

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

W.14/3
30 April 1959

Limited Distribution

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Fourteenth Session

DERESTRICTION OF DOCUMENTS

Proposed Revision of Procedure

(Note by the Executive Secretary)

1. The present procedure for the derestriction of documents, which was approved by the CONTRACTING PARTIES at the sixth session, may be summarized as follows¹:

- (a) documents produced up to 30 June each year are derestricted the following 30 September;
- (b) documents produced up to 31 December are derestricted on 31 March of the following year;
- (c) documents pertaining to a session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES are derestricted ninety days after the close of the session.

Further, in recent years, so as to permit the early publication of a Supplement to the Basic Instruments and Selected Documents as soon as possible after the close of a session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, the documents to be included in the Supplement have been derestricted in January.

2. These procedures have involved four derestriction operations each year and this number will be increased to five now that sessions of the CONTRACTING PARTIES will be held twice a year. As it would seem that the procedure has become unnecessarily cumbersome, the CONTRACTING PARTIES might wish to consider whether it should not be simplified.

3. For the consideration of the CONTRACTING PARTIES it is suggested that, in future, two derestriction operations a year would be sufficient. If this is acceptable, it is further suggested:

¹ See INF/18 issued on 23 December 1952. Excepted from derestriction are all summary records and working papers, as well as any documents which a contracting party requests should remain restricted. Secret documents remain secret.

- (a) that the end of the two derestriction periods in each year should coincide with the end of the two sessions of the CONTRACTING PARTIES. This would mean that a derestriction operation would cover documents produced between the end of one session and the end of the succeeding session;
- (b) that, in order to enable the relevant documents of the second session of the year to be published in a Supplement to the Basic Instruments and Selected Documents in January of the following year, the delay from the end of each derestriction period (i.e. the end of the session to the date on which documents are derestricted) should be reduced from ninety to sixty days.

4. The procedures would then provide for the derestriction of documents issued between the end of one session and the end of the succeeding session sixty days after the end of the latter session.