

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

LIC/M/8

28 September 1983

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Committee on Import Licensing

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 JULY 1983

Chairman: Mr. Z. Jung

1. The Committee on Import Licensing held its eighth meeting on 11 July 1983.

2. The agenda for the meeting was as follows:

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A. Election of Officers

3. The Committee elected Mr. Z. Jung (Czechoslovakia) Chairman, and Mr. A. Liontas (Greece) Vice-Chairman for 1983.

B. Information available on Import Licensing Procedures

4. The Chairman drew attention to document L/5106/Rev.2 of 28 March 1983, which contained the status of notifications on licensing procedures made in response to the GATT Questionnaire on Import Licensing. In this connection, he stated that individual country data referring to signatories that did not provide a response to the questionnaire since 1980 would be considered by the Committee as correct.

C. Implementation and Operation of the Agreement

5. The representative of the United States reverted to the information sought by his delegation at the last meeting regarding India's licensing system for almond imports (LIC/M/7, paragraph 7). He noted that Article 3(b)(iv), invoked by the delegation of India in its response and which stated, inter alia, that the developing countries would not be expected to take additional administrative and financial burdens, referred only to the provision of import statistics with respect to the products subject to import licensing. Therefore the delegation of India was still expected to supply the information referred to in Article 3(b)(i), (ii) and (iii).

6. The representative of India recalled that the information sought by the delegation of the United States related to India's import licensing procedures in respect of in-shell, shelled and prepared and preserved almonds, etc. and covered, for a reference period from 1976 to 1982, the total numbers of licences granted, licence applications and licence holders; the quantity and value imported under each licence; the quantity and value granted to each importer and value of almonds imports and corresponding base year(s) used in determining the licence for each importer since the licensing policy came into effect; the name and address of each firm which was granted a licence; the name of each firm exporting to India, the firm's country of origin and the corresponding importer; the percentage of licences that were filled in the 1981/82 fiscal year; and the percentage of each individual importer's quota allocated to each country. He said that his delegation had provided bilaterally to the delegation of the United States statistics on India's imports of almond kernels and almonds in shell both in value and volume terms for the years 1977/78 to 1980/81. On that occasion he had pointed out that the data on licence applications received and granted were not maintained on a commodity or importer-wise basis but were available at each port of entry on a date-wise basis. In view of the manual data storage and retrieval procedures being used, it had not been possible to compile the information on all aspects of the United States request. Whilst his authorities attached great importance to the requirements of the Agreement on transparency they had found themselves to be compelled to invoke the provisions of Article 3(b)(iv) in that connection. He also said that his delegation would make every effort to provide any additional information requested. They had, however, pointed out earlier some of the information sought as not being of direct relevance to the implementation of the Agreement. He added that he did not wish to address, at this stage, the issue raised by the representative of the United States relating to the exact coverage of Article 3(b)(iv).

7. The representative of Japan informed the Committee that the Japanese authorities had set the total aggregate amount of quotas on "miscellaneous import goods" at a level of US\$ 45 million for the first half of the fiscal year 1983. Furthermore, a number of items including tomato juice, tomato sauce and tomato ketchup, fruit purée and fruit paste, prune juice,

cranberry juice and tropical fruit juice which were previously placed under the category of miscellaneous import goods were transferred to the category of goods under "planned quota". The transfer of the rest of the items in the category of miscellaneous import goods into the category of goods under planned quota was not practicable at this time because of the difficulty in forecasting the demand and supply for a wide variety of such items that were imported in small quantities. He also stated that it had not been possible to publish the amount of import quotas on leather, leather products and leather footwear. However, his authorities had made efforts to issue certificates of import quota allocation for such imports in amounts that were closely related to the level of past imports.

8. The representative of Chile and of the European Economic Community welcomed the progress reported by the representative of Japan on publication of quotas on various items included in miscellaneous import goods and the efforts made to narrow the product coverage of this category of imports. They felt, however, that further efforts should be made in this respect in relation to leather and leather products. The representative of the European Economic Community considered that the Committee could address the issue at its next meeting, when it would hold its second biennial review as well as prepare its report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES, in the light of the information received then from the delegation of Japan.

9. The Chairman noted that the Committee once more urged that all efforts be made in the near future to find a satisfactory solution to the question of compliance with Article 3(c) of the Agreement by Japan.

10. The Committee took note of the statements made under this item.

D. Preparations for the Second Biennial Review of the Agreement under Article 5.5

11. The Committee agreed to the arrangements for the second biennial review proposed in document LIC/W/19.

12. With regard to the decision of the Council at its meeting of 20 April 1983 (C/M/167), the Committee agreed that a section of its annual report for 1983 would be devoted to the review of the operation of the Agreement as called for in the Ministerial decision of November 1982 on MTN Agreements and Arrangements.

E. Date and Agenda of the Next Meeting

13. The date of the next meeting would be fixed by the Chairman in consultations with delegations taking into account that the annual report would need to be in circulation and available to the members of the Council not later than 10 October 1983.

14. The following items would be included in the Agenda:

1. Information available on licensing procedures.
2. Implementation and operation of the Agreement.
3. Second biennial review of the implementation and operation of the Agreement under Article 5.5.
4. Report (1983) to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

15. The draft agenda would be circulated to delegations in advance of the meeting, in accordance with established procedures.