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6-1-1989

# Conference Introduction

C. Ronald Ellington

*University of Georgia School of Law*



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### Repository Citation

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INTRODUCTION

*C. Ronald Ellington\**

I am pleased to welcome everyone, especially our distinguished speakers, to this most important conference. Our purpose is to discuss ways of maintaining the post-World War II multilateral trading system between the United States and its economic partners, the OECD and the developing world. The Uruguay Round multilateral trade negotiations have given the international community a forum to thoroughly examine the possibility of bringing all international trade under a common multilateral trading system, unencumbered by barriers and national interests. The liberalization of trade in services and the protection of industrial and intellectual property rights are an essential part of the Uruguay Round. As you know, important breakthroughs have been accomplished at the Montreal midterm meeting with respect to services. Further, discussions on trade-related intellectual property issues took place.

We in Georgia are deeply involved in the services sector, particularly banking, insurance and telecommunications. Our interest in standards in this sector is global. Removal of barriers to trade in services would provide an emphasis to the furtherance of international relations. Moreover, many high technology products are produced in Georgia. We need fair and effective international safeguards to protect the rights of the creators of technological products.

The discussions through the next day and a half will be highly relevant to our own interests here in Georgia. The publication of the proceedings in the *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law* will bring the results of these deliberations to a wider audience in this country and others.

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\* Dean, University of Georgia School of Law, Athens, Georgia.

We are grateful to the distinguished panelists giving us at this law school and university the benefit of their presence and contributions. I hope they enjoy our Georgia hospitality. I also wish to add my congratulations to the Georgia Society of International and Comparative Law and *Journal* for having put together this extremely important conference. We are proud of our international and comparative law program at this law school and the considerable number of students that take part in it.

I also wish to express my appreciation to the Institute for Continuing Legal Education for its wonderful assistance. Finally, I want to express my special appreciation to Professor Gabriel Wilner who had the vision, and I should add, the contacts, to convene this meeting. I wish you great success.

#### CONFERENCE OPENING

*Scott Birdwell\**

Good morning. My name is Scott Birdwell, President of the Georgia Society of International and Comparative Law. After nearly a year of planning and preparation, it is my great pleasure to formally declare this conference underway. The first order of business is an expression of gratitude to this law school and particularly Dean Ellington who agreed to hold and fund a trade conference which the students would organize. Thank you, Dean Ellington for your confidence in the students and your steadfast support for this conference.

We also owe our thanks to Professor Wilner, advisor to the Society and the *Journal*, and a constant source of encouragement to students taking an active role in the international law programs on campus.

And my personal thanks to the Society and *Journal* officers and many other students who contributed many valuable law school hours to organizing this conference.

I would like to offer a brief student's perspective on this conference. This conference will cover what are becoming the most important areas for the future of the United States economy: intellectual property and trade in services. This conference is policy-oriented and forward-looking. For this reason, we have invited these outstanding panelists, experts in this developing area of the law, to share with us their

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\* President, Georgia Society of International and Comparative Law, University of Georgia, School of Law.