

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/217
30 July 1954

Limited Distribution

Original: English

SCHEDULE XXXII - AUSTRIA

Revision and Renegotiation of Concessions

The Delegation of Austria attending the meeting of the Intersessional Committee has submitted the following statement for the information of contracting parties:

"The Austrian Delegation wishes to inform you that it will be necessary for the Austrian Government to revise the tariff concessions agreed upon at the Conference of Torquay.

"The customs tariff at present in force in Austria is based on a tariff introduced in the year 1906 and partially adapted in 1924 to the economy of the new Austria emerging after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. Since then some changes have been made; the tariff, however, does not meet the requirements of the present day economy and particularly the nomenclature does not take into account the development and progress of production.

"For some time, therefore, the Austrian Government desired to introduce the nomenclature proposed by the Customs Co-operation Council in Brussels. At the same time it is envisaged to change a number of specific duties into ad valorem charges. Further, the new tariff in order to meet the requirements of the economy will include some increases as well as reductions. The drafting of the new tariff has already reached an advanced stage; it is expected that a final draft will have been approved by the Government and be ready for presentation to Parliament by the end of 1954.

"It follows therefore that the Austrian concessions made within the GATT will have to be adapted to the new nomenclature and that in a number of instances new negotiations will have to take place.

"Such negotiations could be arranged in the spring of 1955 on the basis of the final draft approved by the Government and be concluded before July 1955. Should this prove impossible, Austria could agree to an extension of the present schedules for a further period only on the condition that some of the present

L/217
Page 2

concessions would be renegotiated. A detailed list of the items Austria envisages to renegotiate in case of necessity will be submitted as soon as possible to the secretariat for transmission to the contracting parties.

"It would be appreciated if you could advise the contracting parties accordingly."