

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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Committee on Trade and Development
Eighth Session
Punta del Este, Uruguay
16-20 January 1967

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR SESSION

The Committee has agreed that its next session should be held at Punta del Este in Uruguay from 16 to 20 January 1967, and has prepared a provisional agenda for the session (COM.TD/31).

This agenda has been drawn up on the basis of the general consensus that the meeting in Uruguay will present a major opportunity for reviewing the implementation of Part IV in the light of the progress achieved within the framework of the Kennedy Round and for the formulation of the future work programme of the Committee in the field of trade and development.

The present note by the secretariat is intended to provide background information on the individual items on the agenda, for reference by delegations.

1. Review of the implementation of Part IV

(a) Participation of developing countries in the Kennedy Round

At the seventh session of the Committee, held in October 1966, the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Participation of Developing Countries of the Trade Negotiations Committee made a statement describing the current situation of the negotiations with particular reference to points of interest to developing countries. The text of that statement has been circulated as COM.TD/W/31 and the discussion which took place on the basis of that statement is summarized in the secretariat note on that meeting (COM.TD/30).

It is expected that between now and the end of January 1967, the bilateral negotiations and the multilateral consultations on various sectors, including the agricultural and tropical products sectors, will have made significant progress. It is also expected that by that date a more precise picture will have been available of the actual state of the bilateral negotiations. The Committee might, therefore, review the situation on the basis of a further report by the Chairman of the Sub-Committee on the Participation of Developing Countries with a view to giving appropriate impetus and support to the final phase of the negotiations.

(b) Other developments relevant to the operation of Part IV

Under the reporting procedures adopted by the Committee for the review of the implementation of Part IV at least one major review should be held each year (BISD, thirteenth supplement, pages 79-80, and COM.TD/24, paragraph 10), and the Committee has decided that the next such comprehensive review should be conducted at the Punta del Este session.

The scope of such a review has been decided upon by the Committee and set out in its report of March 1965 (see BISD, thirteenth supplement, pages 79-80). The scope of information to be supplied by governments for the purpose of the review has been further defined in the "guidelines for the submission of notifications" contained in paragraph 10 of COM.TD/24. Contracting parties have been asked to submit the fullest possible information to the secretariat in accordance with these guidelines.

In March 1965 the Committee agreed that in order to keep under review developments in world trade, with special reference to the rate of growth of the trade of less-developed countries, there should be an annual discussion of the GATT secretariat annual report on international trade (see BISD, thirteenth supplement, page 80). At its last meeting the Committee noted a suggestion by its Chairman that at the Punta del Este meeting, the Committee should take the opportunity to review the general trends in international trade of interest to developing countries, using the report on "International Trade 1965" as a basis for discussion (COM.TD/30).

(c) Future work of the Committee in the implementation of Part IV

The Committee was appointed by the CONTRACTING PARTIES in March 1965, in pursuance of the provisions of paragraph 2(f) of Article XXVIII, and will by January 1967 have been in operation for nearly two years. In the light of its activities, members of the Committee may wish to discuss proposals on its future work programme. In 1966, especially in the second half of the year, the Committee has generally focused its attention on problems directly related to the Kennedy Round of trade negotiations, in order to achieve the best results from the opportunity presented by these negotiations. Now that the negotiations are approaching their final phase, it has been suggested that the Committee should direct its attention to the longer-term programme of work, bearing in mind activities that may need to be taken up or further pursued after the completion of the Kennedy Round.

It may be noted, inter alia, that the Committee has been asked to consider whether the Group on International Commodity Problems should be convened in the near future (COM.TD/30).

2. Expansion of trade among developing countries

On the proposal of the Committee, the CONTRACTING PARTIES have agreed that developing countries should, through discussions among themselves and making use of the informal group of developing countries in GATT, explore the possibilities of promoting trade negotiations between these countries aimed at expanding their mutual trade. At the October meeting of the Committee, the Chairman of the informal group made an oral report on the progress made in the group and on the current state of the negotiations among developing countries. The governments actually engaged in the negotiations may consider that the further progress made between now and January 1967 could usefully be brought to the attention of the Committee (see COM.TD/30). It may be noted that the progress achieved in certain aspects of the negotiations between developing countries will also be relevant in a review of the contributions made by developing countries to the objectives of the Kennedy Round of negotiations.

The Group on the Expansion of Trade Among Developing Countries has also referred to the informal group for preliminary examination certain other, non-tariff measures proposed by contracting parties (see COM.TD/D/4), and this action has been noted by the Committee (see COM.TD/30). The Committee, at its eighth session, may wish to take note of such further developments as may be reported to it. It may also wish in this regard to take note of the relevant studies and discussions in the UNCTAD.

3. Preferences to be granted by developed countries to developing countries

The secretariat has, in its submission to the last session of the Committee (COM.TD/28), referred to the studies and discussions of this subject in the UNCTAD and in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. This item has been included on the agenda on the assumption that the Committee will consider it useful to hold a discussion on certain aspects of the question that are relevant to its activities.

4. Reports by the Groups on Residual Restrictions and Legal Amendments

At its last meeting, the Committee urged once again that contracting parties applying residual restrictions on products of export interest to developing countries give urgent consideration to the possibility of removing them and notify the secretariat of any action taken or target dates adopted by the end of 1966. It was agreed that the Group on Residual Restrictions should meet to consider, on the basis of proposals submitted by contracting parties, the question of adequacy of, and appropriate improvements in, the existing procedures to deal with the remaining restrictions.

The Group on Legal Amendments was similarly instructed at the last meeting of the Committee to resume the examination of the two outstanding proposals left in abeyance at the twenty-third session.

The Committee has agreed to keep the question of residual restrictions under review and take it up at the January session in the light of any reports from contracting parties, and of the reports of the two Groups (COM.TD/30).

5. Export promotion and marketing

The Committee has agreed that it will review the activities of the GATT in this field with a view to making appropriate recommendations on the future orientation of the work of the Trade Centre in its relation to the export promotion and marketing needs of developing countries including the developing countries of Latin America.

6. Trade and aid studies

The Committee has agreed to discuss arrangements for the implementation of the provision of paragraph 2(c) of Article XXXVIII in future. The secretariat expects to report orally on the further development of its work proposed in this area including studies in hand.