

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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Committee on Trade in
Industrial Products

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PROCEDURE IN EXAMINATION OF NON-TARIFF BARRIERS

Suggestions by Canada

In response to the invitation contained in GATT/AIR/696, the following suggestions by the Canadian Government have been received.

The discussion of Category 1 (Government Participation in Trade - COM.IND/6, Addendum 1) will no doubt supply useful experience in setting out guidelines for the discussion of all categories of non-tariff barriers. We feel that the item-by-item discussion would be a methodical way of covering such a diverse and complex list of subjects. We would, however, not want to see discussion limited to notifying countries and to those maintaining barriers but would want to place emphasis on broadening it with all interested countries participating. It would be important to ensure that contracting parties provide as much information as possible about each barrier in order that the Committee can obtain a complete global picture.

While we believe that any working groups established should be left considerable freedom to determine their own procedures and work methods we suggest that work might proceed more expeditiously if general guidelines were set out for discussions, perhaps along the following lines:

1. Review in detail of the barriers in the inventory with the addition of any new barriers that have come to light in the interim;
2. Determine the global incidence of the barriers;
3. Compile information on the protective incidence of the barriers, including present and future implications for developing and developed countries;
4. Indicate in a preliminary way possible methods of dealing with problems, for example through a code, through standardization, bilateral or multilateral reduction of barrier, etc. Such a preliminary indication need not imply that the Committee has entered the negotiating stage; we feel that with the expert knowledge available the working groups will be in an excellent position to explore appropriate ways of eventually proceeding; and
5. Flag the relevant GATT rules but avoid diverting discussion along narrow legal lines.

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