RESTRICTED
LIMITED B

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

GATT/CP.4/SR.6
2' February 1950
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Fourth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday, February 27, 1950 at 2.30 p.m.

Chairman: Hon. L. D. WILGRESS (Canada)

Subjects discussed:

1. Final Adoption of the Agenda.
2. 1950 Tariff Negotiations.

1. Final Adoption of the Agenda.

Mr. DESAI (India) felt it would be opportune at this stage to adjourn the discussion and ask the Delegation of the United States whether they would be prepared to accept the proposals of the Delegation of the United Kingdom or of the Delegation of New Zealand. As representative of India he would prefer the New Zealand proposal that items 14 and 15 be combined into one item concerned with the examination of Quantitative Restrictions, without any mention of restrictions on imports or on exports. He feared the consequences of bringing such a matter before parliaments, thus jeopardising the delicate balance insituted by the provisional application of the Agreement. Contracting Parties had to face the fact that there was a section of opinion believing that the function of the Agreement was to prevent the development of under-developed areas. Nothing should be done to give support to this opinion.

Mr. EVANS (United States of America) appreciated the effort which had been made to meet their desire, but thought that both the proposals of the United Kingdom and of New Zealand inadvertently failed to reach the heart of the matter. He thought the present meeting was perhaps too large to consider matters of form, and agreed to an adjournment in order to give the United States time to recast their proposals, bearing in mind the points raised in the meeting.

Mr. JAYASURIYA (Ceylon) said he had no objection to the proposal of adjournment, but wished to record his disagreement with an earlier statement made by the United States Delegate that the terms of Article XXV were sufficiently broad to cover a general examination of export restrictions.

It was agreed by the Contracting Parties to adjourn the discussion of items 14 and 15 until the parties agreed to a formulation which could be considered at the following meeting, in the course of which the discussion of item 13 would also be resumed.

2. 1950 Tariff Negotiations.

(ii) Communication from Czechoslovakia re participation of Western Germany (GATT/TN.2/4 Add. 1.)

The meeting agreed to the request of Dr. BENES (Czechoslovakia) to postpone the discussion until the end of the week, pending the arrival of the Head of the Czechoslovak Delegation.

(iv) Determination of Venue (GATT/CP.4/2 and Addenda).

The Executive Secretary informed the meeting that the information supplied in respect of Geneva as a possible site of the 1950 Tariff Negotiations was rather less complete than that supplied for the other proposed sites because the uncertainty about international activities in Geneva in the early part of 1951 made it difficult to obtain firm commitments. He added that the Assistant Director of the European Office of United Nations would now be in a better position, on the strength of the latest information, to explain what facilities could be provided by the Palais des Nations.

The meeting agreed to hear the Assistant Director of the European Office.

Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) then illustrated the advantages of Torquay, insisting on the care with which the site had been chosen by the Government of the United Kingdom. He assured the Contracting Parties that his Government would not have made the proposal if they had not been sure that Torquay would meet with the full approval of the participants in the Tariff Negotiations.

Mr. EVANS (Assistant Director of the European Office of the United Nations) said that since the Tariff Negotiations had been held in the Palais des Nations in 1947, available office space had been much curtailed. When first approached by the Executive Secretary they had replied that some eighty offices would be available for the period of the negotiations, subject to approval from headquarters in Lake Success. Headquarters, however, replied that, owing to the transfer of the Secretariat to the new building which would be taking

place in early 1951, it was planned to hold in Geneva all conferences normally scheduled in New York at that time. They were even doubtful about the possibility of accommodating the Tariff Negotiations late in 1950, but ruled out the possibility of space being available in early 1951.

Mr. PHILIP (France) said that his Government had no candidate to propose officially. He wished, however, to support the proposal made by the Municipality of Cannes. He thought Cannes had the advantage over Torquay as being more readily accessible by air, land and sea, and that it enjoyed the very important advantage of having all offices in one building; as the experience of Annecy had shewn, this was a most important factor.

Mr. DI NOLA (Italy) said that the essential characteristics of a site for such a long conference were an agreeable climate, the combination of all offices in one large building, easy communications and comfort. All these advantages were enjoyed by Bordighera. The site had been carefully studied by the Italian Government, who - he wished to make it clear - had not advanced the proposal in a spirit of competition with other contracting parties. His Government was glad to submit their carefully considered offer for election in the event that the sites proposed by contracting parties be found lacking in any of the fundamental requirements.

Mr. COUILLARD (Canada) asked if other possibilities in Geneva had been investigated, and the Deputy Executive Secretary replied that the Authorities of the Canton of Geneva had offered a building which it was thought would be ready in September and would provide some 110 offices.

A secret ballot on the choice of the site for the 1950 negotiations gave the following result:

Present and voting 19.

Votes:

Torquay 12
Cannes 4
Geneva 2
Monaco 1
Abstention 1.

Accordingly, Torquay was chosen as the venue for the 1950 Tariff Negotiations.

(iii) Proposal by the United Kingdom to revalidate the Geneva and Annecy Schedules (GATT/CP.4/7)

Mr. SHACKLE (United Kingdom) referred to the two letters from the Government of the United Kingdom reproduced in document GATT/CP.4/7, and drew the meeting's attention, in particular, to the note appearing on page 2 of the same document which gave the reason which had motivated his Government.

Two methods of preserving these Schedules which constituted the foundations of the Agreement had suggested themselves. They could be re-negotiated item by item or they could be re-validated as a whole. The first method was very cumbersome and might result in upsetting the balance which had been struck so laboriously. It was the second alternative which they considered more desirable. Some items might be re-negotiated, but he assumed, and hoped, that they would be very few. He suggested for discussion the draft protocol annexed to the document mentioned, which might be brought into effect for the countries which accepted it, when approved by a two-thirds majority. The protocol could stand open for acceptance after the Torquay negotiations had begun.

The meeting adjourned at 5.30 p.m.