

**GENERAL AGREEMENT
ON TARIFFS AND TRADE**

RESTRICTED

L/7546

2 November 1994

Limited Distribution

(94-2301)

Original: English

ASEAN PREFERENTIAL TRADING ARRANGEMENTS
Information Submitted by the ASEAN Contracting Parties

The following communication, dated 14 October 1994, concerning information on trade co-operation among ASEAN Member States, has been received from the Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam for the information of contracting parties.

On behalf of the ASEAN Contracting Parties namely Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand, I would like to request that the excerpt of the Joint Press Statement issued at the 26th Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers in Chiang Mai, Thailand on the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) Scheme for the ASEAN-Free Trade Area (AFTA), attached herewith, be transmitted to the contracting parties for their information.

In pursuance of the Decision of the CONTRACTING PARTIES of 28th November 1979, the information is brought to the attention of the Committee on Trade and Development, as it is entrusted with the responsibility of reviewing the implementation of the Enabling Clause.

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JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

**THE TWENTY-SIXTH MEETING OF THE
ASEAN ECONOMIC MINISTERS
CHIANGMAI, THAILAND
22-23 SEPTEMBER**

(EXCERPT)

The Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the ASEAN Economic Ministers was held in Chiangmai, Thailand, on 22-23 September 1994.

CEPT Scheme and AFTA

12. The Ministers were satisfied with the progress of the implementation of the CEPT Scheme. The Ministers endorsed the Fifth AFTA Council decision to accelerate the realisation of AFTA from 15 to 10 years by 1 January 2003 instead of 2008 and would recommend the decision to ASEAN Heads of Government. The acceleration of the realisation of AFTA is to be achieved by the following approaches.

(1) **Normal Track**

- to reduce tariff rates above 20% to 20% by 1 January 1998 and subsequently from 20 and to 0-5% by 1 January 2003;
- to reduce tariff rates at or below 20% to 0-5% by 1 January 2000.

(2) **Fast Track**

- to reduce tariff rates above 20% to 0-5% by 1 January 2000;
- to reduce tariff rates at or below 20% to 0-5% by 1 January 1998.

13. In addition, all agricultural products will be eventually included in the CEPT/AFTA Scheme. A joint working group between SEOM and SOM - AMAF, will look into the arrangement to include the unprocessed agriculture products into the CEPT Scheme. The CEPT Agreement will be amended accordingly to effect the inclusion.

14. With the view to make the CEPT Scheme more meaningful and definitive, the Ministers have decided to eliminate the Temporary Exclusion List. Products in the Temporary List will be transferred to the Inclusion List in five equal annual instalments of 20%, the first instalment shall be completed by 1 January 1996. This will provide certainty that the Temporary Exclusion List will be phased out within a fixed period compared with the original time frame of a review after eight years. The Ministers endorsed other measures agreed by the 5th AFTA Council, such as the establishment of an AFTA unit in the ASEAN Secretariat, and national AFTA units, more AFTA publicity and promotional campaigns and encouragement of greater private sector participation in the AFTA process.