

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/3106

12 November 1968

Limited Distribution

---

CONTRACTING PARTIES  
Twenty-Fifth Session  
12-29 November 1968

## CREATION OF A CONFERENCE ROOM AT VILLA LE BOCAGE

### Note by the Director-General

1. During the past few years, it has become increasingly difficult to provide suitable accommodation for the numerous meetings of the various organs of the GATT.
2. Although the GATT has received helpful co-operation not only from the United Nations authorities in Geneva but also from the specialized agencies, the situation has been unsatisfactory both for the CONTRACTING PARTIES and for the secretariat which constantly has to improvise often at very short notice. Of late the situation has worsened in particular as one of the conference rooms at the Palais which up until now has always been reserved for GATT meetings has become virtually unusable as a result of the noise caused by the construction of the new wing to the Palais des Nations.
3. Pending other solutions of a more permanent character urgent measures need to be taken in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the CONTRACTING PARTIES meeting programme. Accordingly, the possibility has been examined of converting into a meeting room the office at Villa Le Bocage, previously occupied by the Director-General.
4. The study has shown that the room concerned could, with some minor structural changes, with the addition of simultaneous interpretation equipment, and with the installation of air conditioning be converted into a meeting room suitable to accommodate meetings of up to some ninety people.
5. The conversion would enable GATT to hold about 50 per cent of its meetings at Le Bocage and only meetings of the larger committees, the Council and sessions of the CONTRACTING PARTIES would have to be held elsewhere.
6. The advantages both for the CONTRACTING PARTIES and for the secretariat of having at least one conference room permanently available are clear. Efficiency would no doubt be improved and much of the present uncertainty as to whether or not suitable accommodation would be available when needed would be removed.
7. The total cost of the conversion of the room, including equipment and furniture, is estimated at roughly \$24,000. On the other hand the savings in the budget item for rental of meeting rooms is estimated at \$6,000 per annum.
8. The Director-General therefore proposes that the CONTRACTING PARTIES authorize expenditure for the conversion of the office at Villa Le Bocage mentioned in paragraph 3, up to an amount of \$24,000, the total cost to be absorbed by the 1968 budget.

Point for decision: Paragraph 8.

./.