

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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## Committee on Tariff Concessions

### SUBMISSION OF LOOSE-LEAF SCHEDULES

#### Initial Negotiating Rights regarding Earlier Bindings

##### Note by the Secretariat

1. In the decision by the Council on the introduction of a loose-leaf system for the schedules of tariff concessions, it is stated that initial negotiating rights (INRs) regarding earlier bindings made at a higher level than the present bound rate must, in order to maintain a legal value, be indicated in the loose-leaf schedules (BISD, 27S, page 24).
2. In the course of the preparation of loose-leaf schedules, it was found that a complete listing of previous INRs in respect of concessions given in different nomenclatures and at different rates could be very complicated and in some cases could amount to several pages of INR's in respect of one tariff line.
3. At the request of several delegations during the meeting of the Committee on Tariff Concessions on 1 April 1982 (TAR/M/6, para.3), the secretariat arranged informal meetings with the countries particularly interested in the question of simplifying the information to be provided in column 7 (previous INR's) of the loose-leaf schedules.
4. It appears from the discussion at these meetings that the best solution would be to permit a country submitting a schedule to examine bilaterally with countries having INRs in respect of earlier concessions if simplifications could be made in the presentation of the INRs. INRs at different levels and with different item descriptions could thus, for example, be condensed into only one INR at a level to be mutually agreed upon and expressed in the present nomenclature. Such a solution would, however, have to be agreed upon by the two sides. If the INR holder requests, the country submitting the schedule would have to fill in column 7 in full detail.
5. As the way of presenting previous INRs is a purely bilateral matter, which does not affect third countries' rights or obligations, it would be reasonable to give the two sides a chance of settling matters in any way they can agree on. A considerable amount of bilateral consultations might be required but once agreement has been reached, the INRs would be expressed in a simple way and the need to consult old negotiating records avoided.