

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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## Committee on Tariff Concessions

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 NOVEMBER 1994

Chairperson: H.E. Ms. Lilia R. Bautista (Philippines)

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1. **Adoption of the agenda**

1.1 The **Chairperson** welcomed the participants to the third formal meeting of the Committee this year, which was convened by GATT/AIR/3648. The proposed agenda and the list of relevant documents were contained in the airgram. The agenda was **adopted** without modification.

2. **Submission of national tariffs**

2.1 The **Chairperson** informed the Committee that a Revision 13 of document TAR/W/40 containing the latest information on the availability of national tariffs had been prepared and circulated by the Secretariat. Once again, she urged delegations that had not yet done so, to provide the Secretariat with two copies of the most recent version of their national tariffs (one copy for the Market Access Division and one copy for the IDB Section of the Statistics and Information Systems Division).

3. **Report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES**

3.1 The **Chairperson** reported to the Committee that, following the agreement by the Committee to report twice a year to the Council - or to the CONTRACTING PARTIES in the present case - the Secretariat had prepared a second bi-annual report in document TAR/Spec/11. The report also contained a table reproducing the factual information which the Secretariat had received concerning the extension of waivers. As could be seen, out of the 15 countries which needed to request an extension of their present waivers, 13 had submitted the required factual information and had also submitted a request for extension. The Secretariat would be in contact with the two countries (Malawi and Zaire) which had not yet provided any information. Venezuela, which was in the process of concluding the negotiations, would presumably not need an extension of the waiver.

3.2 The representative of **Costa Rica** pointed out that, although his delegation was hoping to conclude the negotiations related to the transposition of the schedule of Costa Rica into the Harmonized System before the end of the year, it had preferred to request an extension of the waiver.

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3.3 The representative of **Venezuela** confirmed that the schedule of his country was being finalized and that he expected that his delegation would annex its schedule to the Geneva (1994) Protocol in the very near future.

3.4 The representative of **Argentina** stated that his delegation might have recourse to a further extension of its waiver but first wanted to await the outcome of some consultations which were under way. He requested those delegations that might have comments on Argentina's proposed HS schedule to provide them to him within the next ten days in order to expedite the matter. Argentina would continue applying the existing procedures.

3.5 The representative of **Australia** said that the required documentation related to the transposition of the Argentine schedule into the Harmonized System had been on the table for more than a year and that it had not been subject to any Article XXVIII renegotiations. She understood that in the absence of such process and of any requests for clarification, Argentina would be in a position to annex its proposed HS schedule to the Geneva (1994) Protocol before the end of the year.

3.6 The representative of **Sweden** said that his delegation had no objection to the procedure suggested by Argentina and would check the matter further.

3.7 The representative of the **United States** suggested that Argentina submit, under the rectification procedures, a revised schedule and, if there were no comments after thirty days, carry on with the annexation of its schedule to the Geneva (1994) Protocol. As far as his delegation was concerned, it could not be bound legally by any decision in this respect in the Committee. He would do his best to use the proposed ten days to settle the matter with his capital. He suggested that Argentina could proceed with the annexation of its schedule and that it would be for his delegation to object to anything found unacceptable.

3.8 The representative of **Brazil** pointed out that since, as far as he understood, Argentina had not made any changes in its schedule since it submitted its documentation, it would therefore not be necessary to have thirty more days to examine it. In his view, in case a country had a problem after the schedule had been annexed to the Geneva (1994) Protocol, Argentina could have recourse to the rectification procedures but not before.

3.9 The **Secretariat** clarified that if any procedures were to be used, it would be the normal rectification procedures and a period of ninety days would be given to contracting parties to react, and not thirty days, which were part of the special procedures agreed upon under the Preparatory Committee for the rectification of Uruguay Round schedules.

3.10 The **Chairperson** confirmed that if Argentina did not hear from the United States - and possibly from Sweden - within the next ten days, it could go ahead and annex its schedule to the Geneva (1994) Protocol. She added that the new Committee that would deal with this type of questions under the World Trade Organization might wish to establish more precise procedures regarding the transposition of schedules and she invited delegations to make suggestions to this effect.

3.11 Taking into account a few technical rectifications to be made to the draft version, the report was **adopted** and subsequently circulated as document TAR/269 (and Corr.1).

3.12 The representative of **Australia**, supported by the representative of the European Communities, expressed her appreciation and thanks to Ambassador Bautista for her chairmanship during the year. She also thanked the Secretariat for its work and the assistance provided to delegations both in the context of the preparation and verification of the Uruguay Round schedules and of the work of the Committee.