

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

COM.TD/W/419
31 October 1984

Limited Distribution

Committee on Trade and Development
Fifty-Fourth Session
13-14 and 16 November 1984

BACKGROUND NOTE FOR REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PART IV AND OPERATION OF THE ENABLING CLAUSE

Note by the Secretariat

1. According to its terms of reference, the Committee on Trade and Development is required to keep under continuous review the implementation of Part IV of the General Agreement and to supervise the operation of the Decision on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries (the Enabling Clause). The last review of the implementation of Part IV and of the operation of the Enabling Clause was undertaken by the Committee in November 1983 at its fifty-first session.
2. In October 1984, the Committee on Trade and Development continued its programme of consultations in pursuance of the Ministerial Decision taken at the November 1982 Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES which called for consultations to examine how individual contracting parties had responded to the requirements of Part IV. Consultations were held with the EEC, the United States, Japan and a group of developing countries, members of ALADI (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay). In conformity with the agreement reached at the March 1983 Session of the Committee, consultations undertaken in pursuance of the Ministerial Decision during the relevant period would, together with the work of the Sub-Committee on Protective Measures, form part of the Committee's overall annual review of the implementation of Part IV and the operation of the Enabling Clause.
3. Contracting parties were invited, in GATT/AIR/2065, to make notifications containing information not covered in the programme of Part IV Consultations undertaken in the current period and relevant to the regular annual review of the implementation of Part IV and the operation of the Enabling Clause. Notifications received will be circulated to the members of the Committee.
4. Relevant information on actions taken by contracting parties since the last review of the implementation of Part IV and the operation of the Enabling Clause is contained in the following documents:
 - (a) Background material for the Part IV Consultations; submissions were provided by the EEC (COM.TD/W/407 and Corr.1), the United States (COM.TD/W/403 and Corr.1), Japan (COM.TD/W/413) and a group of developing countries members of ALADI (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Peru and Uruguay - COM.TD/W/416 and Add.1 and L/5689). Information was provided by the secretariat in COM.TD/W/402 and Add.1 for the EEC, COM.TD/W/401 and Add.1 for the United States, COM.TD/W/410 and Add.1 for Japan, and COM.TD/W/411 for the consulting countries, members of ALADI. The secretariat note on the proceedings of the Part IV Consultations will be circulated as document COM.TD/118.

- (b) The notifications made by contracting parties to the Sub-Committee on Protective Measures for its September 1984 session (COM.TD/SCPM/W/24-27 and COM.TD/SCPM/W/28 and Add.1), a note by the secretariat containing certain information of possible interest to the Sub-Committee (COM.TD/SCPM/W/23 and the report of the Sub-Committee (COM.TD/SCPM/7).
- (c) The notes by the secretariat for the special meeting of the Council on developments in the trading system (document C/W/437/Rev.1, covering the period October 1983-March 1984, and document C/W/448, (with any revision that may issue) covering the period April-September 1984).

No information in relation to the application of the provisions of Part IV other than that contained in the above-mentioned documents is available to the Secretariat. Section I of the present note summarizes the information on developments with regard to the Enabling Clause. Section II responds to the agreement in the Committee at its thirty-ninth session that the work on the review of the implementation of Part IV should be reinforced generally so as to include, amongst other matters, an overall review of developments in different GATT bodies and of the implementation of MTN results with respect to the interests of developing countries.

SECTION I

(a) Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)

5. All preference giving countries had, by 30 September 1984, extended their GSP programmes beyond 1985. In the United States, action to review the GSP programme was taken under the Trade Act approved by Congress on 9 October 1984.¹ The main features of the notifications received from the contracting parties in connection with changes in their GSP schemes since the fifty-first session of the Committee are summarized below:

- Austria has notified that its GSP tariff rates on some 1,900 tariff lines have been reduced by applying the existing formula for GSP rates to the new m.f.n. rates applicable after the fifth round of MTN reductions, effective 1 January 1984 (document L/4108/Add.18). With effect from 1 July 1984 the following has been added to List B of the origin rules under the Austrian GSP scheme: Shellac, seed lac, stick lac and other lacs; natural gums, resins, gum resins and balsams (tariff heading 13.02) - working, processing or assembling in which the value of the materials and parts used does not exceed 50 per cent of the value of the finished products, confers to status of originating products (document L/4108/Add.10).
- Canada has notified that effective 13 January 1983, thirty-one countries have been designated as least-developed countries, and thus eligible for duty-free treatment under its GSP scheme. Certain GSP rules of origin regulations on eligible exports from these countries have been eased.

¹ More detailed information concerning this Trade Act will be available in due course.

On 1 January 1983, a proportionate reduction was made in GSP rates to take account of reductions in m.f.n. rates introduced by Canada as a result of the staged tariff reduction agreed upon in the MTN (document L/4027/Add.17).

With effect from 24 May 1983, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo have been designated as least-developed countries and have become eligible to receive the benefits of the Canadian General Preferential Tariff applied to least-developed countries (document L/4027/Add.20).

On 28 June 1984 the Canadian Parliament approved legislation extending the Canadian GSP scheme for a further ten years to 30 June 1994 (document L/4027/Add.18).

On 8 August 1984, an amendment to the Canadian rules of origin was also approved to allow for the implementation of global cumulative origin among beneficiary countries (document L/4027/Add.19).

- Czechoslovakia has notified some improvements in its GSP scheme introduced with effect from 10 May 1984. The total number of beneficiary developing countries has been increased from 116 to 120, of which the number of least-developed countries has been increased to thirty-two countries. The number of items excluded from preferential treatment has been reduced from twenty-five to six (document L/3703/Add.5).
- The Commission of the European Economic Communities has notified the decisions* and regulations concerning their GSP scheme for 1984. Details of modifications are available in documents COM.TD/W/402 and COM.TD/W/407.
- Finland has notified that the value limits applicable to small consignments addressed to private persons and travellers' personal luggage have been raised effective 1 March 1984. Goods within the specified limits are granted GSP treatment without production of a certificate of origin. (document L/3694/Add.15).
- Hungary has notified some improvements in its GSP scheme, effective 1 January 1984, including the extension of general duty-free treatment for least-developed countries to Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo, improvements in product coverage and the reduction of preferential rates of duty on a number of products (document L/5141/Add.2).
- Japan has notified improvements and modifications in its GSP scheme for the 1984 fiscal year starting 1 April: the formulae for calculating GSP ceilings have been modified in order to increase the total amount of ceilings on industrial products by about 55 per cent (Y 1,220 billion or approximately US\$5.2 billion for FY 1984 as against Y 785 billion or approximately US\$3.3 billion for FY 1983); the "maximum country amount" has been changed from one-half to one-third of the ceilings; under

the special treatment for least-developed countries, duty-free treatment has been granted for woven fabrics of jute and two items (tariff headings 59.04.1-4 and 5203) have been removed from the list of exceptions from the special treatment for least-developed countries; The GSP rates on two tropical products (fresh bananas and palm oil) have been reduced (document L/4531/Add.6).

Details on increased ceilings for imports of different groups of industrial products under the GSP scheme for the 1984 fiscal year starting 1 April have been provided by Japan in document L/4531/Add.7. Reference may also be made to an analysis of the Japanese GSP scheme provided in document COM.TD/W/410.

- Norway has notified that, as of 1 June 1984, one product (ex 70.13 - drinking glasses) has been removed from the general list of exceptions under the Norwegian GSP scheme and thus has been made eligible for GSP treatment (document L/4242/Add.24).
- Switzerland has notified that in conjunction with the MTN tariff reductions on 1 January 1984 the GSP rates on products which did not benefit from duty-free treatment (certain agricultural products, textiles, clothing, footwear, umbrellas, unworked aluminium and dry-cell batteries) have been reduced. The rules of origin affecting postal traffic have been relaxed by issuing value limits below which simplified procedures apply (L/4020/Add.10).
- The United States has notified the changes made in its GSP scheme, effective 30 March 1984. Twenty-two new items have been designated for GSP duty-free treatment, representing US\$7 million of trade in 1983. Three articles have been removed from the GSP in response to petitions filed by US producers (US imports of these articles from GSP beneficiary countries totalled US\$33 million in 1983). Certain developing countries have been redesignated as eligible for GSP treatment regarding thirty-seven products with an estimated value of US\$155 million. Three developing countries have been denied GSP status on certain products in response to petitions filed by US producers and labour unions (excluded trade is valued at US\$183 million). As a result of the de minimis provision, imports of 220 products valued at US\$52 million from a number of beneficiaries have been exempted from the 50 per cent competitive need rule (L/5153/Add.3). Reference may also be made to an analysis of the US GSP scheme provided in document COM.TD/W/401.

(b) Differential and more favourable treatment under GATT multilaterally negotiated instruments concerning non-tariff measures

6. Developments regarding the implementation of the MTN Agreements on various non-tariff measures are summarized in Section II of this note.

(c) Preferential arrangements among developing countries

7. The eleventh annual report of the Committee of Participating Countries has been circulated in document L/5686 and Addenda. It is listed for consideration by the Committee in the annotated provisional agenda as item five.

8. A notification has been received from Kuwait containing the text of Law No. 58 dated 1982, concerning the notification of the Unified Economic Agreement among States of the Gulf Cooperation Council (L5676).
9. Uruguay, acting on behalf of ALADI member countries which are contracting parties to the General Agreement, has submitted the report of ALADI to the CONTRACTING PARTIES (L/5689).

SECTION II

DEVELOPMENTS IN OTHER GATT BODIES OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO PART IV

The Council

8. Since the Committee's last review of "developments in other GATT bodies of interest in relation to Part IV" at its fifty-first session in November 1983, meetings of the Council of Representatives have been held on 1 and 2 November 1983, and on 7 February, 28 February, 13 March, 15 and 16 May, 14 June, 11 July and 1 October 1984.
9. The meeting in November 1983 was principally devoted to the finalization and adoption of the Council's report to the thirty-ninth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES (C/W/426).
10. The draft report of the Council to be presented to the CONTRACTING PARTIES at their fortieth session in regard to its work during the current year is contained in document C/W/449.
11. The Council met in special sessions on 1 November 1983, 15 May 1984 and will meet again on 6 November 1984, to review developments in the trading system in the light of the commitments embodied in paragraph 7(i) of the Ministerial Declaration of November 1982. Notes prepared by the secretariat (C/W/420/Rev.1, C/W/437/Rev.1, and C/W/448), listing new trade measures by contracting parties, within or outside the purview of GATT and other trade-related developments, provided the background for discussions at the special sessions. The minutes of these special sessions of the Council have been issued as C/M/172, C/M/177 and C/M/182. The work of the Council in this regard during the current year is covered as item 2 in its Draft Report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES (C/W/449).

Consultative Group of Eighteen

12. The Consultative Group of Eighteen met on 4-6 April, 5-6 July and 25-26 October 1984. Besides carrying out review of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Ministerial Work Programme, the meetings were devoted to informal discussion of some leading trade issues of current interest, including Subsidies in GATT, Trade Policy and the International Financial System, Countertrade, and Structural Adjustment and Trade Policy. At its session of 25 and 26 October, the Consultative Group focused its attention on the progress made in the implementation of the Work Programme adopted by the Ministers at the CONTRACTING PARTIES' Session of November 1982 and the further action to be pursued at the November 1984 Session of the Council and the CONTRACTING PARTIES. The Chairman of the Consultative Group of Eighteen will make a report to the Council in regard to the work of the Group during the current year at its meeting on 6-8 November 1984.

Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions

13. The Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions conducted consultations in accordance with simplified procedures with Peru, Tunisia and Turkey in December 1983 and with India and Yugoslavia in May 1984. The Committee also conducted "full" consultations with Brazil and Ghana in December 1983, with Nigeria in March 1984, and with Hungary and Israel in May 1984. It also carried out full consultations with Korea and Portugal and simplified consultations with Bangladesh and the Philippines at its meeting of 30 October-2 November 1984.

14. In the context of the consultation with Brazil, responding to the statement by Brazil on the extent to which import measures adopted by its trading partners affected its balance-of-payments situation, the Committee, in its conclusions, inter alia, "recognized the importance of giving particular attention to the possibilities for alleviating and correcting balance-of-payments problems through measures that contracting parties might take to facilitate an expansion of the export earnings of consulting contracting parties. Accordingly, the Committee agreed that members should jointly consider this issue in the broader GATT context, in the light of further consultations. The Committee noted the specific proposals made by the Brazilian delegation concerning ways to improve Brazil's export prospects." The Committee agreed that members would reflect further on these proposals.

15. In a report presented to the Council at its 13 March 1984 (C/125), the Chairman of the Balance-of-Payments Committee drew attention to the obligation of the Committee to take into account "external factors" which affected the balance-of-payments position of a consulting country and, if a developing country so desired, to give particular attention to possibilities from alleviating the balance-of-payments problems of that country through measures that other contracting parties might take to facilitate an expansion of the export earnings of the consulting country. In this context, he pointed out that, consistent with the observance of the m.f.n. principle, or the principle of differential and more favourable treatment of developing countries, including special treatment for the least-developed among the developing countries, action of other contracting parties could be taken in the following general areas:

(a) "Quantitative restrictions and non-tariff measures"

Quantitative import restrictions form the most obvious example of measures which hamper the exports of other countries. The rollback of such restrictions and measures with similar effects (without prejudice to their legal status in GATT) on products of interest to consulting countries would therefore deserve particular attention. The possibility of removing or reducing other non-tariff obstacles to trade on products exported by consulting countries could also be considered, taking full account of special provisions in favour of developing countries contained in the General Agreement and related to NTM Codes.

(b) "Safeguards, anti-dumping and countervailing action, market disruption"

Current actions under Article VI and related agreements, as well as under Article XIX, concerning products for which a consulting country is a principal of substantial supplier, could be given

particular attention in examining the need for their continued existence and possibilities for phasing them out. Great caution should be exercised in launching new actions concerning such products, taking full account of existing provisions in favour of developing countries. In view of the importance of trade in textiles and clothing to many consulting countries, the need to adhere strictly to the rules of the Arrangement regarding International Trade in Textiles was emphasized.

(c) "Tariffs

Suspension of m.f.n. duties, advance implementation of tariff concessions as well as improvement of GSP treatment for products of importance to consulting developing countries could be given serious consideration."

Safeguards

16. The Ministerial meeting of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, had inter alia, affirmed the "need for an improved and more efficient safeguard system which provides for greater predictability and clarity and also greater security and equity for both importing and exporting countries, so as to preserve the results of trade liberalization and avoid the proliferation of restrictive measures", and called for "a comprehensive understanding, to be based on the principles of the General Agreement" to be drawn up by the Council for adoption by the CONTRACTING PARTIES not later than their 1983 session. Work on this subject since the Ministerial meeting has been pursued through informal consultations organized by the Chairman of the Council. In his report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES at their thirty-ninth session in November 1983, the Chairman of the Council, inter alia, observed that "a certain progress had been made in further preparing the ground for the comprehensive understanding which ministers instructed us to seek and which must remain our objective. Our work has shed additional light on the safeguards issue and revealed new dimensions and facets of this complex problem. Developments since the Ministerial meeting have continued to be a matter of concern and in the present economic environment it is particularly important to achieve the comprehensive understanding. It has been confirmed that there remains an imperative need to draw up a comprehensive understanding, which can ensure predictable, stable and equitable conditions for both importers and exporters. More time will, however, be needed to achieve this goal and a positive political will will be even more indispensable if continued progress on a comprehensive understanding is to be made." Further work has since then continued to be pursued on an informal basis. Interim reports in this regard have been presented to the Council from time to time. The Chairman of the Council will be making a report on the status of this work to the CONTRACTING PARTIES at their fortieth session.

Textiles

17. The Textiles Committee held its third meeting under the 1981 Protocol of Extension on 15 December 1983 during which it conducted the second annual review of the operation of the Textiles Arrangement as extended by the 1981 Protocol. The Committee agreed to the request of the People's Republic of China for accession to the MFA which became effective on 18

January 1984. The fourth meeting of the Committee, held on 19-20 January 1984, was mainly devoted to the discussion of "new textile trade policy and procedure" announced by a major developed importing country establishing statistical criteria as the basis for an initial presumption that imports of particular products from particular sources were causing market disruption or a risk thereof, as set forth in the MFA. The fifth meeting of the Committee, held on 4-5 September 1984 was devoted to the discussion of measures announced by the same developed importing country in regard to countervailing duty actions against certain textile and clothing products imported from developing exporting countries under bilateral agreements negotiated in the framework of the MFA, and new "Customs Regulation Amendments Relating to Textiles and Textile Products" which would modify existing law and practice in regard to rules of origin applicable to the imports of textiles and clothing to that country. The sixth meeting of the Textiles Committee, held on 17 and 23 October 1984 was mainly devoted to the major review of the Arrangement as extended by the 1981 Protocol in the light of its operation in the preceding years. The Committee also agreed to a request by Panama for accession to the MFA.

18. Pursuant to the Decision taken by Ministers at the thirty-eighth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to carry out on a priority basis a study of various aspects of world trade in textiles and clothing, including the economic impact of the restraints and restrictions existing in this sector, and to examine expeditiously, taking into account the results of such a study, modalities of further trade liberalization in textiles and clothing including the possibilities for bringing about the full application of GATT provisions to this sector of trade, the secretariat prepared a study entitled "Textiles and Clothing in World Economy", which was circulated in May 1984. At its meeting on 15-16 May 1984, the Council agreed to set up a Working Party on Textiles and Clothing to carry out the examination contemplated in the Ministerial Decision. The Working Party had held five meetings since its inception and has presented a progress report to the Council in document L/5709.

Group on Quantitative Restrictions and Other Non-Tariff Measures

19. At its second meeting in October 1983, the Group agreed that the information so far assembled under the first stage of its work programme provided an adequate basis for its work, on the understanding that it was necessary to ensure the continuation of the work of collecting information from all contracting parties, as well as improving the quality of the information already available. Consequently, the Group proceeded to the second stage of its work which consists of the "review of existing quantitative restrictions and other non-tariff measures, the grounds on which these are maintained, and their conformity with the provisions of the General Agreement, so as to achieve the elimination of quantitative restrictions which are not in conformity with the General Agreement, and also to achieve progress in liberalizing other quantitative restrictions and non-tariff measures." The process of review was continued at the meetings of the Group held in December 1983, and in March and May 1984. Further meetings of the Group held in June, July, September and October 1984 were mainly devoted to the final phase of its work, namely consideration of its findings and conclusions. The Group's report to the Council is to be found in document L/5713.

Committee on Trade in Agriculture

20. At its meeting in November 1983, the Committee continued the work commenced at its October meeting, namely (i) the examination of trade measures affecting market access and supplies including those maintained under exceptions or derogations applied by the EEC and thirty-five countries; and (ii) examination of the operation of the General Agreement as regards subsidies, especially export subsidies, including other forms of export assistance.

21. At its meeting in March 1984 the Committee continued its work on the two exercises as well as a preliminary consideration of conclusions to be drawn from them. These conclusions were discussed at a meeting of the Committee held at senior policy level in April 1984, under four main headings, namely (a) inter-linkage of domestic support and measures affecting trade; (b) reinforcement of Article XI, in a manner which would enable all quantitative restrictions and other related or assimilable measures to be brought under effective GATT surveillance and discipline; (c) subsidies in general, including export subsidies and other forms of export assistance; and (d) approaches to improving opportunities for trade in agriculture including special needs for developing countries, balance of rights and obligations, specific characteristics and problems in agriculture. It was agreed that, on the basis of the Committees' discussions, the secretariat, in conjunction with the Chairman, would prepare draft recommendations for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

22. The secretariat draft recommendations (AG/W/8) prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee were given a first consideration at the Committee's meeting held from 6 to 8 June 1984. Of particular interest to developing countries was the recommendation, contained in paragraph 3, that in the elaboration of the various elements outlined in the preceding paragraphs as a basis for possible future negotiations, full account should be taken of the need for a balance of rights and obligations under the GATT; of the special needs of the developing countries in the light of the GATT provisions providing for differential and more favourable treatment for such contracting parties; and of specific characteristics and problems in agriculture. In the light of the preliminary comments given, the draft recommendations were revised (AG/W/8/Rev.1). The Committee continued its discussions on them at a meeting held in September 1984, and amendments proposed by certain delegations have been presented in the form of an alternative revised version (Spec(84)53). The Committee will meet again in November 1984 with a view to achieving agreements.

Working Party on Trade in Certain Natural Resource Products

23. In pursuance of the Ministerial Decision that problems relating to trade in certain natural resource products (non-ferrous metals and minerals; forestry products; fish and fisheries products), including their semi-processed and processed forms, falling under the competence of the General Agreement relating to tariffs, non-tariff measures and other factors affecting trade, should be examined with a view to recommending possible solutions, the Council, at its meeting on 13 March 1984, agreed to establish a Working Party on Trade in Certain Natural Resource Products. The Working Party held an organizational meeting in May 1984, and has since held a series of meetings in connection with the review of the situation in regard to the various product groups covered in its mandate.

Committee on Tariff Concessions

24. The Committee on Tariff Concessions met in December 1983 and in April and November 1984. The Committee reviewed the progress in the submission of loose-leaf schedules. It authorized the secretariat to begin preliminary work towards the establishment of a common data base which would be used by delegations concerned for the conduct of their negotiations under Article XXVIII. The Committee understood that technical assistance by the secretariat would be available to the developing countries so that they could fully participate in the negotiations. The Committee also heard statements in regard to the intentions of governments to adhere to the Harmonized System, and the progress of preparatory work in this regard in the respective capitals.

Bovine Meat

25. The International Meat Council met in December 1983 and in April and June 1984. The Council examined the functioning of the Arrangement Regarding Bovine Meat. It reviewed world market situation and outlook. It also undertook examination of national policies linked to trade in bovine meat.

Dairy Products

26. The International Dairy Products Council met in March and September 1984. The Council carried out its review of the functioning of the International Dairy Arrangement. It also carried out evaluation of the situation in and outlook for the world market for dairy products.

Agreements on Non-Tariff Measures

27. The Committee on Subsidies and Countervailing Duties met on 17 and 18 November 1983 and on 10 May and 1-2 November 1984. The Committee dealt with questions relating to the adherence of further countries to the Agreement. It continued its examination of national legislation and implementing regulations in member countries. It examined preliminary or final countervailing duty actions notified by members.

28. The Committee on Anti-Dumping Practices met on 15 November 1983 and on 14 March, 8 May and 30-31 October 1984. The Committee dealt with questions relating to adherence of further countries to the Anti-Dumping Code. It continued its examination of national legislation and implementing regulations in member countries. At its meeting on 8 May 1984, the Committee also considered the report of the Ad Hoc Group on the Implementation of the Anti-Dumping Code appointed by it earlier. The Committee examined reports in regard to anti-dumping actions taken by member countries.

29. The Committee on Government Procurement met in November 1983, and in February, April, June and September 1984. At these meetings, apart from its continuing review of questions relating to national implementation and administration of the Agreement on Government Procurement, the Committee reviewed the implementation of Article III of the Agreement (in regard to special and differential treatment of developing countries), and invited

observers from non-parties to explain to the Committee problems they might have encountered in acceding to the Agreement so that the Committee might be in a position to examine such problems with a view to ascertaining whether it could do something to make accession of interested countries easier.

30. The Committee opened Article IX:6(b) negotiations in regard to the improvement and broadening of the Agreement and exploration of the possibility of expanding its coverage to include service contracts. The Committee invited governments not Parties to the Agreement to participate in the negotiations by tabling entity offers and to explain problems they might have encountered in acceding to the Agreement.

31. At its meeting held in February 1984, the Committee heard a statement by one observer on the need for greater flexibility and transparency in order to facilitate accession of developing countries. The Committee also heard and discussed a number of suggestions concerning the Article IX:6(b) negotiations. The Committee agreed to establish a Practical Guide to the Agreement, and asked the secretariat to start its preparation on the basis of information already available to it.

32. The meeting of the Committee held in June 1984 was devoted principally to the ongoing negotiations pursuant to Article IX:6(b) of the Agreement. A "Consolidated List of Suggestions Made for Improvement of the Agreement" (GPR/W/56) served as background document for discussion. More clarification and precision was demanded on some of the suggestions made. A paper (GPR/W/56/Add.2) circulated by the secretariat, summarizing views and suggestions for improvements expressed in more general terms in oral statements as from the opening of the negotiations in November 1983, and pertaining mainly to questions relating to developing countries, was before the Committee at its meeting, on 19 September 1984.

33. The Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade met in February, July and October 1984. At these meetings, technical assistance featured on the agenda. At the February meeting, the observer from the International Standardization Organization reported on various technical assistance programmes of ISO. At its October meeting, the Committee agreed on procedures for the exchange of information on technical assistance between Parties. A number of Parties gave information on their technical assistance programmes. In the light of informal consultations held by the Chairman of the Committee with developing country signatories and non-signatories, the Committee agreed to hold an information meeting on the implementation and operation of the Agreement with those countries, in conjunction with its regular meeting in the Spring of 1985 (TBT/M/17).

34. The Committee on Customs Valuation held its eighth meeting in November 1983, during which, among other things, it carried out its third annual review of the operation of the Agreement. A number of member countries informed the Committee of the various forms of technical assistance they were offering to developing countries on customs valuations, including training courses and seminars on customs administration. The subject of appropriate technical assistance to developing countries which had already acceded to the Agreement and others which may be contemplating accession to the Agreement was also discussed extensively at the April 1984 meeting of the Committee.

35. The Committee on Import Licensing held its tenth meeting on 12 June 1984 and among the items on the agenda were (a) information available on import licensing procedures, (b) implementation and operation of the Agreement, (c) consultations with interested non-signatories, and (d) future work of the Committee. On the question of consultations with interested non-signatories, the representative of a group of developed countries expressed interest in organizing a meeting as soon as possible so as to determine why non-signatories had not yet acceded to the Agreement and to help them in that respect. The representative of a developing country stressed the importance of enlarging the membership of this as well as other GATT Agreements and Arrangements. He said that it might be useful to examine the provisions of the Agreement to see whether there might be any scope for adapting them in order to facilitate the accession of developing countries. Informal consultations are understood to be continuing on this matter.