

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON  
TARIFFS AND TRADE

L/5766

14 January 1985

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GATT RULES AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES  
AND TROPICAL PRODUCTS

Fortieth Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES

Action taken on 30th November 1984

The CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted the Report of the Committee on Trade and Development (L/5735) which contained the following summing-up by the Chairman on the Committee's activities in relation to the Ministerial Decisions on GATT Rules and Activities Relating to Developing Countries and Tropical Products:

"In summing-up the results of the discussion which the Committee has held on those items of its agenda falling under the Ministerial Work Programme the Chairman noted that a programme of consultations on the implementation of Part IV was carried out with a number of developed and developing countries, including, amongst the former, the major trading partners of the GATT system. It has been generally felt that these consultations were useful, and it was agreed that such consultations should be held in 1985 with other contracting parties. While noting that the Ministerial Decision referred to holding consultations on a regular basis, the Committee was unable at this stage to come to a decision on the holding of such consultations on a periodic basis and the matter will have to be reverted to.

"The Sub-Committee on least-developed countries has continued to focus on specific trade problems confronting these countries. Ad hoc consultations with Bangladesh and Tanzania have been held. Follow-up action has been taken where possible and thus it is hoped that some concrete results in further improving trading conditions for these countries will be achieved. Further work in the Sub-Committee has also been done relating to the least-developed countries as a whole and the possibilities of promoting their trade interests. It is noted that the Sub-Committee will consider in future meetings specific proposals which have been made regarding concrete measures to promote the trade of least-developed countries and procedural questions relating to its own methods of work.

"In the light of comments made on the operation of the Enabling Clause, the Committee has agreed to keep this item on its agenda for further consideration in the future.

"The discussion under paragraph 5 of the Ministerial Decision, which took place against the background of the paper prepared by the secretariat (COM.TD/W/412), has reflected general appreciation of the importance of the issues involved in this matter, their complexity, and the need to examine them further. It was noted that a number of substantive problems would need to be analysed before any conclusions could be drawn and the matter therefore remains before the Committee.

"The Committee has carried out lengthy consultations on tropical products, through which it has identified the progress achieved in this area since the MTN, and the problems remaining. Developing countries have submitted a number of requests for further action. Responses to these requests have been provided in some cases. The Committee was however unable to determine how best to move from these consultations to "appropriate negotiations" and there was no agreement as to what was involved in the process of "appropriate negotiations". This matter will require further reflection.

"Finally, on technical cooperation, the secretariat has continued to respond to the requirements of developing countries and in this context has given special attention to the technical assistance needs of the least-developed countries."