

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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CONTRACTING PARTIES
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MODIFICATION OF SCHEDULES CONSEQUENT UPON ADHERENCE TO THE BRUSSELS CONVENTION FOR TARIFF NOMENCLATURE

There is circulated below a letter from the European Customs Union Study Group drawing attention to possible minor adjustments of tariff schedules to the General Agreement consequent upon the eventual adherence of contracting parties to the Brussels Convention on Tariff Nomenclature. It is suggested that these adjustments could be dealt with by reporting them to all of the contracting parties, and that an interval be accorded for any contracting party to register objections. In the absence of objections the adjustments would be deemed approved unanimously by the Contracting Parties and this approval would be formalized by means of a protocol of rectifications.

Letter from the European Customs Union Study Group

Brussels,
23 September 1950.

"You are no doubt aware that the work initiated by the European Customs Union Study Group has resulted, inter alia, in the drawing up of a common tariff nomenclature known as the 1950 Brussels Nomenclature.

At its last session, the Study Group recommended that Governments should adopt this nomenclature with a view to embodying it in an international convention which would ensure its common application for the classification of products in national tariffs.

During the same session (July 1950) the Study Group has entrusted me, on behalf of those of the participating countries which are Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, with the task of expounding to you whatever difficulties might arise from the need of these countries that would adhere to the Convention on the common Nomenclature to modify the description of the products included in their schedules annexed to the Geneva and Lomé arrangements, with a view to presenting the concessions previously granted by them in such wording as would conform with the Brussels Nomenclature.

In making such readjustments in their tariffs, countries participating in the Convention would of course wish not to make them too complicated, as this would be contrary to their basic objective, which is to assist both the members of the Group and other countries in matters relating to international trade.

There is little likelihood, however, that the modifications made in the description of products will entail some minor readjustments in the rates of tariff duties; it being understood, of course, that whatever increases might be made would be counterbalanced by the lowering of other rates so as to maintain the existing general tariff levels.

I have the honour to request you kindly to inform the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade of the difficulties which might arise for the countries that would adhere to the Convention on the Tariff Nomenclature."