

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS RELEVANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF PART IV

In response to GATT/AIR/1574, the countries listed below have transmitted to the secretariat the following information in relation to the implementation of Part IV. Further notifications will be circulated as addenda to this document.

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CANADA

Canada has no information to report additional to that contained in COM.TD/W/291 and COM.TD/101.

FINLAND

Finland's import policy vis-à-vis developing countries has continued in its liberal form as previously. Finland implemented its concessions for tropical products already in 1977 and other concessions to developing countries were reflected in the final Finnish tariff offer. Also in other fields of the MTN, in negotiations of non-tariff agreements Finland aimed at taking into account special and differential treatment for developing countries and especially the interests of the least developed countries.

A special GSP scheme for the least developed countries is under preparation and scheduled to be effected in the beginning of next year. This scheme is planned to include several products of export interest to the least developed countries, notably coffee. As a result of this policy the Finnish GSP imports have grown rapidly, 43 per cent in 1978.

Finland is together with the other Nordic countries going to finance commercial policy courses for participants from developing, preferably least developed, countries. These courses will be organized together with the GATT secretariat and the International Trade Centre.

NEW ZEALAND

The following report indicates moves initiated by New Zealand which could be regarded as benefiting the trade of developing countries.

I. Measures under Article XXXVII(3)(B) - Trade promotion

- (i) In the past year, the New Zealand Government has assisted developing countries to increase their exports to New Zealand by arranging and, in some cases, funding visits through the Developing Countries Liaison Unit within the Department of Trade and Industry. This Unit was established in 1975 to assist developing countries in their endeavours to export to New Zealand. In the last twelve months, eight missions have been assisted; four from ASEAN countries, both funded and arranged by the Unit; two others from ASEAN countries were arranged; and two further developing country missions were assisted in other ways.
- (ii) Trade visitors from developing countries were assisted in their exploration of market opportunities in New Zealand.
- (iii) Developing countries wishing to export to New Zealand have been provided with product information.
- (iv) There have been trade talks with a number of countries designed to expand the access opportunities in New Zealand for these countries.

II. Non-tariff measures

Over the past year, New Zealand has taken action in several areas to reduce the incidence of import restrictions applied to products of developing countries. These have included the complete removal of licensing on a variety of products (e.g. crustaceans, some types of footwear) while licensing restrictions have been reduced on a number of items (e.g. leather, toys, etc.).

III. Tariffs

- (i) There have been tariff reductions on some items (e.g. precious and semi-precious stones) of interest to developing countries.
- (ii) There has been a simplification of the procedures associated with the developing country handicraft scheme which allows certain hand-made products of specified materials duty-free entry into New Zealand.

General assistance

During the past year, a number of customs officers from developing countries have been brought to New Zealand to observe New Zealand's customs procedure.

NORWAY

1. The Norwegian Government has extended the global quota system for import of various textile items for six months. There are no changes in the modalities of the system reported in document COM.TD/W/291. The sizes of the quotas are with some minor modifications half the size of those for the whole of 1979. This is a temporary measure and the Norwegian Government aim at terminating it as soon as possible.

2. The Norwegian Import Promotion Office for Products from Developing Countries (NORIMPOD) has arranged seminars for trade representatives from developing countries, aiming at creating permanent business contacts with Norwegian importers.

SWEDEN

Many of the tariff concessions made by Sweden in the Protocol of 30 June 1979 of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations were made on direct request from developing countries.

Furthermore, from 1 January 1980 the Swedish GSP system will also cover anthurium (06.03) and water melons (08.09) and, from 1 January 1981, woven fabrics of jute (57.10) as well.

During 1979 Sweden has offered GSP treatment to four new countries, i.e. Nicaragua, Sudan, Liberia and the Maldives. The number of countries profiting from GSP treatment in their trade with Sweden now amounts to eighty-two.

Under the heading 'Measures falling within the provisions of paragraph 3(b) of Article XXXVII' I would like to mention that Sweden has participated financially in the setting up of a "Cotton Market Developing Programme" under the International Institute of Cotton.

Sweden is also giving a heavy contribution to the International Trade Centre parallel to bilateral co-operation with developing countries in trade promotion. The Swedish Government is also financing the Import Promotion Office for Products from Developing Countries (IMPOD).

SWITZERLAND

As from 1 January 1979 the Swiss Government has a programme credit for the financing of economic and trade policy measures in the context of international co-operation for development. Part of this credit (approximately Sw F 10 million) is earmarked for measures designed to ensure better participation by developing countries in world trade. It will allow the financing of projects in various fields that are currently being defined.

As from 30 July 1979 Switzerland has been applying its scheme of tariff preferences to China. The relevant details were circulated in document L/4818, dated 9 August 1979.

The rules of origin have been amended slightly and this should facilitate still more the utilization of preferences.

Total imports by Switzerland declined from Sw F 43,026 million in 1977 to Sw F 42,300 million in 1978, and those from beneficiary countries of the Swiss scheme of preferences from Sw F 4,960 million to 4,128 million. Imports covered by the Swiss GSP scheme declined from Sw F 2,087 million in 1977 to 1,970 million in 1978, and those carried out under preferences from Sw F 905 million to Sw F 850 million during the same period. The decline in the value of imports from developing countries is mainly due to lower coffee prices and smaller imports of petroleum oils, silver and cotton.