

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/554

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## CERTIFICATES OF ORIGIN

### PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF GATT REGULATIONS

#### Note by Executive Secretary

The proposal by the International Chamber of Commerce (reproduced in L/481) that the CONTRACTING PARTIES' recommendations concerning proof of origin be amended, which is to be considered at the Eleventh Session, relates to the following paragraph:

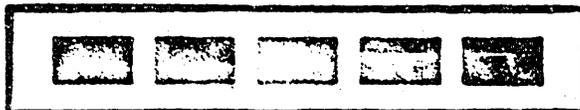
"(b) As large a number of competent bodies as possible should be authorized to issue certificates of origin, in order to minimize the time taken by traders in obtaining certificates."

The resolution adopted by the Chamber at its Congress in 1955 suggests that this paragraph is unsatisfactory in its present form for two reasons, namely: The multiplication of issuing offices might lower the value of the certificates issued, and exporters should themselves be able to prepare the certificates subject to visa by a competent authority. The Chamber, therefore, suggests that the paragraph might be amended to read:

"Governments should ensure that a sufficient number of authorized and genuinely competent offices is available to trade for the issuance and/or visa'ing of certificates of origin."

Contracting parties were requested to submit comments in advance of the Eleventh Session. No government has opposed the proposal. The following is a summary of the views expressed as distributed in the addenda to L/481:

1. The Governments of Canada, India, Indonesia and New Zealand have replied to the enquiry but have made no comment on the Chamber's proposal.
2. The Governments of Australia, Austria, France, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Turkey and the United States support the amendment proposed by the Chamber. Austria and the United States however, point out that they do not necessarily endorse the reasons given by the ICC for proposing the change of the recommendation.



3. The Governments of Belgium, Germany, Rhodesia, & Nyasaland, Sweden and the United Kingdom say that they have no objection to the proposed amendment. While supporting the proposal, the Government of the United Kingdom proposes an alternative wording as follows:

"In order to avoid delay to traders, governments should authorize a sufficient number of competent offices to issue certificates of origin or, when necessary, to visa certificates issued by traders."

Canada, India, New Zealand, The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the United Kingdom pointed out that their customs authorities generally only require certification signed by the exporter.

