

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

COM.TD/W/373
29 September 1982

Limited Distribution

Committee on Trade and Development
Forty-Eighth Session
25 and 28 October 1982

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

The following items are proposed for the forty-eighth session of the Committee on Trade and Development.

1. Review of developments in international trade

The Committee undertakes a regular review of developments in international trade having regard to the trade and payments position of developing countries with particular reference to developments in trade in primary commodities. At its last session, the Committee undertook such a review on the basis of secretariat document COM.TD/W/368 which examined recent developments in the trade and payments position of developing countries, and attempted to place these developments in a longer-term perspective. To provide a basis for further discussion at the October session of the Committee, delegations have available, in document GATT/1319, the main conclusions of the GATT annual report, International Trade 1981/82. The first section of GATT/1319 reviews the latest data on world trade, production and other aspects of the world economy in 1981 and the first half of 1982. The second section focuses on the issues confronting policy makers in their search for ways of improving the present economic situation.

2. Review of implementation of Part IV and operation of the Enabling Clause

(a) Review of implementation of Part IV

According to its terms of reference, one of the main functions of the Committee on Trade and Development is to keep under continuous review the implementation of Part IV of the General Agreement. A mid-term review of the implementation of Part IV was carried out by the Committee at its forty-seventh session in July 1982, on the basis of background information provided by the secretariat on developments in commercial policy measures and other matters of interest in relation to Part IV (COM.TD/W/367). As background for the annual review of Part IV, recent actions relevant to Part IV, as reported by governments in response to GATT/AIR/1841, will be reproduced in document COM.TD/W/375 and Addenda. A secretariat note (COM.TD/W/374) providing certain additional information relevant to Part IV is being circulated. Delegations may also wish to take into account the information in documents COM.TD/SCPM/W/13-16 made available for the meeting of the Sub-Committee on Protective Measures of 28-29 September 1982. The Sub-Committee's report (COM.TD/SCPM/5) appears as a separate agenda item for the session of the Committee (see item 3 below).

(b) Review of the operation of the Enabling Clause

In line with its primary responsibility for supervision of the implementation of the Decision on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries, the Committee on Trade and Development, at its July 1982 meeting, carried out a review of the operation of the Enabling Clause on the basis of background information provided by the secretariat in Section II of COM.TD/W/367. For the October 1982 session of the Committee, information provided by governments relevant to the Enabling Clause in response to the invitation in section B of the Attachment to GATT/AIR/1841 is being circulated in COM.TD/W/375 and Addenda. Secretariat note, COM.TD/W/374, includes a separate section containing supplementary information relevant to the Enabling Clause.

At the last session of the Committee, in July 1982, the representative of Uruguay presented to the Committee the text of the Montevideo Treaty of 1980 creating the Latin American Integration Association, which had been notified to the CONTRACTING PARTIES in document L/5342. The Committee agreed to revert to this matter at its next meeting.

3. Sub-Committee on Protective Measures

The report of the Sub-Committee on its fifth session scheduled for 28-29 September 1982 will be available to the Committee on Trade and Development in document COM.TD/SCPM/5.

4. Work on trade liberalization

It will be recalled that, at its meeting in April 1982, the Committee reviewed the progress made in the programme of consultations on trade liberalization in the areas of tropical products and quantitative restrictions held in March 1982, and considered how work in these areas might be carried forward. In his summing-up (COM.TD/110, Annex), the Chairman said:

"The Committee agreed that there is scope for further work in this area, with a view to seeking means of further liberalizing trade in products of interest to developing countries. It also agreed that the meeting of the CONTRACTING PARTIES at Ministerial level in November 1982 presents an opportunity for the consideration of specific measures of trade liberalization and of appropriate modalities for carrying forward the unfinished process of liberalization in this area. It agreed that it could carry out preparatory work to this end, with a view to facilitating decisions by Ministers."

With regard to tariff escalation, the Committee, at its session in November 1981, welcomed the decision of the Committee on Tariff Concessions to request the secretariat to proceed with work on tariff escalation by way of case studies in regard to selected chains of production or product areas to assess the feasibility of the approaches that had been suggested in TAR/W/18. The Committee on Trade and Development noted that it would be kept informed of developments and thus have an opportunity to offer comments and observations on points of interest to it. At its last session, the Committee on Trade and Development had before it, in document COM.TD/W/361-TAR/W/26, a

secretariat pilot study on tariff escalation, dealing with the copper producing and copper consuming industries, and a secretariat note, COM.TD/W/369-TAR/W/29, elaborating on the methodological and practical difficulties encountered in attempting to measure tariff escalation in the copper industry. A number of delegations said that they would wish to revert to these studies at the next meeting of the Committee. For its part, the Committee on Tariff Concessions had a preliminary discussion of these studies at its meeting of 13 July 1982 (TAR/M/8).

At its last meeting, the Committee on Trade and Development considered a number of specific proposals for Ministerial action in regard to tropical products, quantitative restrictions and tariff escalation (COM.TD/112, Annex 1 (a), (b) and (c)). The record of the Committee's discussion on these proposals is contained in COM.TD/112, paragraphs 46-53, and the Chairman's conclusions following that discussion are in COM.TD/112, paragraphs 63-66. Following further discussions in the Committee on Tariff Concessions on tariff escalation, and further informal consultations on the three issues, texts dealing with these matters were incorporated in the "First Draft" (PREP.COM/W/26/Rev.1) that is before the Preparatory Committee (tropical products on pages 14-15; non-tariff measures on page 16; tariffs on pages 16-17).

5. Technical assistance to developing countries

At its April 1982 session, the Committee carried out a review of technical assistance by the secretariat on the basis of a secretariat note COM.TD/W/359 which described the evolution and present status of GATT technical co-operation and training activities and made an assessment of future needs in this area. There was widespread support in the Committee for the proposals made in that document. Following a further discussion on this matter at the last meeting of the Committee (COM.TD/112, paragraphs 55-56), the Chairman was able to conclude as follows (COM.TD/112, paragraph 68):

"There was general agreement in the Committee that Ministers be requested to endorse a strengthening of the technical co-operation programme of the secretariat, covering training courses and other technical assistance activities, with a view to ensuring that it meets more adequately the current and prospective requirements of developing countries related to their participation in the GATT trading system. In this connexion, the proposal for a regular commercial policy course in Spanish was recalled. It was noted that the budgetary implications of such an expanded programme would need to be addressed."

6. Expansion of trade among developing countries

In accordance with GATT's post-MTN work programme, the Committee continues to serve as a forum for following developments in relation to the expansion of trade among developing countries. In this connexion, it receives the Annual Report of the Committee of Participating Countries concerning the operation of the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries. The ninth Annual Report of the Committee of Participating Countries is being circulated as L/5367.

7. The GATT Ministerial meeting

At its last two sessions, in April and July 1982, the Committee has considered the contribution that it could make to the preparatory work for the Ministerial meeting in relation to matters within the Committee's areas of competence. It has done this under certain agenda items dealing with specific issues that could be taken up at the Ministerial meeting and under an agenda item on the Ministerial meeting in general. The proceedings of these two meetings of the Committee, including the conclusions that the Chairman of the Committee was able to draw from the discussions on the Committee's contribution to the preparatory work for the Ministerial meeting, were forwarded to the Preparatory Committee in documents COM.TD/110 and COM.TD/112. The discussions under items 2, 4 and 5 could be expected to reflect the consideration given to the question of the treatment of these issues in the perspective of the Ministerial meeting. Members of the Committee may wish to exchange further views on what may be done at the Ministerial meeting with respect to these and other matters of concern to the Committee in the light of the stage reached in the work of the Preparatory Committee.

8. Other matters

Delegations might wish to raise for discussion any other matters relevant to the work of the Committee.

9. Adoption of the report

The Committee will adopt its report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.