

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

COM.TD/W/170/Add.7  
3 November 1972

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Committee on Trade and Development

Original: English

## ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS RELEVANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF PART IV

### Addendum

The following information has been received from the delegation of Austria in connexion with the implementation of Part IV.

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In the period under review Austria has further endeavoured to provide possibilities for better market access to developing countries. In carrying out their work the competent Austrian authorities took into account the provisions contained in Part IV of the General Agreement.

The last stage of the tariff concessions negotiated during the Kennedy Round has been implemented on 1 January 1972.

The Austrian Tariff Preference Act entered into force on 1 April 1972. This Act provides for the granting of preferential tariff treatment for all industrial goods of developing countries with the exception of unwrought lead and certain products in the cotton textile field. In the agricultural sector the Act provides for preferential tariff cuts for selected items. These tariff preferences were granted by Austria to all interested developing countries in accordance with the principle of self-election.

Details concerning the Austrian scheme of preferences can be found in the Austrian notification (document L/3797).

In accordance with a recommendation by the Group of Three Austria included bananas into its system of preferences reducing the customs duty for this item to zero and at the same time reduced further the preferential tariff rates for cocoa and tea.

The temporary suspension of the import-equalization tax for tea and coffee has been extended for a further period of time.

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On 1 April 1972 Austria has put into force a "Law concerning imports of handmade products duty free or at a reduced rate of duty with the aim of promoting trade relations with developing countries". This law was established upon request of developing countries in the spirit of Part IV of GATT with the objective of promoting the exports of developing countries in the field of handicrafts.

In the agricultural sector Austria made further efforts to facilitate imports from developing countries through a liberal application of the Austrian import régime.

In the discussion in GATT concerning the forthcoming multilateral trade negotiations envisaged for 1973, Austria took a very positive attitude and hopes that in the framework of these negotiations, through common actions by the countries concerned, substantial results can be achieved in favour of developing countries especially in the agricultural sector and with regard to non-tariff obstacles. During the negotiations concerning the agricultural sector in order to achieve effective results, due consideration should be given to all measures concerning the regulation of the trade of agricultural products.

In the period under review, Austria has neither introduced any new restrictive measure with regard to items which are of importance to developing countries nor increased customs duties on these items.

The still existing restrictions concerning tariff items No. 29.44 - penicillin, tyrothricin and No. 30.03 - medicaments - are applied very liberally by the Austrian authorities. No applications by developing countries for imports of these products were refused in 1971 or 1972.

Austria supported the activities of the International Trade Centre by providing gratuitously an official to the Centre. In accordance with concrete requests of the Trade Centre for responses to certain inquiries, contacts between officials of the Trade Centre and the competent circles of Austrian industry were established.

Furthermore, by making intensive use of the Austrian foreign trade delegations which are located all over the world, information concerning export possibilities into Austria has been provided by Austria to developing countries.

In this connexion special emphasis has been given to indicating the possibilities for the import of handmade products into Austria duty free or at a reduced rate of duty.

In 1972 Austria organized the seventh special course for customs officials from developing countries. Besides that twelve courses for high ranking customs officials from developing countries were given by the Austrian customs administration. It is the objective of these courses to make these officials familiar with the structure and the functioning of the Austrian customs administration, thus providing technical assistance to customs administrations of developing countries.

Bearing in mind the importance of commodity agreements for developing countries Austria continued to participate in existing agreements and negotiations.