

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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Limited Distribution

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## BELGIAN IMPORT RESTRICTIONS ON DOLLAR GOODS

### Note submitted by the Belgian Delegation to the Intersessional Committee on 4 February 1953

On 29 October 1952, M. Max Suetens, President of the Belgian Delegation to the seventh Session defined the position of the Belgian Government as regards Belgian restrictions on dollar imports and informed the CONTRACTING PARTIES that his Government, desirous to meet the wishes of the CONTRACTING PARTIES and of the International Monetary Fund, intended to relax substantially the restrictions imposed by the Belgian-Luxembourg Economic Union on dollar imports. In this connection the President of the Belgian Delegation made the following statement:

"The Belgian Government believes that it is justified in proceeding cautiously in its return to a régime of freedom from quantitative import restrictions. However, the Belgian Government intends, as a first step in this direction, to implement the following measures by way of relaxation of the present level of restrictions affecting dollar imports: first, the goods on the free list will be increased significantly; second, the two lists providing respectively for prior approval and prohibition in principle will be unified so that licences for products not on the free list will be examined on their merits; thirdly, a more liberal policy with respect to imports of the latter will be pursued."

Furthermore, the President of the Belgian Delegation stated that he hoped that the proposed new measures would yield their full results within the next two or three months and that the Belgian Government could then report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

The Belgian Delegation is happy to inform the CONTRACTING PARTIES that the following measures have been implemented with a view to carrying out the commitments referred to above:

1. A list of items which are not restricted upon importation on account of the fact that they are payable in dollars, has been drawn up and published by the Belgian Office for Foreign Trade (Office Belge du Commerce Extérieur). The value of the goods included in this list represents from 68 to 70 per cent of the value of the dollar imports of the Belgian-Luxembourg Economic Union (on the basis of the first six months of 1951). Before such measures were initiated, 25 per cent only of the BLEU imports (first six months of 1951) came under this system.

2. A list of items still submitted to prior approval (List B) has been drawn up. This list includes all the products which do not come under the List A system. Hence it incorporates items, importation of which was automatically denied under the previously existing system. The Belgian Government will issue licences for imports of items on List B in as liberal a spirit as possible.

The measures referred to above entered into force on 1 February 1953 in conformity with the commitments undertaken by the Belgian Delegation at the Seventh Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.