

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

CPC/58

30 October 1980

Special Distribution

Preferential Arrangements
Among Developing Countries
Negotiated in GATT

COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Summary of Discussions at Twenty-Eighth Meeting
Held on 20 October 1980

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Committee of Participating Countries of the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries held its twenty-eighth meeting on 20 October 1980 under the Chairmanship of Miss E. Arciniega (Peru).
2. The draft agenda circulated in document CPC/W/80 was adopted.

Item 1: Accession of Argentina

3. The Chairman welcomed the delegation of Argentina to the meeting on behalf of members of the Committee. She recalled that, as indicated in paragraphs 3-5 of the Summary of Discussions (CPC/57) at its last meeting, the Committee had taken note of developments concerning Argentina's application for accession to the Protocol in the light of the procedures for consultations and negotiations that had been adopted and urged interested participating countries to intensify the process with a view to its early completion. In this respect, it was understood that contacts between Argentina and a number of participating countries had been taking place. She suggested that the Committee may wish to review developments with a view to speeding up the negotiating process to the extent possible so as to bring to a satisfactory conclusion the accession of Argentina to the Protocol at an early date.
4. The representative of Argentina informed the meeting that, since the last meeting of the Committee, close bilateral contacts had been maintained between the delegation of Argentina and other interested delegations on the subject of concessions to be exchanged on the basis of request lists and offers. The authorities concerned in Buenos Aires had conveyed to the delegation of Argentina their reaction to some of the proposals and requests that had been received in this context. The pre-occupation of the authorities in Buenos Aires with certain important regional meetings had prevented more rapid progress in this matter. The process was, however, expected to be accelerated now. The delegation of Argentina reaffirmed its interest and desire to complete these negotiations successfully as early as possible and would make every effort to this end.

5. The Committee took note of recent developments relating to Argentina's application for accession to the Protocol and expressed the hope that the negotiations would be completed at an early date.

Item 2: Expansion of Trade Among Developing Countries

6. The Chairman referred to paragraphs 7-9 of the Summary of Discussions at the last meeting (CPC/57) and observed that, at that meeting, the Committee had taken note of the information provided on the continuing technical work being undertaken by the secretariat in connexion with the expansion of trade among developing countries. The Committee had also agreed to maintain this item on its agenda for future meetings in order to provide an opportunity for members to review further developments in this regard or to offer comments or suggestions on the broad subject of the expansion of trade among developing countries.

7. The Committee agreed to maintain this item on its agenda for future meetings.

Item 3: Annual Report

8. The Chairman recalled that, at the last meeting, the Committee had taken note of the information requirements for the annual report. As indicated in document CPC/W/79 and in the information provided by the representative of the secretariat, the provisions of the Enabling Clause concerning preferential trading arrangements among developing countries provided a standing legal basis in GATT for such arrangements. Thus, an appropriate reference to the Enabling Clause had been included in the draft seventh annual report which had been circulated as CPC/W/81. As had been customary practice, this report will be taken up by the Committee on Trade and Development at its end of year meeting.

9. The Chairman observed that the draft report was essentially factual in character. Aggregate statistics of trade subject to concessions under the Protocol, from 1975 to 1979, incorporated in the draft, were based upon information provided by eight participating countries. Information in regard to two more participating countries, namely Chile and Yugoslavia, was expected to be received by the secretariat very shortly and would be added to the report before its submission to the Committee on Trade and Development.

10. A member of the Committee urged participating countries that had not already done so to make available the required statistical information as soon as possible, so that the Annual Report would present as complete a picture of concessional trade flows under the Protocol as possible.

11. One other member observed that as Greece had withdrawn from the Protocol in June 1980, it would be useful if statistical tables in the report could cover concessional imports by Greece for the year 1979.

12. The draft report (CPC/W/31) as amended was adopted and the secretariat invited to circulate it for consideration at the forthcoming meeting of the Committee on Trade and Development.

Item 4: Derestriction of documents

13. The Chairman recalled that at its twenty-first meeting held on 25 July 1978 (CPC/46), the Committee of Participating Countries adopted guidelines for derestriction of documents contained in document CPC/W/60, Annex II, paragraph 3, subject to the provision that derestrictions would be considered annually, having as background a listing of documents to be considered for derestriction. On the basis of these guidelines, a list of CPC/ and CPC/W/ documents which would appear to be eligible for derestriction had been circulated as CPC/W/32 for consideration by the Committee. The Committee agreed that documents in the CPC/ and CPC/W/ series listed in document CPC/W/32 be derestricted.

Next meeting

14. The Chairman indicated that the date for the next meeting of the Committee would be fixed by the Chairman in consultation with delegations, in accordance with the usual procedures.

Item 5: Rotation of officers

15. Recalling that Peru's term of office had come to an end, the Chairman thanked members for their assistance and spirit of co-operation in carrying out the activities of the Committee. She stated that in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Committee, the representative of the Republic of Korea would assume the Chairmanship of the Committee for the forthcoming period.