

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

TN.64/19
27 April 1964

Special Distribution

Trade Negotiations Committee

Original: French

MINISTERIAL ATTENDANCE AT MEETING ON 4 MAY 1964

The following letter from the President of the Council of Ministers of the European Economic Community is circulated for the information of the Committee.

In your airgram GATT/AIR/391 of 15 April 1964 you confirmed that, in accordance with the desire expressed by several contracting parties, the Trade Negotiations Committee will hold a meeting on 4 May next at ministerial level to mark the formal opening of the multilateral trade negotiations. You also noted that the meeting might be extended by a day or two if that appeared appropriate.

I wish first of all to advise you of the satisfaction with which the member States of the European Economic Community have greeted the announcement of this meeting which will mark the opening of negotiations in which the Community is prepared to participate in the spirit of mutual goodwill which has always characterized the work of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

As you know, the Community's participation in the above-mentioned negotiations is governed by the provisions of Article 111, paragraph 2 of the Rome Treaty. In these circumstances, the Commission will be responsible for representing the Community at the meeting and throughout the Conference. The Commission will inform you of the membership of its delegation.

The member States of the Community, however, appreciate the wish expressed by certain contracting parties that a particularly solemn character should be given to this opening meeting which will also constitute a tribute to the great statesman to whose initiative we owe this endeavour by the free world for the expansion of world trade.

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In these circumstances, I wish to inform you, on behalf also of the other member States of the European Economic Community, that in the event that Ministers of other contracting parties participate in the meeting, a Minister of my country, which is currently presiding over the Council of the European Economic Community, as well as Ministers of other member States of the Community, will be happy to attend the opening meeting on 4 May. Although their intention is not to participate in the negotiations, which, so far as the Community is concerned, will be conducted by the Commission, those Ministers have asked me to emphasize to you that they wish by their presence to demonstrate the interest which the Community attaches to these negotiations and to their success.