

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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CONTRACTING PARTIES
Twenty-Fifth Session

TRADE IN TROPICAL PRODUCTS

Statement by the Chairman of the Special Group on 13 November 1968

1. During their last session the CONTRACTING PARTIES agreed to reactivate the Special Group on Trade in Tropical Products. The Group was instructed to examine problems affecting trade in tropical products and to report on ways and means of overcoming them. The Group was to study, inter alia, the incidence of internal charges and revenue duties on tropical products.
2. Since then the Group has held two meetings. In a meeting in January 1968 the Group agreed on giving attention on a priority basis to six products, namely, tea, coffee, cocoa, bananas, oilseeds and vegetable oils, and spices, it being understood that other products could be taken up by the Group at a later stage.
3. In July the Group considered certain proposals by governments concerning the scope and nature of its future work. There was general agreement that in taking up any problems and in seeking solutions to them, the Group would take fully into account the relevant activities in other international organizations.
4. The secretariat, on the request of the Group, has undertaken certain studies of problems relating to trade in tropical products and is currently engaged in up-dating the material collected. The secretariat has also been asked to arrange consultations with interested exporting and importing countries with a view to identifying specific issues arising from proposals presented for discussion in this Group. Such consultations are in progress and it has been proposed that the Group should be convened at an appropriate date in the light of the progress made.
5. A short account of the activities of the Group as well as certain information relating to particular commodities has been set out in a secretariat document under the symbol SGTP/10.