

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

W.17/28

15 November 1960

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CONTRACTING PARTIES  
Seventeenth Session

## EUROPEAN FREE TRADE ASSOCIATION

### Note by the Chairman of the CONTRACTING PARTIES

The Working Party on European Free Trade Association set up at the sixteenth session to examine the Stockholm Convention recommended to the CONTRACTING PARTIES "that they should postpone any action in regard to the Convention and that the question should be included on the agenda of the seventeenth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES. This would give contracting parties time to reflect on the various points of view expressed in the course of the Working Party's discussions so that they would be in a better position, at the seventeenth session, to reach a conclusion on the issues involved".

After informal consultations with a number of interested delegations the Chairman submits the following draft conclusions as a basis for the discussion of this matter at the present session under item 9 of the Agenda.

### DRAFT CONCLUSIONS

Taking account of the report drawn up by the Working Party set up at the sixteenth session and in the light of the discussions which took place in the CONTRACTING PARTIES on the Stockholm Convention, the CONTRACTING PARTIES have adopted the following conclusions:

- (a) The CONTRACTING PARTIES have examined, in accordance with paragraph 7 of Article XXIV of the General Agreement, the provisions of the Stockholm Convention for the Establishment of a European Free Trade Association, and have taken cognizance of the information submitted by the parties to that Convention in this connexion;
- (b) The CONTRACTING PARTIES have taken note of the provisions of the Stockholm Convention as well as of the statements made by the representatives of the parties to the Convention to the effect that their Governments are firmly determined to establish, within the time-limit provided for in the Convention, a free-trade area in the sense of Article XXIV;

- (c) At this stage of their examination the CONTRACTING PARTIES felt that there remain some legal and practical issues which could be more fruitfully discussed in the light of experience of the operation of the Stockholm Convention. For these reasons the CONTRACTING PARTIES did not at this juncture find it appropriate to make recommendations to the parties to the Convention pursuant to paragraph 7(b) of Article XXIV;
- (d) This conclusion would clearly not prejudice the rights of the CONTRACTING PARTIES under Article XXIV.
- (e) The CONTRACTING PARTIES welcomed the readiness of the members of the EFTA to furnish further information pursuant to paragraph 7(a) of Article XXIV as the evolution of the EFTA proceeded;
- (f) The CONTRACTING PARTIES also welcomed the willingness of the members of the EFTA to furnish in Article XXII consultations information as to the measures arising out of the application of the Convention;
- (g) The CONTRACTING PARTIES noted that the other normal procedures of the General Agreement would also be available to contracting parties to call in question any measures taken by any of the seven countries in the application of the provisions of the Stockholm Convention, it being open of course to such country to invoke the benefit of Article XXIV insofar as it considered that this Article provided justification for any action which might otherwise be inconsistent with a provision or provisions of the General Agreement.