

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED  
LIMITED B  
GATT/CP.4/SR.18  
23 March 1950  
ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

CONTRACTING PARTIES  
Fourth Session

## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE EIGHTEENTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on  
Thursday, March 23, 1950, at 2.30 p.m.

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

- Subjects Discussed:
1. 1950 Tariff Negotiations - other Plans and Arrangements.
  2. Budget Report for 1949/50.

### 1. 1950 Tariff Negotiations - Other Plans and Arrangements (GATT/TN.2/8 and Add.1)

The CHAIRMAN informed the meeting that in reply to the questionnaire contained in GATT/TN.2/7, (1) 17 countries had submitted information which showed that 152 lists of products had been exchanged, (2) lists of requests to 111 countries, in addition to the 152 to which lists of products had been sent, would be submitted, and (3) tariffs and statistics were being requested in 78 other cases. From the replies received it would appear that some 300 negotiations at Torquay could already be considered possible.

Mr. GRADY (United States) said that the absence of the United States lists of products was due to the procedure which had to be followed and that they would be available shortly.

Mr. DESAI (India) explained that while it appeared from document GATT/TN.2/8/Add.1 that the United States was the only country with which his Government wished to exchange lists of requests, other lists were being prepared and would be sent before June 15th.

The CHAIRMAN felt it was evident - from the information received so far - that the tariff negotiations at Torquay would be very extensive. He urged the delegates to do everything possible to expedite the forwarding of customs tariffs and trade statistics. He recalled that two points had been left in abeyance regarding plans for Torquay, first the date by which other countries should submit lists of requests on Germany in view of the delay before the new German tariff would be ready, and second, the suggestion of the German representative that an extension of time should be given to Germany for the submission of its lists of requests to those Governments, sending them lists of requests without having sent lists of products. He recalled the suggestion which had been made that other governments negotiating with Germany should have a further period beyond 15 June for the submission of lists, and that since the German government had received the customs tariff and trade statistics of other countries, it should not be necessary to defer the submission by Germany of lists beyond 15 July.

Mr. IMHOFF (Germany) stated that his government has accepted willingly the invitation to take part in the next tariff negotiations to lower tariff barriers on the principle of reciprocity, and that the Federal Government, since last December, had been removing quantitative restrictions. At present, as he had explained at an earlier meeting, a special committee was working out a new tariff and it was not the intention of the German Government to introduce a high protectionist customs policy. The German Customs Tariff Commission was working on the principle that a certain measure of protection was necessary, but, in comparison with other countries their tariff would be only moderately protective. This depended on other countries granting them similar treatment, and on substantial reductions to be granted by countries with high tariffs in order to balance his country's concessions. Only if sufficient concessions for German export goods were granted by contracting parties would it be possible for Germany to increase its exports sufficiently to eliminate the deficit in Germany's balance of trade and payments in the more or less near future. Mr. Imhoff said that it would be regrettable if other countries took the occasion of the re-appearance on the market of German goods to increase their duties for such goods. He recalled that at the meeting on 14 March, he had stated that the Federal Republic had agreed to postpone the date for acceptance of the lists of requests of other countries to 15 July and had asked that they should similarly be permitted to delay sending their lists of requests to such countries. On that occasion the delegate of the United Kingdom replied that there was no reason for a corresponding delay in sending requests by Germany. Mr. Imhoff wished to say, however, that his government might find it necessary, upon the receipt of requests after the date of 15 June, to send lists to other countries, and he felt sure that the Contracting Parties would not wish his government to be in the position of having to refuse any list. He also mentioned the difficulty his government would have in supplying teams of negotiators for the 14 countries to which they had submitted lists of requests, and said it would hardly be possible to form teams to negotiate with all the countries represented at Torquay. Lists of requests had not yet been submitted to some countries because customs tariffs and statistics had not been received from 29 countries. Mr. Imhoff, while regretting that the German customs tariff was not ready, said that there was also uncertainty about tariffs of some other countries. Furthermore, if a contracting party found it necessary to modify a concession contained in the existing Schedules, a notification could be sent to the contracting party with which the concession was initially negotiated, at the opening of the tariff negotiations or even later. The obligation upon his Government to make known its offers on the first day of the Torquay meeting would place them in a position less favourable than that of the contracting parties whose Geneva and Annecy lists would still be subject to modification. Their lists of requests and their offers would therefore both be on an uncertain basis. He felt that the stipulations of the memorandum of November 1st 1949 were more onerous than the conditions which had been laid down for the Annecy acceding governments, and that this should not be the case.

He expressed his satisfaction with the draft Resolution for the maintenance of the assured life of the Geneva and Annecy concessions and felt they should trust in their decision as reducing the element of uncertainty to which he had referred.

Mr. PHILIP (France) wished to make it clear that the French government was examining any reductions in rates of duties which could be agreed to in the course of the Torquay negotiations. The committee set up for this purpose might propose exceptional upward re-adjustments of small importance, but the French Delegation would negotiate in Torquay on the present tariff.

Mr. SHACKLE (United Kingdom) thought it desirable that they should receive the German request lists by 15 June so that preparations could advance as rapidly as possible. The German government had had his government's tariff and statistics for some time and they would like to receive the German requests with the least possible delay. However, in view of the considerations which the representative of Germany had put forward, his government would not insist on rigid adherence to the date of 15 June and would accept requests until 15 July, assuming, however, that the great bulk of requests would be forwarded by Germany by 15 June.

Mr. NICOL (New Zealand) hoped the contracting parties would allow some degree of latitude in the meeting of deadlines.

Mr. IMHOFF (Germany) thanked the representatives of France and the United Kingdom for their statements.

Mr. BOEKSTAL (Netherlands) stated that his government had sent its tariff and statistics to Germany in November, but up to now had received no products lists. In view of the large volume of trade between his country and Germany, he wished to ask the representative of Germany the reason for this omission.

Mr. IMHOFF (Germany) stated that his government had not intended sending a list of requests to the Netherlands, but that, if the Netherlands wished to negotiate with them, his government would make requests after the receipt of the Netherlands' lists.

The Contracting Parties approved the proposal that in view of the late publication of the German tariff, requests on Germany might be sent up to July 15th, Germany to have also until July 15th in the case of countries who had not submitted their lists by June 15th.

Mr. BOEKSTAL (Netherlands) asked if it would be possible to have some explanation of the new German tariff before the Torquay negotiations, and also enquired as to the date on which the tariff would be forwarded.

Mr. IMHOFF (Germany) replied that he thought a written explanation of the tariff could be sent and that the new tariff will be ready by 15 May.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY asked representatives to inform their governments of the importance of estimating at the earliest possible moment the size of delegations which would be sent to Torquay; the amount and type of hotel accommodation and, most important, the amount of office accommodation required. He hoped shortly after the session closed to enter into discussions with the United Kingdom authorities to work out administrative arrangements for allocating office and hotel accommodation, and would communicate these arrangements to contracting parties as early as possible. In the meantime it would be helpful if contracting parties would refrain from making individual arrangements and conform to the procedure which would be suggested after consultation with the United Kingdom authorities.

The CHAIRMAN strongly endorsed the suggestion made by the Executive Secretary. He also requested delegations to inform the Secretariat of the correct address to which request lists should be sent as, in the absence of any other address, such lists were sent to the Foreign Ministry which sometimes resulted in long delays.

## 2. Budget Report for 1949/50

The CHAIRMAN referring to the Budget Report for 1949/50 outlined the recommendations contained in paragraphs 5 and 6 of Budget/6 and requested the adoption of these recommendations. In connection with contributions he stated that the Deputy Executive Secretary had asked him to announce that since the distribution of Budget/6, information had been received from Czechoslovakia, India and New Zealand, regarding the payment of their 1950 contributions, and from Italy regarding the payment of their 1949 contribution. He drew the attention of the meeting to Annex I containing the Revised Budget Estimates for 1950, and Annex II containing the Revised Scale of Contributions for 1950, remarking that the latter should be read in conjunction with document GATT/CP.4/9/Add.2 dealing with the contribution of Indonesia.

Mr. EVANS (United States) requested confirmation that the contribution of the United States was not affected by the revised scale.

The DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY in his reply referred to Budget/4/Rev.1 giving the Scale of Contributions approved at the Third Session, and confirmed that the United States' contribution remained the same.

Mr. SHACKLE (United Kingdom) stated that his government would shortly make payment for their order of Annex Schedules, and that their 1950 contribution would be paid soon after 5th April 1950.

The recommendations contained in paragraphs 5 and 6 of Budget/6 were adopted.

The meeting adjourned at 4 p.m.

