

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

C/W/38
23 May 1962

Limited Distribution

COUNCIL
24 May - 1 June 1962

COUNCIL AGENDA

Notes by the Secretariat on Agenda Items

The provisional agenda has been distributed in document C/22. To facilitate preparations by Council members for dealing with various items on the agenda, the following annotations are provided:

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The provisional agenda includes the items suggested by the Executive Secretary (GATT/AIR/280) and items proposed by contracting parties. At the first meeting the Executive Secretary will suggest an order of business. As agreed in February, meetings of the Council will be held in the afternoons.

2. PROGRAMME FOR EXPANSION OF TRADE

(a) Customs tariffs

When the Working Party on Tariff Reduction was appointed at the nineteenth session, it was intended that its first meeting would be held in April 1962. However, when the Council met in February, it was agreed that a meeting of the Working Party in April would be premature and that the Council in May should decide upon a date.

(b) Trade in agricultural products

At the time of the last Council meeting, it was envisaged that the Group on Cereals would reconvene on 26 March, but it was agreed that the Chairman of the Group would consult with delegations to ascertain whether there existed a reasonable basis for continuing at that time the discussions which had been initiated. The second meeting of the Group has not yet been convened.

At its last meeting the Council established a Group on Meat and instructed the Executive Secretary, in consultation with members of the Group, to decide when the first meeting should be convened. A preparatory meeting of the Group is being held prior to the Council meeting. (See GATT/AIR/284).

(c) Trade of less-developed countries

Committee III met earlier this month and has submitted a report in document L/1768. The Committee proposes to meet again before the next session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

At its last meeting the Council established a Special Group on Trade in Tropical Products and it was agreed in principle that a meeting of the Group would be convened prior to the next meeting of Committee III, but on the understanding that the Executive Secretary in consultation with the member of the Group, could, if found appropriate alter the date of the meeting. It was subsequently decided that the Special Group should meet from 4-8 June.

3. BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

(a) Reports on consultations

At its meeting earlier this month, the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Restrictions carried out consultations with Brazil, Ghana, Greece and Israel. The Committee will carry out a consultation with Pakistan during the period of the Council meeting. The reports on these consultations will be presented to Council which may wish to recommend to the CONTRACTING PARTIES that the reports be formally adopted at the twentieth session.

(b) Chilean restrictions

In April the Executive Secretary was advised that Chile had suspended the importation of luxury and non-essential goods for balance-of-payments reasons (L/1755). The Government of Chile is prepared to consult with the CONTRACTING PARTIES concerning these measures.

4. RESIDUAL IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

At the February meeting of the Council the Panel of Experts presented an interim report (L/1716) on its examination of the adequacy of notifications submitted by contracting parties pursuant to paragraph 7 of the procedures adopted at the seventeenth session. The Panel's second and final report has been distributed in document L/1774. The notifications which have so far been received from contracting parties and which have been examined by the Panel of Experts and referred to in its report will be reproduced in a consolidated document with the symbol L/1769.

In the light of the two reports of the Panel, which relate to paragraph 7 of the procedures, the Council might consider what arrangements it wishes to make to carry out the review of the efficacy of the whole of these procedures i.e., paragraphs 7 - 9 (9S/19). In September 1961 the Council considered that a review at that time would be premature and at the nineteenth session the CONTRACTING PARTIES agreed with the Council's recommendation that it should carry out the review at an appropriate time in 1962.

5. GERMAN IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

This item has been included in the provisional agenda at the request of the United States. The item relates to the waiver granted to the Federal Republic under the Decision of 30 May 1959 which will expire at the close of the twentieth session. This matter was last examined by a Working Party at the nineteenth session (see particularly paragraph 43 of the Working Party report, 10S/257, and SR.19/11).

6. EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY

(a) Association of Greece

A number of contracting parties submitted questions concerning the provisions and implementation of the Agreement creating an association between Greece and the Community and a consolidated list of questions was submitted to the participating governments (L/1715/Add.1). Arrangements were made for the Working Party, which was appointed at the nineteenth session, to meet in March or April, but as the replies to the questionnaire had not been received, the meeting was postponed. The replies were received on 21 May and are being prepared for circulation. The Council may wish to fix the date for the meeting of the Working Party.

(b) Common agricultural policy

The representative of the Community informed the Council at its meeting in February that the decisions taken concerning the common agricultural policy would be made available to the CONTRACTING PARTIES. These have now been received by the secretariat and copies are being prepared for distribution during the Council meeting. (The English text will be a provisional translation.)

7. CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AREA

At its meeting in February the Council deferred consideration of the Treaty concerning Preferential Exchanges and Free Trade between the Republics of Panama, Nicaragua and Costa Rica (L/1706). The Executive Secretary was asked to prepare an analysis of the economic and legal questions arising in connexion with the Treaty; this has been distributed in document L/1770. A representative of Nicaragua is expected to attend the Council meeting from 28 May.

8. RELATIONS WITH POLAND

The Working Party which was appointed by the Council, to conduct the first annual review under the Declaration of 9 November 1959, will meet on Friday, 25 May. (Relevant documents are L/1736, L/1738 and L/1753 and Addenda.) The Working Party has been asked to present a report before the close of the Council meeting.

9. RELATIONS WITH YUGOSLAVIA

The Working Party which conducted the second annual review under the Declaration of 25 May 1959 at the nineteenth session noted that in the course of the third annual review the CONTRACTING PARTIES would be required to consider whether the present arrangement should be "terminated, modified or continued". Therefore, the Working Party considered that "it would be necessary for the third review to be more detailed than the previous ones" and that "more time should be allowed for that review so that the important question of the future position of Yugoslavia in relation to the GATT could be adequately examined". The CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted the recommendation of the Working Party that the Council should be instructed to take up this matter well in advance of the twentieth session.

The Council is requested to make arrangements for the review. A note by the secretariat will be distributed.

10. TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

The Working Party which was appointed at the nineteenth session met from 5-9 March and has presented a report in document L/1741. This, however, is an interim report since the Working Party did not complete its study of the matters referred to it and decided to meet again in May after governments had had time to study the report, unless a re-assessment of the situation by the Executive Secretary should indicate that a meeting at that time would be inopportune. The Council will be informed of the result of the Executive Secretary's consideration of this matter.

11. CONSULAR FORMALITIES

The Panel of Experts, which was nominated at the last meeting of the Council, met in Geneva in March and has presented a report in document L/1743. The Panel makes two recommendations which are set out in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the report. The Council may wish to endorse these recommendations for adoption by the CONTRACTING PARTIES at the twentieth session.

12. UNITED KINGDOM WAIVERS

The report of the Panel which was appointed by the Council in February was issued in document L/1749. At the nineteenth session the CONTRACTING PARTIES authorized the Council to take a decision on this matter and therefore the report will be submitted to the Council for adoption.

13. AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR PRODUCTS OF PAPUA/NEW GUINEA

The annual report required from the Government of Australia under the Decision of 24 October 1953 has been distributed in L/1750. The report states that no measures have been taken under the Decision since the submission of the previous annual report. The report examines the development of trade in products affected by measures taken earlier.

14. PARTICIPATION OF SPAIN IN THE WORK OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

The Decision of 4 June 1960, inviting Spain to participate in the work of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, will expire at the end of June. This will require the attention of Council since the tariff negotiations with Spain with a view to accession will not have been completed by that time.

15. ACCESSION OF THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The Government of the United Arab Republic has advised (L/1759) its desire to discuss the terms on which it might accede to the GATT under Article XXXIII. Representatives of the United Arab Republic will attend the Council meeting. The Council may wish to make arrangements for this request to be examined and for recommendations to be submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

16. APPLICATION OF ARTICLE XXXV TO JAPAN

When the report of the Working Party (L/1545) which conducted the review of the application of Article XXXV in the case of Japan, was considered by the CONTRACTING PARTIES at the nineteenth session, the representative of Japan requested that the question of the review be retained on the agenda. The Council was instructed to follow developments in the light of any reports made by countries concerned. Japan has requested the inclusion of this item in the agenda for this meeting.

17. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

(a) Final 1961 budget position

A note by the Executive Secretary has been distributed in L/1756. The Council is asked to approve the proposal mentioned in paragraph 5 of that document. Proposals for the utilization of the unappropriated surplus will be referred to the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration (paragraphs 8 and 9).

(b) Salaries of ungraded posts

This matter was discussed at a meeting of heads of delegations during the February session of the Council; agreement was reached on proposals which were to be put before governments for final approval with a view to a formal decision being taken by Council at this meeting.

(c) Appointment of Committee

A Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration should be appointed to examine, inter alia, the Executive Secretary's proposals for the 1963 budget. The executive Secretary will put forward a suggestion for the Committee's terms of reference and membership; he intends to suggest that the Committee should meet in September and that its report should be examined by the Council at a brief meeting to be held before the opening of the twentieth session.

(d) Contributions to the Working Capital Fund - Sierra Leone and Tanganyika

The Council has been asked in document L/1779 to approve the advances assessed on these two countries.

(e) General service salaries

The Executive Secretary will submit a paper on the latest developments concerning general service salaries for the information of the Council.

18. PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS (JUNE - OCTOBER)

A number of committee and working party meetings should be held before the twentieth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES and therefore the Executive Secretary intends to recommend to the Council that the opening of the session, which was to be on 25 September, should be postponed for four weeks, i.e., until 23 October. A programme of meetings will be proposed.

19. TWENTIETH SESSION

A list of items for inclusion in the provisional agenda for the twentieth session will be distributed to afford an opportunity for consideration of preparatory work to be done by the Council, by subsidiary bodies and by the secretariat.