

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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WORK ON TRADE LIBERALIZATION: UPDATING OF INFORMATION  
ON QUANTITATIVE RESTRICTIONS AND OTHER NON-TARIFF  
MEASURES AFFECTING THE TRADE OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Note by the Secretariat

1. At the session of the Committee on Trade and Development held in March, there was a general view that among the areas of special interest to developing countries to which the Committee should give attention in its future work on trade liberalization were quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures (COM.TD/104, paragraph 27). As an initial step in the work of the Committee in this respect, it was generally felt by members that an adequate data base would need to be put together showing the post-MTN situation regarding conditions of access for exports of developing countries in developed country markets. In doing this, it was suggested that due account would need to be taken of any work proceeding in the different areas identified in connexion with the updating of documentation for the Joint Working Group on Import Restrictions and for the Tariff Study and that there should be a co-ordinated approach having regard also to work in GATT with respect to the Inventory of Non-Tariff Measures. The present note is intended to summarize recent developments regarding the availability in GATT of information on quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures relevant to the work of the Committee.

2. Important sources of information in GATT on quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures have been the Inventories of Non-Tariff Measures relating to trade in both agricultural and industrial goods (MTN/3E/DOC/5-10 and 12 series and MTN/3B/1-5 and Addenda, respectively). In recognition of the fact that much of the material contained in these documents was now unreliable and out-of-date and in accordance with its responsibility under the Work Programme of GATT in connexion with the continuation of the process of trade liberalization in GATT as a whole, the Council agreed, at its meeting of 26 March 1980 (C/M/139), on an updating of the Inventories according to a procedure proposed by the Director-General in paragraph 4 of document C/110. On the basis of this procedure, contracting parties have been invited, by GATT/AIR/1624, to confirm in writing by 31 July 1980 which of the notifications to the Inventories that they had earlier made they would wish to maintain, either in their original or in an amended form. Contracting parties are also free to submit new notifications for inclusion in the

Inventories. The procedure then provides for a process of comments from contracting parties maintaining measures which are the subject of notifications and of verification and consultation where a notification is challenged. Following this, the revised Inventories will be issued by the secretariat as early as possible and, as in the past, in loose-leaf format.

3. Also of importance as a source of information on quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures relevant to work on trade liberalization in areas of special interest to developing countries are some of the notification procedures established under the General Agreement or by the CONTRACTING PARTIES. In particular, the notifications made to the Joint Working Group on Import Restrictions have formed the basis for past Committee on Trade and Development documents on import restrictions affecting products of export interest to developing countries. At its meeting of 26 March 1980, the Council adopted (C/M/139) a proposal put forward by the Director-General in document C/111, relating to the implementation of various provisions of the Understanding Regarding Notification, Consultation, Dispute Settlement and Surveillance (L/4907) resulting from the Multilateral Trade Negotiations. In doing so, the Council has, *inter alia*, drawn the attention of contracting parties to paragraph 2 of the Understanding, by which they reaffirm their commitment to existing obligations under the General Agreement regarding publication and notification, and has invited contracting parties to submit notifications under the various procedures in accordance with an agreed calendar. On this basis, it can be expected that notifications containing the changes that are necessary to the Joint Working Group documentation following the completion of the Multilateral Trade Negotiations will be made by 30 September.

4. It might also be noted that with respect to requests for concessions on quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures submitted by developing countries in the negotiations in the framework of the Group "Tropical Products", the current situation with respect to those requests, based on information available to the secretariat, is shown in documents COM.TD/W/310 and Add.1. Non-tariff measure requests not dealt with in the tropical products negotiations, with additions, were subsequently carried over to the negotiations on agriculture and non-tariff measures not being dealt with multilaterally. Copies of such requests which were filed with the secretariat were made available to participants in the negotiations in the MTN/AG/R series for agricultural products and the MTN/NTM/R series for industrial products. However, as indicated above, in connexion with requests for non-tariff measure concessions by developing countries initially taken up in the tropical products negotiations, as well as later in the agricultural and non-tariff measure negotiations, the secretariat has endeavoured to indicate the current situation in COM.TD/W/310 and Add.1 on the basis of information available to it.

5. Thus, while certain information on some quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures of relevance to developing country interests may be found in the COM.TD documentation cited above, it would seem that the secretariat, in consultation with delegations, would be in a better situation to assemble comprehensive details of such measures affecting the interests of developing countries when the Inventories of Non-Tariff Measures and the Joint Working Group documentation have been brought up to date over the next few months. Accordingly, at the stage of completion of this updating, the secretariat could proceed in consultation with delegations, to an identification of products of export interest to developing countries which continue to be subject to quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures for consideration by the Committee.