

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

Prepared by the Secretariat

Addendum

The following paragraphs summarize certain developments in the multilateral trade negotiations since the issue of COM.TD/W/247.

Group "Safeguards"

At its October meeting, the Group "Safeguards" received a document setting out the views of one developed country on the multilateral safeguard system and heard a number of preliminary comments on the paper. The Group then addressed itself to the specific proposal tabled earlier by one developed country. Comments were made in some detail by a number of delegations on the specific points in this paper and on the proposals for complementary action considered necessary to establish the effective and equitable operation of the safeguard mechanism. Comments were also made on certain other issues, such as whether safeguard action should be taken on a most-favoured-nation or a selective basis. The Group also discussed the proposals submitted by a number of developing countries. The Group agreed to continue its work at its next meeting in February 1977, on the basis of the elements in the specific proposals before it, including the proposals for special and differentiated treatment for developing countries, and the considerations advanced by other delegations.

Sub-Group "Customs Matters"

The Sub-Group, at its meeting in October, had an extensive discussion of possible principles for customs valuation on the basis of a secretariat background paper, during which further explanations were provided and a number of issues were clarified.

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The secretariat has been asked to revise a part of this paper, taking into account the oral comments made at the meeting and in consultation with interested delegations. The Sub-Group continued its discussion of problems related to prices and quantities to be taken into account in the valuation of goods for customs purposes. The Sub-Group agreed to revert to this question at its next meeting. The Sub-Group requested the secretariat to circulate for discussion at its next meeting a list of issues which were considered important by some delegations in relation to rules on customs valuation which might be agreed upon in the MFN. Participants have been invited to submit by the end of November, additional items which they wish to add to the list. The Sub-Group had a further exchange of views on import documentation requirements and consular formalities and fees and agreed to revert to these matters at its next meeting.

Sub-Group "Quantitative Restrictions"

At its November meeting, the Sub-Group further reviewed developments under the consultation procedure agreed earlier by it. The Sub-Group also continued its discussion on the possibility of formulating additional procedures for bilateral and/or plurilateral negotiations on quantitative restrictions, and the possibility of working out a general formula or formulae of automatic application, as well as the question of differential treatment including special procedures in favour of developing countries. It agreed to focus its discussion on the proposals and suggestions made at its next meeting. The Sub-Group also continued its discussion on the question of ensuring that there was an accurate and complete data base on quantitative restrictions. It agreed to revert at a subsequent meeting to the question of a review of the GATT provisions relating to the use of quantitative restrictions, including from the point of view of the interests of developing countries. On the question of import licensing procedures, the Sub-Group requested the secretariat to prepare a single working document on the specific comments and proposals that had been made thus far by delegations together with the respective paragraphs of the draft texts on import licensing prepared by Working Group 4 of the Committee on Trade in Industrial Products. It agreed that the Chairman would then consult with delegations concerning a meeting at technical level, open to all interested delegations with a view to working out an improved text for further negotiations in the Sub-Group.