

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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IN-SERVICE TRAINING SCHEME FOR OFFICIALS OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. At their Tenth Session, the CONTRACTING PARTIES agreed to put into effect on an experimental basis for 1956 an in-service training scheme for officials of contracting parties holding UNTAA scholarships. It was also agreed that the Intersessional Committee would be empowered to receive a report by the Executive Secretary on the operation of the scheme in 1956 and that, if the Committee were prepared to recommend the continuation of the scheme, the Executive Secretary would be authorized to communicate with governments with a view to obtaining nominations, on the understanding that any action would be subject to confirmation by the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

2. The first group of officials who were awarded fellowships from the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration to follow a training course at the GATT secretariat arrived at Geneva at the beginning of January 1956. It consisted of the following officials:

Mr. Edouard DUPONT (Haiti),	Official of the Fiscal Department of the National Bank of Haiti (Customs Administration)
Mr. Madan G. MATHUR (India),	Under-Secretary, Ministry of Finance
Mr. Constantin PARITSIS (Greece),	Rapporteur at the Greek Ministry of Finance
Mr. Raúl MARDONES OYARZÚN (Chile),	Official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Economic Department)

3. The programme was arranged in accordance with the proposals contained in document L/424. During their stay of six months at Geneva, those officials worked with the different units of the secretariat and obtained first hand information on the actual operation of the various units. The course was divided into three parts. The first part of the syllabus, which was conducted at the office of the Executive Secretary, included an analysis of the main problems of commercial policy which are likely to arise in under-developed countries and an examination of the various methods used both in developed and under-developed countries to solve these problems. The course took the form of a discussion of the various topics with the trainees after a short introduction of the subject had been made by an official of the secretariat some time before the discussion

took place. During the interval between the introduction and the discussion, the trainees were asked to study and reflect on the subject thus introduced and to prepare questions and comments. These discussions, as those which took place later in other units of the secretariat, were illustrated by reference to the actual experience of the various countries and were intended to be as practical and realistic as possible; they tried, in particular, to relate the objectives of commercial policy to economic development and a large part of the time was devoted to a consideration of various technical problems which developing countries are meeting in the implementation of their customs and commercial policies.

4. The second part of the syllabus related more specifically to the way in which the GATT is assisting governments in developed and under-developed countries in solving their commercial policy problems. During that part of the course, discussions were held on the major topics covered by the GATT, after an official of the Operations Unit had analysed the relevant provisions of the Agreement as well as the decisions taken by the CONTRACTING PARTIES in relation to those provisions.

5. During that part of the course, the trainees were associated with the actual working of the Operations Unit; they were invited to examine current problems under consideration and to prepare written notes or reports on these questions. That close association with the day-to-day operation of the secretariat has been considered by the trainees as one of the most useful aspects of the training programme and in their reports to the UNTAA they commented at length on the advantages of such a method. Moreover, the trainees attended the meetings of the Tariff Negotiations Committee during the Geneva Conference and were frequently asked to analyse and comment on the various problems which were raised in the course of these meetings.

6. Finally, the trainees were asked to write a short paper on a specific problem selected by them, such as the application of anti-dumping duties, bilateral agreements, etc.; their memoranda were discussed with the officers of the Operations Unit, the Director for Commercial Policy, the Deputy Executive Secretary and the Executive Secretary and the trainees revised their memoranda on the basis of the comments made in the course of those discussions.

7. The stay in the Operations Unit was concluded by a visit to London, Paris and Bonn, the object of which was to familiarize the trainees with some methods of customs administration which are little known in under-developed countries and which were considered by the administrations to which some of the trainees belonged as of particular interest for the development of certain industries. At the request of the secretariat, the Customs administrations of the United Kingdom, France and Germany accepted to receive the trainees in their offices and to give them first-hand information on the operation of tariff quotas, drawbacks and temporary admission procedures. The Executive Secretary wishes to place on record his appreciation of the valuable assistance which the Customs administrations of these three countries made to the success of the training programme and of the warm welcome which they extended to the

GATT trainees. Not only did the trainees obtain the most authoritative explanations from responsible high officials, but they were shown these procedures in actual operation. They went, for instance, to the Long Room in Customs House, London; they paid a visit to the Customs Bureau at La Chapelle, Paris; and they visited a factory near Cologne where goods are processed under the temporary admission procedure as well as the Customs Office in Duisburg from where certain tariff quotas are controlled. Although short, these visits gave to these officials an unique opportunity of getting useful material for the introduction and operation of procedures which may prove of substantial value to their countries.

8. The last part of the course was spent in the Trade Intelligence Unit where the trainees obtained practical information on the contribution which statistics and economic analysis can make towards the formulation and implementation of commercial policies. The object of this stay was not to give them professional training in the working out of statistics or economic analysis; but to enable them to know more about the sources of documentation and the kind of information which commercial policy services may expect from statistical and trade intelligence services. It is expected that this particular course would facilitate the formulation of questions to be analysed by these services and to enable the trainees to appraise correctly the information which these services would pass on as an answer to such questions.

9. The first GATT training course ended on 30 June 1956 and the four trainees submitted their reports to the UNTAA before leaving Geneva. Both the secretariat and the trainees were of the opinion that this stay at Geneva had been very useful and the comments already received from one government show that this opinion is shared by at least one administration which had sent one of its officials to Geneva. In practically all cases, the officials who stayed at the GATT secretariat would be closely associated with work connected with GATT in their capitals and, apart from the experience which these officials had gained, it is expected that the training course will result in closer relations between the secretariat and the officials who have to deal with GATT problems in the various capitals.

10. The second group of trainees arrived at Geneva at the beginning of July. In view of the numerous requests received from governments, the UNTAA and the GATT secretariat decided to accept five nominations instead of four as during the first half of the year. The group consists of:

Mr. Irawan DARSA (Indonesia), Head of the Desk for the Economy of
Indonesia, Ministry of Foreign
Affairs

Mr. Francisco JOHANET (Cuba), Foreign Service Assistant, Ministry of
State (Economic Department)

Mr. Lawrence J. MARIADSON (Ceylon), Commercial Assistant, Department
of Commerce

Mr. Rana SHUJA (Pakistan), Superintendent (Gazetted Officer II),
Ministry of Commerce

Mr. Ibrahim TURGAY (Turkey), Official of the Ministry of
Economy and Commerce (Foreign
Trade Department)

11. On the basis of the experience gained during the first half of the year and taking into account the comments made by the trainees who attended the course during the first half of the year, some minor adjustments were made in the programme of work but the syllabus outlined in L/424 remained substantially without change. The time table was slightly re-organized in order to give to the trainees more time in the Operations Unit and to associate them more closely with the day-to-day operation of that unit. As the trainees will be in Geneva during the Eleventh Session, they will be assigned to some of the working parties; they will gain practical experience in assisting the secretaries of the working parties. They will be asked, for instance, to prepare notes and reports on points discussed by the working parties and their drafts would be compared with the text drafted by the secretaries and commented upon by senior officials of the secretariat.

12. The Executive Secretary is of the opinion that the experiment made this year is conclusive and that the training programme should be continued. The interest shown by governments and the number of applications which are still outstanding seems to prove that this new activity of the GATT serves a very useful purpose. From an administrative point of view, it might have been feared that the time devoted by the staff to this course would affect the normal working of the secretariat. While the individualized tuition which the secretariat is called upon to give to the trainees adds certainly to the workload of the officials who are responsible for the course, it has proved possible to absorb this additional load without delaying or affecting in any way the other activities of the secretariat. Provided the participation is limited to five or six officials in each group, the Executive Secretary is convinced that the programme can continue without involving additional expenditure from the CONTRACTING PARTIES or additional manpower.

13. The Executive Secretary has been advised by the UNTAA that it is prepared to grant five to six fellowships for two courses of six months in 1957. If the CONTRACTING PARTIES agree to the continuation of the programme, ten to twelve officials would have the opportunity of improving their knowledge of commercial policy problems and methods at the GATT secretariat in 1957. The UNTAA has, however, pointed out that it would be necessary for it to communicate with governments without delay with a view to obtaining nominations and assigning the necessary funds in due time. In those circumstances, it will be necessary for the Intersessional Committee to consider the matter at its

September meeting. If it agrees to recommend the continuation of the scheme, the Executive Secretary will immediately get in touch with the UNTAA so that communications could be sent to governments without further delay.

14. As regards the procedure for the nomination and selection of candidates, the UNTAA wishes to follow the same rules as for the award of other fellowships. Accordingly, the Director-General of TAA will send a communication to the bodies responsible for technical assistance in the GATT countries eligible for participation in the scheme. The GATT secretariat will send copies of this communication to the delegates of these countries to its meetings and hopes that they will assist the technical assistance authorities in recommending the best candidates. The selection of the candidates would be made as before by the UNTAA after consultation with the GATT secretariat.