

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

RESTRICTED

COM.TD/W/477

6 November 1989

## TARIFFS AND TRADE

Limited Distribution

---

Committee on Trade and Development

Sixty-Seventh Session

9-10 and 14 November 1989

### TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

#### Note by the Secretariat

1. The technical cooperation programme of the GATT secretariat in the context of the regular work of the GATT as well as the Uruguay Round is periodically reviewed by the Committee on Trade and Development. The Committee last reviewed the programme at its Sixty-Sixth Session in July 1989, on the basis of an interim report by the secretariat outlining the current year's activities (COM.TD/W/473). The following paragraphs provide an updated summary of the technical cooperation activities of the secretariat since the beginning of the year.

#### Tariffs, NTM's and trade data

2. During the period under review, the secretariat continued to make available to developing countries, on request, different types of data and information in connection with the Uruguay Round negotiations. Apart from meeting various ad hoc requests, the following were the main categories of data supplied to delegations of developing countries.

3. Country studies Data and information was provided to some thirty-five developing countries to assist them in identifying their broad negotiating and trade interests in the Uruguay Round.

4. Data for negotiations on non-tariff measures Data and information designed to assist developing countries in preparing their request lists on non-tariff measures or to be used otherwise in the context of negotiations on NTM's has been supplied to some thirty-two developing country delegations.

5. Data for tariff negotiations Upon request of developing countries, data is being prepared and supplied so as to help delegations to take a more effective part in negotiations on tariffs, including, as appropriate, any eventual submission of request lists.

6. Information and data on tropical products The secretariat has provided information and data to developing countries to help them in evaluating for their export trade the offers and contributions on tropical products.

Factual background notes

7. Factual background notes on some subjects covered in the negotiations, as well as on developments in the negotiations as a whole since the Mid-Term Review, were also prepared and made available, on request, to developing country delegations.

Briefing of delegations and officials

8. A general briefing session was organized by the secretariat, in the beginning of 1989, to inform delegates, especially those who were newcomers to Geneva, about the Uruguay Round negotiations and the regular activities of GATT. In addition, briefings on the progress of the Uruguay Round negotiations, in the sectors or areas of their particular interest, continued to be provided to visiting officials and delegations from developing countries. This activity was on the increase during the period under review as many visiting officials and delegations approached the secretariat for briefing.

Country missions and trade policy seminars

9. There have been continuing requests from developing countries for trade policy seminars and for country missions during the period under review with the result that this has remained an important dimension of the technical cooperation activities of the secretariat. Greater need for seminars and country missions was felt in 1989 with the start of the active phase of negotiations.

10. During the period under review, and in response to requests from governments, the Technical Cooperation Division organized or participated in sixteen national trade policy seminars in developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Some of these seminars were general in nature covering all aspects of GATT's work as well as the Uruguay Round negotiations, while some others were more specialised, focusing on a few specific subjects of particular interest to the concerned developing countries, such as, for example, TRIPS, TRIMS, and trade in services. Programmes for these seminars were drawn up, as in the past, in consultation with requesting countries in order that their particular needs, interests and concerns might be addressed.

11. The secretariat organized two regional seminars during this period, in Asia and Latin America, on the regular work of the GATT and the Uruguay Round negotiations. The second of these, held in June 1989 at Bogota, Colombia, was organized with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany.

12. The secretariat has been cooperating, as far as possible, with other international organisations in the context of their technical assistance activities relating to the Uruguay Round negotiations. During the period

under review, the GATT secretariat made the services of its officials available to participate in a number of seminars and workshops organized by other international organizations such as UNCTAD and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Such cooperation will continue to be extended, on a pragmatic basis, in the future.

13. Officials from the secretariat also visited some developing countries, at their request, on technical missions, to hold discussions on specific trade policy questions and to advise concerned officials in regard to particular issues relating to GATT's work or the Uruguay Round negotiations.

#### Least-developed countries

14. The secretariat has continued to give special attention to the technical assistance needs of the least developed countries by, among other things, providing them with data and other information and responding to their requests for briefings on issues of their particular interest in the Uruguay Round negotiations.

15. Four of the national seminars organized by the secretariat during the year were held in least-developed countries, namely, Sudan, Haiti, Nepal and Laos. A regional seminar on the GATT and the Uruguay Round negotiations was organized in Bangkok, for least-developed countries members of ESCAP, from 26-30 June 1989, with financial support from the Government of Norway. The secretariat also participated in and lent technical support to an inter-regional seminar for least-developed countries participating in the Uruguay Round, organized by the UNCTAD, in Dhaka from 3-5 October 1989.

#### Technical assistance in the textiles and clothing sector

16. The provision of technical assistance in the field of textiles has been maintained during the period under review. The Technical Consultant (Textiles) continued to make available background material and statistical data to individual delegations upon request.

#### Seminar/workshop on the integrated data base

17. As part of its technical cooperation activities in connection with the Integrated Data Base (IDB), the secretariat organized a second week-long seminar/workshop in Geneva from 2-6 October 1989, for technical experts from capitals. The seminar/workshop was open to all contracting parties and was designed to give secretariat staff the opportunity to explain in detail the plans and data requirements for the IDB, to answer questions and help specialists find solutions to data submission problems, and to receive suggestions (to be forwarded to the Informal Advisory Group on the IDB) in respect of possible modifications in data content and possibilities for the end-use applications of the IDB. Some seventy participants from thirty-four countries attended the seminar/workshop.

Special training course on GATT dispute settlement procedures

18. The Decision on Improvements to the GATT Dispute Settlement Rules and Procedures, adopted by CONTRACTING PARTIES on 12 April 1989 (L/6489), called on the secretariat to conduct special training courses for interested contracting parties concerning GATT dispute settlement procedures and practices so as to enable contracting parties' experts to be better informed in this regard. In accordance with this Decision, the Technical Cooperation Division, in conjunction with the Legal Affairs Division, will organise the first such training course in Geneva on 13-17 November 1989.

Future technical assistance and voluntary financial contributions

19. The more active pace of work in the Uruguay Round negotiations after the April TNC meeting resulted in considerably increased demands upon the secretariat for technical assistance to developing countries, in support of their active and effective participation in the negotiations. A number of requests and proposals received this year for the organization of seminars and workshops etc. in the capitals have had to be carried over to the next year, both due to the preoccupation of concerned GATT officials with the work of the negotiations at Geneva, and the limitations of the budget. The demands for technical cooperation may be expected to remain at a similarly high level during 1990, during the concluding phase of the negotiations, and in later years in connection with the implementation of the results of the Uruguay Round.

20. Developing countries may also need strong technical support from the secretariat in connection with their coverage in the Integrated Data Base, especially in view of the intention to have it in place and operational by the end of the Uruguay Round.

21. The usefulness of regional and sub-regional seminars in providing opportunities for constructive exchange and interaction of views, perceptions and positions amongst developing countries on issues of particular interest and importance for them, especially when Geneva-based delegates are also enabled to participate in them, has been clearly demonstrated by experience, and demand for such seminars remains high. However, as in the past, organization of such seminars will continue to be dependent on financial support through voluntary contributions. It is to be hoped that donor countries will be able to continue to make ad hoc voluntary contributions in the future as well, to enable the secretariat to respond to the urgent needs of the developing countries for technical support.