

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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Preferential Arrangements  
Among Developing Countries  
Negotiated in GATT

COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Summary of Discussion at Twenty-Seventh Meeting  
Held on 7 July 1980

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Committee of Participating Countries provided for in the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries held its twenty-seventh meeting on 7 July 1980 under the Chairmanship of Mr. E. Ponce (Peru).

2. The draft agenda circulated in document CPC/W/78 was adopted.

Accession of Argentina

3. On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman welcomed the delegation of Argentina to the meeting. He recalled that, as indicated in the Summary of Discussions at its last session (CPC/54), the Committee had agreed on procedures for the negotiations expected to take place between Argentina and interested participating countries in the context of Argentina's application for accession to the Protocol. These procedures basically provided for consultations, the exchange of information and requests and offers etc. within an indicative time-frame. The Committee had also noted that the services of the secretariat would be available to delegations, on request, to provide such assistance as might be required with respect to Argentina's application for accession. The Chairman suggested that the Committee might review recent developments in the light of the procedural guidelines it had established, with a view to providing an opportunity for members to offer any comments or suggestions they might wish with respect to this matter.

4. The representative of Argentina stated that since the last meeting of the Committee, his delegation had held a series of bilateral consultations with a number of interested participating countries aimed at exchanging information and providing clarifications on the tariff treatment and import régimes for products of trade interest. In this connexion, certain participating countries had submitted to Argentina request lists for concessions. Noting that some lists were more concrete than others, he said that they were at present being examined in the Ministry of Economics in Buenos Aires. Argentina had also presented to

participating countries an offer list in connexion with its entrance fee and was awaiting reactions in order to move forward as quickly as possible. He stressed once again that his country's objective was to go beyond the payment of an entrance fee and negotiate with interested countries an exchange of additional concessions that would provide an effective basis for increasing mutual trade in the framework of the Protocol. He was optimistic that the negotiations for the accession of Argentina to the Protocol would be carried out expeditiously and reach a satisfactory result.

5. Several members of the Committee recalled that they had welcomed Argentina's application for accession to the Protocol and reiterated their interest in promoting increased trade relations with Argentina in the framework of the Protocol. Consultations carried out so far had been very positive and constructive. They suggested that the process of negotiations might be intensified with a view to reaching an early conclusion. Some members said that they had already submitted preliminary lists of products or request lists to Argentina and were looking forward to receiving Argentina's responses and request list. One member said that the items contained in the initial Argentinian offer were not of significant interest to his country. His delegation had, however, submitted a request list to Argentina some time ago and he hoped that further bilateral consultations would serve to identify concrete possibilities for further trade expansion between his country and Argentina.

6. The Committee took note of developments in the light of the procedures that had been adopted to provide a basis for consultations and negotiations concerning the accession of Argentina to the Protocol and urged interested participating countries to intensify the process with a view to its early completion. In the light of progress in the negotiations, the secretariat could be expected to prepare a draft Protocol for the accession of Argentina to which the relevant schedules of concessions would be attached, as well as a Decision concerning Argentina's accession to the Protocol, for consideration by the Committee once the negotiations had been completed. The Committee expected that the secretariat would continue to provide technical assistance upon request by individual members to facilitate their participation in the accession negotiations.

#### Expansion of trade among developing countries

7. The Chairman referred to paragraph 11 of the Summary of Discussions at the last meeting (CPC/54) and said that at that meeting the Committee had taken note of the progress report on the continuing technical work being undertaken by the secretariat in connexion with the expansion of trade among developing countries. The Committee had agreed to revert to this item at the current meeting.

8. At the invitation of the Chairman, the representative of the secretariat said that this was a standing item on the Committee's agenda, to provide an opportunity for members to raise any matter concerning the expansion of trade among developing countries of interest to participants in the Protocol. With respect to the technical work programme which had been continuing at the request of interested developing countries since the ad hoc consultations in October 1979, he drew attention to document LDC/TS/51 - Trade Flows Among Developing Countries - Statistical Tabulations of Exports and Imports. This document was based on the most recent available United Nations statistics which in a significant number of cases covered the year 1978. The tabulations attempted to identify those products which in a recent year and for a given country figured significantly in their trade with other developing countries. Data was provided on exports to or imports from the world, all developed countries and all developing countries, with a breakdown of up to ten main developing country markets or suppliers. He also indicated that since the ad hoc consultations in October 1979, some fifteen developing countries had asked to be included in the secretariat's technical work programme on the expansion of trade among developing countries, thus increasing the number of participants to some sixty-five to seventy countries. In the light of available resources, the secretariat would be carrying out the relevant country studies. This work did not of course prejudice what future activities might be taken up in connexion with the expansion of trade among developing countries.

9. The Committee took note of the information provided and agreed to maintain this item on its agenda for future meetings.

#### Reporting procedures

10. The Chairman said that a secretariat note on information requirements for the annual report had been circulated as CPC/W/79. He drew attention to paragraph 5 of the note inviting delegations to provide the requested data no later than 10 September so as to give sufficient time for the secretariat to prepare a draft for consideration and finalization by the Committee at its end of September meeting. The document noted that the report could be expected to be taken up by the Committee on Trade and Development at its end of year meeting in connexion with the review of the operation of the Enabling Clause for which it had primary responsibility. The representative of the secretariat recalled the provisions of the Enabling Clause concerning preferential trading arrangements among developing countries and said that the Annual Report of the Committee, in the regular format, could be submitted to the Committee on Trade and Development which had reached the understanding that reviews of the operation of the Enabling Clause would be co-ordinated with the Committee's end-of-year reviews of the implementation of Part IV of the General Agreement.

11. The Committee took note of the information provided and agreed to invite all participating countries to forward the statistical data required for the Annual Report to the secretariat at the earliest possible date and in any case no later than 10 September 1980.

#### Next meeting

12. The Chairman said that in accordance with usual procedures, the date of the next regular quarterly meeting of the Committee would be fixed by the Chairman in consultation with members of the Committee and the secretariat.