

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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Committee on Trade and Development
Forty-Sixth Session
5-6 April 1982

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

Note by the Secretariat

1. As the tentative timetable established by the Preparatory Committee for contributions from other GATT bodies to the preparation for the Ministerial Meeting requires that contributions be made by 20 April, the forthcoming session of the Committee on Trade and Development might concentrate on issues which appear to be relevant to the Ministerial Meeting. Thus the Agenda could consist of two basic items:

- (a) Programme of consultations on trade liberalization; and
- (b) the GATT Ministerial Meeting.

A. Programme of consultations on trade liberalization

2. Under this item, the Committee could be expected to take up the results of the consultations on tropical products and quantitative restrictions being held during the month of March. A report on this activity might contain an overall assessment of the consultations, and suggestions by delegations with respect to possibilities for future progress having regard to the forthcoming Ministerial Meeting.

B. The GATT Ministerial Meeting

3. Under this item, the Committee might consider its contribution to the preparatory work for the Ministerial Meeting. This contribution could be on two levels.

4. On a first level, the Committee might examine issues for which it has substantive responsibility and which are therefore more directly related to specific questions on trade relations between developed and developing countries arising from past discussions.

5. On a second level, in pursuance of the role given to the Committee on Trade and Development, to facilitate a coherent overall approach to the problems facing developing countries, the Committee might wish to contribute to the examination, within broader issues relating to trade

relations in general, of those aspects and problems that are of priority concern to the developing countries. The Committee's discussions in this respect should not interfere, in any way, with the competence of other GATT bodies, but should serve as an input to the preparatory work being carried out for the Ministerial Meeting.

6. Thus, for illustrative purposes, questions that delegations might wish to take up in the Committee, at each of these two levels, are indicated under the sub-items below:

(a) Issues of direct competence of the Committee on Trade and Development

The following questions appear to be relevant:

- (i) further liberalization of trade;
- (ii) implementation of the Enabling Clause and Part IV;
- (iii) technical assistance to developing countries;
- (iv) other issues that might be raised by delegations.

7. Under (i) above, members of the Committee might have the opportunity to address any questions additional to those that may have been considered under the first item of the proposed Agenda, in connexion with the possibilities of reducing or eliminating barriers to trade between developed and developing countries. Questions relating to the operation of the Enabling Clause, to differential and more favourable treatment including special treatment for the least-developed countries and to the possible strengthening of Part IV of the General Agreement might be discussed under (ii). The discussions under the two items should facilitate a co-ordinated approach to questions relating to the application of the GATT system to developing countries and measures conducive to the participation of developing countries in the trading system.

8. Ways and means of enlarging the scope of, and strengthening, technical assistance activities of GATT could be taken up under (iii). Any other questions under the direct competence of the Committee on Trade and Development might be raised under (iv).

(b) Aspects of global issues of priority concern to developing countries

9. Delegations would be free to raise any issue of particular concern in discussions under the sub-item. As reflected in the Catalogue of Suggested Topics (document PREP.COM/W/1/Rev.1), among the topics which have particularly interested developing countries are: safeguards; structural adjustment; agriculture; tariff escalation; non-tariff measures; the implementation of the MTN agreements.

10. As indicated before, discussion on these issues would be without prejudice to work being carried out by other GATT bodies. The objective of this exercise would be to enable delegations to pin-point aspects and problems of special concern to developing countries, which might be taken into account in the global perspective of problems and approaches for dealing with them which go forward to the Ministers.

11. The Report of the session of the Committee, covering both proposed Agenda items 1 and 2, could be forwarded to the Preparatory Committee as a contribution to future preparatory work for the Ministerial Meeting.