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GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

CONTRACTING PARTIES

Tariff Negotiations Committee

PROCEEDINGS OF THE TARIFF NEGOTIATIONS COMMITTEE

Eighth Meeting, held on Tuesday, 7 June 1955, at 3.p.m.

1. Approval of the records of the Seventh Meeting (TNJ/8)

The records of the Seventh Meeting were approved.

2. Publication of the Protocol

The DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY reported that a release on the conclusion of the tariff negotiations had been issued to the press that morning, and that on the following day the text of the Protocol, without annexes, and of the Draft Decision to be taken by the CONTRACTING PARTIES under Article XXXIII, would be circulated to all contracting parties. In the course of the week each contracting party would receive the schedules of tariff concessions as annexed to the Protocol but containing also an indication of the country or countries with which each item had been negotiated; but as was customary, each contracting party would receive only one copy of these annotated schedules. He said that the secretariat would proceed to photo-offset the Protocol and annexes and would send a certified copy of the Protocol to each contracting party. Further, the protocol and schedules would be published in separate English and French volumes and contracting parties should notify the secretariat the number of copies in each language they would wish to purchase.

3. Publicity for the Results of the Negotiations

Mr. HAGUIWARA (Japan) reported that his Government had agreed with the United States Government that the results of the negotiations could be made public on 10 June. If any later date were chosen for the release of these results there would be some difficulty for his Government; in fact the Japanese constitution required that an instrument such as the Protocol of Accession should be submitted to parliament before signature or immediately thereafter. It was, therefore, intended to submit it to parliament on 14 June, and from that moment it would obviously be difficult to preserve the secrecy of the contents of the Protocol.

Mr. WOODBURY WILLOUGHBY (United States) said that his delegation had been in touch with several others and had found no objection to release on 10 June. He therefore hoped that simultaneous release in all countries would be possible on that date.

4. Conclusion of the Negotiations

Mr. KASTOFF (Denmark) said that the negotiations had been of short duration because there was only one acceding government and only a limited number of contracting parties had taken part. This was unfortunate because customs tariffs remained one of the most important barriers to international trade and a wider participation would undoubtedly have led to more substantial tariff reductions. However, the Schedules to the Protocol comprised nearly 600 tariff items.

The work of the Committee was now at an end and what remained to be done before Japan could take its seat among the other contracting parties had to be done by governments individually. He thought he was expressing the feelings of all the representatives present in expressing the hope that Japan would very shortly become a contracting party and play the rôle within the GATT to which its position in international trade entitled it.

Before closing the session Mr. Kastoff thanked all members of the Committee for their collaboration in bringing their work to an end well within the time-limit they had set.

Mr. HAGUIWARA (Japan) thanked the Chairman for his conduct of the meetings of the Committee and all delegations with which Japan had negotiated. He regretted that the time-limits had not permitted negotiations of a much wider scope as would have been desired by his Government; the time shortage restricted the number of negotiations and also prevented some negotiations from being more extensive. His Government would be glad, however, to hold supplementary tariff negotiations with any contracting party, whether or not it had participated in these negotiations.

Mr. WOODBURY WILLOUGHBY (United States) associated himself with the remarks of the Chairman and the representative of Japan and congratulated the Japanese delegation on their collaboration and zeal in the negotiations.