

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

COM.TD/W/122

21 May 1970

Limited Distribution

Committee on Trade and Development
Resumed Sixteenth Session
26 May 1970

INFORMATIVE NOTE ON THE TARIFF STUDY TO THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

The Tariff Study which is to be completed in the course of this year will contain three summary tabulations. The third of these will be designed with a view to focusing attention on one of the main trading problems encountered by the developing countries, namely on the problem of tariff escalation.

A specific proposal for such presentation of the statistical data has already been elaborated by the secretariat, working in close contact with the interested developing countries, and will be presented, together with a sample tabulation along the proposed lines, to the Expert Group on the Tariff Study on 28 and 29 May. This tabulation utilizes the system of industrial sectors established by the Group of Experts for summary tabulation No. 2. Those sectors in which the distinction could be made have been sub-divided into raw materials, semi-finished manufactures and finished manufactures. Two types of tariff averages have been calculated for the sector as a whole and each of the sub-sectors, and imports entering under each of these average tariffs have been cross-divided into most favoured nation and preferential imports and into imports from other developed and from developing countries. For each of the eleven main import markets comprised by the Tariff Study, and for all of them combined, it will thus be possible to determine (i) the degree of tariff escalation and how it varies from industrial sector to sector, and (ii) how this variation affects the composition of imports from developed and developing countries.

In the view of the secretariat, this proposal observes all the rules of strict comparability insisted upon by the Expert Group, but the technical details will in any case be looked at in the Group. After a definitive version has been agreed upon at its meeting, the secretariat will proceed to tabulate the data so that all three summary tabulations, accompanied by the requisite technical notes, can be submitted to the Industrial Committee before its meeting in early July. After the summer recess the Committee, or a working group which it may establish for that purpose, will thus be in a position to draw appropriate conclusions from these statistics and so to complete the Tariff Study.

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