

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

CPC/60
23 July 1981

Special Distribution

Preferential Arrangements
Among Developing Countries
Negotiated in GATT

COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Summary of Discussions at Thirtieth Meeting
held on 30 June 1981

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Committee of Participating Countries provided for in the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries held its thirtieth meeting on 30 June 1981 under the Chairmanship of Mr. H. Hyun (Republic of Korea).
2. The draft agenda circulated in document CPC/W/84 was adopted.

Accession of Argentina

3. The Chairman recalled that, as indicated in paragraphs 3-6 of the Summary of Discussions of its previous meeting (CPC/59), the Committee had taken 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. In this respect, it was understood that contacts between Argentina and a number of participating countries had been taking place. He suggested that the Committee may wish to review developments and exchange views on matters relating to this agenda item.
4. The representative of Argentina informed members that since the last meeting of the Committee his authorities had received new requests from two participating countries; these were at present being examined in Buenos Aires. In stating that Argentina was reviewing the content of its initial offer, he indicated that his country hoped to conclude the negotiating process as soon as possible. This would be facilitated if clarifications of requests made by some participating countries which had been sought were transmitted to his delegation.
5. A number of members welcomed the information provided by the delegation of Argentina on developments since the previous meeting of the Committee and indicated that their authorities wished to conclude the negotiations for Argentina's accession to the Protocol on a mutually satisfactory basis without undue delay.

6. The Committee noted the intention of interested countries to continue their bilateral contacts with a view to completing the negotiating process relating to Argentina's accession to the Protocol and agreed to revert to this matter at the next meeting of the Committee in the light of developments which had taken place.

Expansion of trade among developing countries

7. The Chairman referred to paragraphs 7-10 of the Summary of Discussions of the February 1981 meeting (CPC/59) and said that at that meeting the Committee had agreed to maintain this item on its agenda. He informed the Committee that, as requested, the secretariat had completed on the basis of available United Nations' statistics, tabulations of exports and imports for individual participating countries aimed at identifying complementarities in trade among members of the Protocol, taking into account products subject to tariff concessions covered by the Protocol. It was expected that these tabulations might be helpful to participating countries in considering a more effective use of the Protocol and in identifying possible approaches to the expansion of their mutual trade.

8. Several members of the Committee expressed appreciation for the technical work carried out by the secretariat and indicated that the material was being examined by their authorities. One member recalled that, as reflected in paragraph 9 of the note on proceedings of the previous meeting of the Committee (CPC/59), it had been generally agreed that participating countries so wishing might enter into a process of exchanging information, seeking clarifications, etc., on products of interest to them on a bilateral basis. While his country was prepared to participate in discussions for this purpose, no such requests had been received from other members up to the time of the meeting. One other member indicated that he expected shortly to receive instructions from his Government to enter into consultations with other participating countries in order to examine the possibilities for the expansion of trade in products of interest to his country within the framework of the Protocol. One member, in reiterating the importance of promoting the expansion of trade among developing countries through the enlargement of the Protocol, suggested that ways should be further explored for giving impetus to this objective taking into account the procedures which had been suggested at the previous meeting.

9. In response to a question, the representative of the secretariat indicated that the statistical tabulations containing trade flow data had been prepared for those countries for which United Nations' statistics were available. Where such information was not available, it might be possible to provide information on exports for a particular country based on the extraction of relevant data on imports by other participating countries. This possibility could be examined taking into account the secretariat's ongoing work programme.

10. In his summing-up, the Chairman noted the positive interest that continued to be expressed by a number of delegations in exploring possibilities for the enlargement of the Protocol. He suggested that, as proposed at the previous meeting of the Committee, every effort should be made to utilize the process of informal contacts among interested participating countries with a view to exchanging information and seeing how work in this area might best be carried forward without undue delay.

Annual Report

11. The Chairman recalled that a secretariat note on reporting procedures for the Annual Report had been circulated as CPC/W/85. He drew attention to paragraph 5 of the note inviting delegations to provide the requested data not later than 10 September so as to allow sufficient time for the secretariat to prepare a draft of the report for consideration and finalization by the Committee at its end-of-September meeting. The document noted that the report would be taken up by the Committee on Trade and Development at its end-of-year session in connexion with the review of the Enabling Clause.

12. One member suggested that as Greece had not withdrawn from the Protocol until the end of June 1980, the Greek authorities might be invited to provide the relevant data for this year's Annual Report so as to ensure as complete a picture as possible on the coverage of the Arrangement.

13. The Committee invited all participating countries to provide the statistical data required for the Annual Report at the earliest possible date and in any case not later than 10 September 1981.

Next meeting

14. The Chairman indicated that the date for the next meeting of the Committee would be fixed in consultation with delegations and the secretariat in accordance with usual practice.

Rotation of officers

15. Recalling that Korea'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. He stated that in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, the representative of Romania would assume the Chairmanship of the Committee and the representative of Turkey, the Vice-Chairmanship, for the forthcoming period.