

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

CG.18/W/13

1 October 1976

Special Distribution

Consultative Group of Eighteen
Fourth Meeting
25-26 October 1976

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

It is suggested that, at its fourth meeting, the Consultative Group may address itself to the following:

1. Recent developments in trade policies and international trade
2. World trade in agricultural products
3. Trade measures taken for balance-of-payments purposes
4. The international trading system and the rôle of GATT
5. Report of the Group to the Council of Representatives
6. Other business

Item 1 Recent developments in trade policies and international trade

The purpose of this item would be to permit delegations to raise questions of specific interest to them and to have an exchange of views on the wider aspects of recent trade policy developments.

A comprehensive summary of trends and developments in international trade has been issued as a GATT secretariat press release "Prospects for International Trade" at the end of August 1976 and will be available. A short secretariat note covering information available more recently will also be circulated as document CG.18/W/14.

Item 2 World trade in agricultural products

This item was placed on the agenda of the Group's third meeting at the request of the Australian delegation, and the discussion thereon is summarized in paragraphs 32 to 35 of the Note on the third meeting (CG.18/3). The Australian representative had indicated that he may wish to revert to this matter.

A memorandum from the Australian delegation will be circulated for the forthcoming meeting (document CG.18/W/16).

Item 3 Trade measures taken for balance-of-payments purposes

At its second meeting on 24-25 February 1976 the Group engaged in an in-depth discussion on the question of trade measures taken for balance-of-payments purposes on the basis, inter alia, of a background paper presented by the member for the United States (CG.18/W/5), which outlined a step-by-step approach to the improvement or reform of the GATT rules and procedures in this area. The discussion is summarized in paragraphs 12 to 20 of the Note on the second meeting (CG.18/2).

At its third meeting on 22-23 June the Group resumed its discussion on this subject. In this connexion the Group had before it a memorandum from the Argentine delegation concerning balance-of-payments aspects to be considered within the framework of GATT (CG.18/W/8), and a further paper by the member for the United States (CG.18/W/9). The relevant discussion is summarized in paragraphs 11 to 25 of the Note on the third meeting (CG.18/3).

It is suggested that at its fourth meeting the Group may wish to consider how the question of trade measures taken for balance-of-payments purposes might be further dealt with taking into account the discussions which took place at the last meeting of the Group.

It will also be recalled that, following the statement by the representative of the International Monetary Fund at the third meeting and the ensuing exchange of views on existing arrangements for co-ordination between the IMF and the GATT, it was agreed that the respective secretariats should work out jointly the practical means for improving co-ordination between the two institutions and that the GATT secretariat should report to the Group on this subject at the October meeting (CG.18/3, paragraphs 5 to 10 and 24).

The Director-General will accordingly report to the Group on the stage reached in his discussions with the Managing Director and staff of the Fund on measures to improve co-ordination between the two institutions.

Item 4 The international trading system and the rôle of GATT

It is suggested that under this item the Group may wish to discuss:

- (a) Dispute settlement;
- (b) Proposals for improvements in the operation of the GATT;
- (c) Developments in other fora.

(a) Dispute settlement

The Group may wish to have a preliminary discussion of this subject having regard, *inter alia*, to suggestions or proposals made within the framework of the MTN. It might exchange views as to how this matter might be dealt with and on points requiring consideration with the object of facilitating coherent treatment of issues relating to arrangements for dispute settlement.

A background note by the secretariat on this subject, setting out certain headings under which the matter could be discussed and some points that could be looked at, will be circulated as document CG.18/W/15.

(b) Proposals for improvements in the operation of the GATT

This item is intended to provide an opportunity to members of the Group to revert to proposals made at earlier meetings of the Group with respect to improvements in the operation of the GATT either generally or in specific areas, or to make new suggestions.

(c) Developments in other fora

The Director-General may wish to give a short progress report on discussions in other fora which are relevant to present and future GATT activities.

Item 5 Report of the Group to the Council of Representatives

At the last meeting of the Group it was agreed that the Chairman, on his own responsibility, would submit to the Council, following the fourth meeting of the Group, a comprehensive report on the Group's activities during the first year of its existence as required by its terms of reference (CG.18/3, paragraph 39). In this connexion members may wish to express views on the activities of the Group during the first year of its existence, including any views on its possible future work and other relevant matters for incorporation in the report to the Council.

Item 6 Other business