

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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TRADE RESTRICTIONS ON ORTHOPAEDIC EQUIPMENT

Request of the Council of Europe

The Executive Secretary has received the following communication from the Secretary-General of the Council of Europe:

"I should like to inform you that the Committee of Experts on Public Health of the Council of Europe decided at its third session in July 1955 to address a recommendation to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. The relevant part of this recommendation reads as follows:

'The Committee of Experts on Public Health,

Recommends to the Committee of Ministers that it should invite the governments of Member countries to take all necessary steps in order that:

1. artificial limbs and orthopaedic equipment lacking in their countries and urgently required for their cripples, should be free of all customs duties, prohibitions and import restrictions;
2. customs formalities should, for the import of such equipment, be reduced to the minimum.'

"The Committee of Ministers considered this recommendation and decided to request GATT and WHO to study the question, and to continue its own examination thereof once their opinions were available.

"Accordingly, I should much appreciate it if you could examine the measures proposed in the light of existing customs legislation and regulations and inform us of your conclusions."

This question will be included in the Advance Agenda for the Eleventh Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES which will be examined by the Intersessional Committee at its meeting on 11 September.