

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

OUTLINE FOR ANNUAL REVIEWS OF THE OPERATION
OF THE AGREEMENT

Note by the Secretariat

1. Article 15.8 of the Agreement states:

"The Committee shall review annually the implementation and operation of this Agreement taking into account the objectives thereof. The Committee shall annually inform the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the GATT of developments during the period covered by such reviews."

A. Review

2. The main objectives of the Agreement that would need to be taken into account by the Committee are those listed in the Preamble. The annual review of the Committee should cover action by Parties to ensure proper implementation and operation of the Agreement in the light of these objectives and of their specific obligations under other provisions of the Agreement, as well as the operation of the Agreement as a whole.

3. It is suggested that the operation of the following main provisions might be given particular attention:

- (a) implementation and administration (Article 15.7);
- (b) the use of international standards (Articles 2.5, 2.6); participation in regional standardizing bodies (Articles 2.9, 2.10) or international and regional certification systems (Article 9);
- (c) transparency: publication (Articles 2.5.1, 2.7, 3, 4, 7.3.1, 7.5, 8) and information (Article 10);
- (d) notification and consultation (Articles 2.5, 2.6, 3, 4, 7.3, 7.4, 8);
- (e) testing (Articles 5 and 6);
- (f) technical assistance and special and differential treatment (Articles 11 and 12);
- (g) dispute settlement (Article 14).

4. The review might also examine the overall implementation and operation of this Agreement (Article 15.8).

5. As is the case with other reviews conducted in the framework of GATT, the Committee would presumably ask the secretariat to prepare a factual document on which the review could be based. For this purpose, it is suggested that Parties to the Agreement should submit written statements about the action taken by them under the items listed in paragraph 3 above to the extent that this has not already been done in the normal course of the Committee's work. The information so submitted would be collated by the secretariat in a single document, together with summaries of notifications received, relevant activities of other international organizations etc.

B. Annual Report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES

6. The report referred to in the second sentence of Article 15.8 would cover all aspects of the work of the Committee. It is suggested that a procedure be used similar to that adopted in other GATT bodies. Accordingly, the secretariat would present a draft report to the Committee for examination and adoption. This would normally take place at the end of the meeting which conducts the annual review.