the European Union and Japan together with the Asiatic tigers; all of this to establish primacy in global economic power.

The United States is a nation of highly competitive magnitude and power; therefore, if it wishes the FTAA to be effective, it should eliminate all tariff and non-tariff barriers to Latin American countries, in addition to heterogeneity with respect to size, productivity, level of development, macroeconomic management, immense social, cultural and political issues in each of the Latin American countries which are presently not in the best condition, and it implies that a regional Free Trade Area cannot be conceived as a reciprocal exchange among equals.

Therefore, reciprocal liberalization of trade among unequal partners and, consequently, full execution of the FTAA can only be feasible if there is an equitable distribution of profits with mechanisms to support the rapid growth of exports, investment and competitiveness in the less developed member countries; all that aimed at improving the quality of life of the American population. I remain,

Sincerely,

/s/ Mary Luz Sanchez Martinez
MARY LUZ SANCHEZ MARTINEZ
c.c. 52.665.613, issued in Cajica

Student of International Trade, Ninth Semester
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Note: in the event of any suggestion, call telephone # 091-8661434;
thank you for your attention to this matter