

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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Special Distribution

Group on Cereals

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NOTE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I have been requested by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to bring to your attention his communication to me dated 5 June 1967.

I acknowledge the receipt of your letter, received on 2 June 1967, by which you informed me that participating governments in the Kennedy Round had authorized you to invite me or my representative to attend the meetings dealing with cereals. I duly noted the exceptional nature of this decision as opposed to the general rule applied by the CONTRACTING PARTIES for negotiating meetings.

In pursuance of this invitation, I designated a representative to attend the meeting of the special Group on Cereals enlarged to include all participants in the Kennedy Round which was held in the afternoon of 2 June 1967. My representative reported to me on the discussions and decisions of that meeting. In particular, he reported that the consensus of the participants was that a special session of the International Wheat Council should be called at the earliest possible time, and that the Council should decide to convene under its own auspices an international wheat conference to negotiate a new international wheat agreement which in particular would embody the provisions already agreed by some negotiating parties in the Kennedy Round in the Memorandum of Agreement of 19 May 1967.

In the light of this development, I feel compelled to recall my communication to you of 14 March 1967 and to reiterate my reference to the clear responsibilities that devolve upon the United Nations for the negotiation of international commodity agreements. As you are aware, the functions which the United Nations has exercised in this regard since its inception were entrusted to UNCTAD under the terms of General Assembly Resolution 1995 (XIX). In order to ensure the basic principle of equal opportunity of participation of all countries in the formulation of international commodity agreements in which they might have an interest, the world community has for the past nearly twenty years entrusted to the United Nations the task of convening commodity conferences. Needless to say, the work of those conferences has been invariably greatly facilitated by the preparatory work which has been undertaken by commodity councils or study groups. On the other hand, it

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has also been invariably felt that the principle of equal opportunity of participation should lead in the final analysis in each case to the holding of a general commodity conference under United Nations auspices.

I therefore view with utmost concern the situation emerging from the decision made at the meeting of 2 June 1967, a situation in which a group of countries agreed on a procedure for negotiation an international wheat agreement which would disregard the practice described above and would fall short from ensuring the discharge by the United Nations of its responsibilities towards its membership as a whole. I consider this matter to be of such importance that I feel bound to ask you to bring the present communication to the attention of all governments participating in the Kennedy Round negotiations.