

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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MAINTENANCE OF QUANTITATIVE IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

Request by the Government of Belgium

The following communication, dated 13 May, has been received from the Belgian Government and will appear on the Agenda for the meeting of the Intersessional Committee tentatively scheduled for 16 June 1955. It is suggested that the Committee should consider this request in the capacity of a working party of the CONTRACTING PARTIES and that if necessary a special session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES should be convened at the earliest practicable date to consider any recommendation which the Committee may decide to submit to them.

"Since October 1951, Belgium has eliminated all exchange restrictions on imports. However, a number of quantitative restrictions which had been imposed during a period when Belgium was free to resort to Article XII of the GATT have been maintained. During the Ninth Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, the Head of the Belgian Delegation indicated on several occasions that it was impossible for the Belgian Government forthwith and at once to eliminate such restrictions but that he agreed that they should be gradually eliminated and that the CONTRACTING PARTIES should review annually progress made toward such elimination.

"The Belgian Government therefore requests a waiver from the provisions of Article XI.

"The Belgian Government expresses the wish that the Intersessional Committee may be called on short notice for the purpose of examining this request promptly so that a solution may be reached before the Tenth Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES. The Belgian Government would wish to know what fate its request will meet with, before signing the Protocols amending the General Agreement and the Agreement on the Organization for Trade Cooperation.

"In view of the fact that the Belgian Government has to conduct a general review of existing restrictions, the list of those restrictions which will be maintained and a justification therefor shall be submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES upon completion of this review but not later than 1 June 1955."

