

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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THE OPERATION OF PART IV OF THE GENERAL AGREEMENT

Statements by Governments

Addendum

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

1. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago expects the developed countries to provide assurances, by more flexible approaches to the provisions of the Agreement, that they recognize the intention of all contracting parties, through Part IV, to modify the most-favoured-nation principle in favour of developing countries.
2. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is of the view that the General Agreement, including Part IV, still does not adequately meet the needs of developing contracting parties with very small domestic markets which are attempting to implement programmes and policies of economic development designed to raise the general standard of living of their people.
3. Specific areas of concern to Trinidad and Tobago are:

COCOA

4. The lack of an international agreement greatly inhibits the expansion of Trinidad and Tobago exports of this commodity. With greater access to world markets and stabilization of prices through an international agreement, Trinidad and Tobago would be able to expand cocoa production considerably. High customs duties, internal fiscal charges, and restraints on consumption specifically applied by certain developed countries (e.g. the European Economic Community countries, Japan, Switzerland) to cocoa beans and cocoa semi-processed products, have also prevented the expansion of the cocoa industry of Trinidad and Tobago.

CITRUS

5. Trinidad and Tobago's citrus industry has been seriously affected by restrictions imposed by the New Zealand Government on its imports of citrus juices. Formerly Trinidad and Tobago sold some 25,000 cartons of grapefruit, orange and blended orange and grapefruit juices on the New Zealand market annually. With the imposition of restrictions, only blended orange and grapefruit juice is admitted, and even then only under licence. Apart from the considerable reduction in quantity which is admitted into New Zealand, Trinidad and Tobago's citrus juices are faced with a high import duty of 32½ per cent.

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RUM AND AMMONIA

6. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has noted with sympathy the Report of the Working Party on the United Kingdom Import Deposits Scheme and accepts its conclusion. However, it has to be pointed out that the Scheme is having a damaging effect on Trinidad and Tobago's exports of rum and ammonia. It must be seen as a form of import restriction, and is hardly in keeping with the United Kingdom's obligations as a developed country under Part IV of the GATT.

7. Importers of Trinidad and Tobago products in the United Kingdom find it difficult to raise the money to make the advance deposit, and even if they succeed in raising it, the interest rates are so high that the selling price of Trinidad and Tobago's products are forced up, thereby weakening their competitive position with the domestic United Kingdom products.

8. Furthermore, Trinidad and Tobago exports of rum to the United Kingdom are at a rather low level because of the high customs and excise duties, and the additional burden of the Import Deposits Scheme can almost eliminate her exports of rum to that market.

9. Trinidad and Tobago as a small, developing Commonwealth country with a high unemployment rate, is naturally very concerned about any disturbance of its trade in traditional markets. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago, however, hopes that the United Kingdom in keeping with its commitments under Part IV of the GATT, will understand the special difficulties which legislation of this nature poses for countries like Trinidad and Tobago and, indeed for developing countries as a whole and will, in any review of the measure, give special consideration to the interests of these countries.

COTTON TEXTILES

10. The United States Government has imposed restraints on Trinidad and Tobago's exports of certain categories of cotton textiles to the United States (Category 52, blouses, not knit; Category 61, brassieres and other body-supporting garments).

11. The textile industry in Trinidad and Tobago is a labour-intensive industry ideally suited to the needs of a developing country like Trinidad and Tobago, with a serious unemployment problem. The imposition of restraints at uneconomic levels, by the United States Government on Trinidad and Tobago's exports of cotton textiles, has resulted in the severe disruption of the industry, has affected the level of investment in the country, and has caused the cancellation of plans which, had they been implemented, would have had a considerable impact on existing unemployment rates.

12. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago expresses the hope that together with the United States Government, a mutually acceptable solution to the difficulties experienced in the field of cotton textiles can be worked out in keeping with the spirit of Part IV of the GATT.