

Preferential Arrangements
Among Developing Countries
Negotiated in GATT

COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Summary of Discussions at Fifty-Fourth Meeting
Held on 11 July 1989

1. The Committee of Participating Countries provided for in the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries held its fifty-fourth meeting on 11 July 1989 under the Chairmanship of Mr. V. Radu (Romania).
2. The draft agenda circulated in document CPC/W/136 was adopted.

Expansion of trade among developing countries

3. The Chairman referred to paragraphs 3-11 of the Summary of Discussions (CPC/98) of the last meeting. He said that at the last meeting, the Committee had taken note of the comments and proposals made by members and agreed that participating countries would reflect on the various approaches which might be pursued with a view to the expansion of trade among developing countries. In summary, it had been suggested that, in the short term the Committee might proceed as follows: firstly, pursue the updating of the schedules of concessions of participating countries having regard, inter alia, to the opportunities offered by the introduction of the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System; secondly, review periodically developments in the schedules of concessions on the basis of an updated secretariat document; and thirdly, consider in more detail the possible elaboration of procedures that might entitle participating countries to incorporate into the Protocol additional concessions and contributions fully recognized in the context of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. The Committee had also agreed to revert to the question of the expansion of trade among developing countries at the present meeting.

4. A member said that his Government had decided to include additional items in its schedule of concessions on an autonomous basis. Essential oils, citrus fruits, leather and leather products and a number of textile products were in the list of additional items. These items would receive duty-free treatment as of 1 July 1989. His authorities felt that this autonomous action was in line with the current efforts aimed at increasing trade exchanges among developing countries in the framework of the Protocol and were ready to negotiate further concessions with interested participating countries. Moreover, his authorities would in due course

seek appropriate credit for the additional concessions in the context of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations. An official communication describing his Government's action would be sent to the secretariat shortly. It was expected that the procedures set out in CPC/4 would be used to include these additional items in his country's schedule of concessions.

5. Several members expressed support and appreciation for the efforts by a participating country to include additional items in its schedule of concessions on an autonomous basis. Both the product coverage and the level of the concessions set at duty free appeared to be a significant contribution to the objective of expansion of trade among developing countries thus strengthening the Protocol. It was hoped that this initiative might encourage other participating countries to follow suit in the near future. The Committee agreed that following the circulation of the official communication,¹ the certification procedures for the establishment of consolidated schedules established in document CPC/4 would be applied.

26. Reference was made to the desirability of seeking formal recognition and credit for any additional concessions established in the framework of the Protocol, whether on an autonomous basis or a negotiated basis, in the Uruguay Round negotiations. Members felt that trade liberalization efforts in the Protocol framework which would benefit developing countries were in line both with the Punta del Este Declaration and the Montreal Decisions. In response to questions concerning the procedures that might be used to seek recognition in the Uruguay Round for liberalization measures in the framework of the Protocol, the representative of the secretariat said that, in his view, those participating countries which liberalized conditions of access in the framework of the Protocol might approach the relevant Uruguay Round negotiating groups on an individual basis or eventually through the Committee of Participating Countries. Perhaps if trade liberalization went beyond individual action, participating countries might wish to give the Committee an official rôle in conveying information to the relevant Uruguay Round bodies concerning the introduction of additional concessions in the framework of the Protocol. Even though these bodies might acknowledge that the additional concessions would represent a contribution to the objectives of the Uruguay Round, in his opinion, the evaluation of the specific credit that would accrue to participating countries for the purposes of the Uruguay Round would have to be carried out on an individual basis and would be a matter for negotiation with interested trading partners.

7. The Committee took note of the comments made by members. The Committee also agreed to revert to this matter at its next meeting and to examine specifically the question of obtaining credit in the Uruguay Round for additional concessions established in the framework of the Protocol as well as the procedures that might be used to convey relevant information to the appropriate Uruguay Round bodies.

¹The communication has been circulated as CPC/99.

Yugoslavia - Schedule of Concessions

8. The Chairman referred to paragraph 13 of the Summary of Discussions (CPC/98) of the last meeting. He recalled that at the last meeting the Committee had taken note that, in accordance with the procedures set out in CPC/4, the Schedule of Concessions of Yugoslavia revised in accordance with the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System would be circulated for inclusion in a certification of rectifications to schedules. The revised Schedule of Concessions of Yugoslavia had been circulated as CPC/97. The Committee had agreed to revert to this matter at the present meeting. The representative of Yugoslavia said that her delegation had carried out consultations with interested participating countries. Most questions raised by members had been settled satisfactorily. The only outstanding issue which would be clarified shortly related to pocket knives (item 82.11). Moreover, the revised schedule would have to include the following corrections to the text reproduced in CPC/97: (i) page 6 of the English version under item 4010.20 delete "-- other and 100%"; and (ii) page 14 of the French version delete item "8418.70" and replace by "84.70".

Certification of origin

9. The Chairman referred to the additional information concerning certification of origin provided by Mexico, Peru and Israel which had been circulated in document CPC/10/Addendum 33, 34 and 35, respectively. The Committee took note of the information concerning certification of origin provided by Mexico, Peru and Israel. The Committee also agreed to invite Peru to provide additional information concerning official signatures and stamps.

Israel - Schedule of Concessions

10. The representative of Israel said that his country's schedule of concessions transposed to the Harmonized Commodity Description and Coding System would be circulated as soon as possible.

Rotation of officers

11. The Chairman thanked members for their co-operation and assistance in carrying out the activities of the Committee and seeking to strengthen the arrangements under the Protocol. He said that in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Committee, the Chairmanship for the forthcoming period would be assumed by the representative of Turkey and the Vice-Chairmanship by the representative of Uruguay.

Next meeting

12. The Chairman said that the date for the next meeting of the Committee would be fixed in consultation with delegations and the secretariat in accordance with usual practice.