

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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SOUTH AFRICA - IMPORT SURCHARGES

Communication from the United States

The following communication, dated 17 September 1992, has been received from the Office of the United States Trade Representative in Geneva, with the request that it be circulated to contracting parties and inscribed on the Agenda of the Council meeting on 29 September 1992.

In 1985, South Africa notified the GATT that it applied a 10 per cent surcharge on certain imports (L/5898). In 1988, that surcharge was extended and amended to increase the rate of application to levels of up to 60 per cent on some products. Since that time, there have not been any further notifications on the status of these measures.

The United States is concerned that South Africa is applying these surcharges without regard to GATT provisions concerning the need to consult with the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions. The surcharges are also being applied on a discriminatory basis, having been eliminated selectively with respect to imports from certain countries.

The application of these surcharges limits import access to the South African market. We believe that South Africa should bring the application of these measures into conformity with its GATT obligations, update its notification concerning their status, and consult in the Balance-of-Payments Committee concerning their justification and future application.