

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Statement Adopted by the Council of the International Chamber of Commerce

Faithful to its mission, the International Chamber of Commerce has always lent its support to any initiative aimed at promoting international trade. As early as November 1962, the ICC therefore called upon governments to take advantage of the occasion provided by the enactment of the Trade Expansion Act by the United States Congress to open new trade negotiations within the framework of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

In July 1963, the ICC welcomed the decisions taken by the GATT Ministerial Meeting and defined the principles and methods of negotiation which, in its opinion, would enable the Geneva Conference to achieve positive results of universal significance.

Since then, the ICC has continuously concerned itself with the problems which have arisen in the course of the negotiations, drawing the attention of governments to steps which, it seems, should enable the difficulties encountered to be overcome. It has brought to bear the influence of its national committees with the aim of overcoming resistance and reacting against the pessimism that has sometimes pervaded the negotiations. The ICC is happy to observe that this action has achieved results and that tangible progress has been made in recent weeks.

Now, however, when the Geneva Conference has entered its ultimate and decisive phase, the ICC wishes to emphasize once again how crucial the success of this enterprise appears to the world of business which it represents. What is at stake is so far-reaching that a failure of the Geneva Conference - or even a success too limited in character - would be looked upon as a serious defeat for the spirit of international co-operation. Protectionism would thus be strengthened and, in particular, there would be the danger of seeing its influence spread to the level of the major regional economic groups.

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