

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/50

27 October 1952

Limited Distribution

PUBLICATION OF AN ANNUAL REPORT

(Proposal submitted to the Seventh Session by the
Executive Secretary)

In each of the years 1949, 1950 and 1952, the secretariat, at the request of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, published a progress report on the operation of the General Agreement. These reports took the form of pamphlets in popular language describing the operation of the General Agreement and the activities of the CONTRACTING PARTIES. The three pamphlets were entitled "The Attack on Trade Barriers", "Liberating World Trade" and "GATT in Action".

It is proposed that something more systematic in the way of an annual report should now be considered. In 1953 and annually thereafter, the secretariat might publish a report under the same conditions as the three pamphlets mentioned above, i.e. it should be a report of the secretariat, and therefore not engage the responsibility of the CONTRACTING PARTIES or of contracting parties individually. The report would not be submitted for approval or discussion by the CONTRACTING PARTIES prior to publication but, following the practice heretofore adopted, a draft would be circulated and the Executive Secretary would consult informally with any contracting party which expressed an interest in the contents of the draft.

The proposed annual reports might consist of three parts. Part I would be a general description of developments in international trade during the period under review. This would be intended to provide the background for a description of the operation of the Agreement and of the activities of the CONTRACTING PARTIES. Part II would contain a description of measures relating to international trade adopted by governments during the same period. Part III would be an account of the activities of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

The secretariat would rely upon statistical and other material published by other international organizations and by governments, and would not engage upon any extensive research activities. Working arrangements would be made with interested organizations to ensure a prompt transmission of the necessary data. Every effort would be made to avoid the duplication of reports of other international bodies.

In order to illustrate this proposal, a draft table of contents is attached.

A note prepared for the internal use of the secretariat on recent trends in trade, which follows the line proposed for Part I of the report, is being completed and will be distributed as a further illustration of the proposal.

PROJECT OF AN ANNUAL REPORT
PROPOSED TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I. MAIN TRENDS IN INTERNATIONAL TRADE

1. Recent Developments in World Trade

Main factors which have determined the course of world trade during period under review

Comparison of the levels of value and volume in world trade in period under review with those of preceding period

Summary of developments in the trade of countries belonging to the dollar area, continental Western Europe and its overseas territories, the United Kingdom and the outer sterling area, Latin America and other regions

Summary of the changes in the direction of world trade

Summary of the changes in the commodity composition of world trade

2. Main Trends in International Trade in Individual Commodities

Share of basic commodities in world trade

Trade in foodstuffs and raw materials

Share of manufactures in world trade

Trade in capital goods and consumer goods

Recent trends in commodity trade

3. Recent Developments in the Trade of Individual Countries

The position in world trade of the main groups of countries

The volume and value of trade of the principal countries

The direction of trade of groups and of principal countries

Summary of the commodity position of the trade of groups and of principal countries

PART II. DEVELOPMENTS IN GOVERNMENTAL
INTERVENTION IN INTERNATIONAL
TRADE

1. Customs Tariffs

Changes in the level and incidence of tariffs (The data furnished by members of the Sub-Group of the Working Party on the Reduction of Tariff Levels provide sufficient information for a comparison of the incidence of certain tariffs in 1951 with the calculation of the League of Nations for 1923)

Changes in customs tariffs - structure, nomenclature, rates.
Duties imposed for fiscal and protective purposes

Plans for reduction of import duties - the progress of schemes for co-ordinated international action for the reduction of tariffs,

Projects and interim agreements for customs unions and free-trade areas

Changes in export duties as an anti-inflation measure or for other purposes

2. Quantitative Restrictions

Developments in the maintenance of quantitative restrictions on imports for various purposes - in particular to safeguard balances of payments and monetary reserves. Relaxation or removal of restrictions and intensification of restrictions

The discriminatory application of import restrictions. Arrangements affecting the use of quantitative restrictions among members of the sterling area and OEEC - the operation of the EPU

Changes in methods of restriction - licences, quotas, programming of imports

Export controls, prohibitions and restrictions to conserve materials in short supply and for other purposes

3. International Trade Agreements

Changes in the character of bilateral trade agreements - methods and objectives

Other bilateral and multilateral trading arrangements - barter deals and triangular transactions

The effects of such agreements on the direction and volume of trade

4. Customs Formalities

The action or plans of governments to simplify or remove formalities which operate as a hindrance to trade

5. Subsidies, etc.

Developments in governmental policy of promoting exports by subsidies and other means. Taxes and regulations affecting the use of imported products

6. State Trading

Developments in direct governmental participation in international trade - import and export monopolies, bulk purchasing, stock-piling

PART III. THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

1. The Status of the Agreement

Governments adhering to the Agreement; provisional application; status of the text and schedules

2. The Work of the CONTRACTING PARTIES in connection with Barriers to Trade

Action by the CONTRACTING PARTIES on customs tariffs, quantitative restrictions and other measures of governmental intervention:

- negotiations for tariff reduction
- plans for simultaneous reduction
- consultations on import restrictions
- recommendations on customs formalities and tariff simplification

3. The Settlement of Differences by the CONTRACTING PARTIES

The complaints dealt with and the settlements proposed by the CONTRACTING PARTIES during the year