

UNRESTRICTED

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ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

INTERIM COMMISSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING

Held on 20 March 1948 at the Capitolio, Havana, Cuba

Chairman: Mr. M. Suetens (Belgium)
Mr. L. D. Wilgress (Canada)

The CHAIRMAN congratulated Mr. Wyndham White on his election as Executive Secretary.

1. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY suggested that, since delegations had had little time to study the Rules, they might wish to adopt them provisionally for the meetings in Havana and consider them in more detail before the second meeting of the Executive Committee.

Mr. KELLOGG (United States) said that he assumed Rule 6 regarding credentials would be waived for this meeting.

This was agreed and the Rules provisionally adopted.

2. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Mr. COLBAN (Norway) proposed the election of Mr. Wilgress (Canada) as Chairman.

This was seconded by the delegates of Mexico, the Philippines and Greece and Mr. Wilgress was unanimously elected and took the Chair.

It was agreed that three Vice-Chairmen should be elected.

Mr. BEPETA (Mexico) nominated by Mr. LLERAS RESTREPO (Colombia) and seconded by the delegates of Brazil, Egypt and El Salvador.

Sr. RAGHAVAN PILLAI (India) nominated by Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) and seconded by the delegates of the United States, Canada, Greece, China and the Philippines.

Mr. ROYER (France) nominated by Mr. KELLOGG (United States) and seconded by the delegates of Czechoslovakia, Greece, Colombia, Italy, India and Brazil were declared unanimously elected as Vice-Chairmen of the Committee.

3. Consideration of the Work of the Committee (E/CONF.2/C.5/111)

The CHAIRMAN suggested that paragraph 3 regarding the services of staff for the Contracting Parties of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

/should be considered

should be considered together with item 4 of the agenda, budget proposals. He asked the Executive Secretary for his views on the implementation of paragraph 4 regarding the publication of the important documents of the Havana Conference and the establishment of the texts of the reports.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY suggested that delegations could either (1) delegate to the secretariat the task of implementing these proposals, using the expert assistance of the translating staff of the United Nations in order to assure that the texts were identical in both working languages and on the assumption that the texts in the languages in which they were originally drafted were authentic; or (2) to constitute a drafting sub-committee similar to the Central Drafting Committee. He considered the first suggestion the more expeditious.

Mr. ROYER (France) believed that some documents other than committee reports were of interpretative value. He considered the secretariat competent to assure the identity of the texts in the working languages but suggested that they might usefully be checked by some experts before being published.

Mr. COLBAN (Norway) emphasized that the texts in the original language should not be altered and the translations only checked for conformity.

Mr. KELLOGG (United States) asked that the Executive Secretary be given authority to de-restrict such documents as he considered necessary.

Mr. LLORENTE (Philippines) agreed with Mr. Royer and Mr. Colban and emphasized the usefulness to various governments of having these documents published as soon as possible.

Mr. COUILLARD (Canada) did not think that the Secretariat could establish the authenticity of the texts and suggested that they might be published unofficially by the Secretariat and checked by the Executive Committee at its second meeting.

Mr. POLITIS (Greece) thought the full reports of sub-committees should be published as the Secretariat should not have to make the selection of that which should or should not go into the official record.

The CHAIRMAN thought that most of the Committee was in favour of giving the Secretariat authority to proceed with arrangements to bring the two texts into conformity, using the text in the original language as a basis. He thought that it would be useful to publish the reports of sub-committees in full as they were referred to in reports of main committees. He considered that the committee should be able to agree on this and that the Executive Secretary should employ experts if he considered it necessary. He asked that the discussion be confined to the point raised by the delegate of Canada regarding the checking of the texts in the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

/Mr. COLBAN (Norway)

Mr. COLBAN (Norway) considered it unnecessary to reproduce in full the texts of all sub-committee reports and the Secretariat should be instructed to produce only those necessary.

Dr. COOMBS (Australia) thought that the task could not be accomplished unless the Executive Secretary was given sufficient discretion to choose what was necessary from the sub-committee reports in order to make the record complete. If the committee was not willing to entrust the Executive Secretary with this task it should set up a small sub-committee of available members and give them the responsibility.

Mr. HOLMES (United Kingdom) thought that where entire reports of sub-committees had been adopted, they should be reproduced in full and otherwise only those parts which had been adopted by the main committees.

Mr. COLBAN (Norway) said that when in doubt, the Executive Secretary could consult with the Chairman and, if necessary, the Vice-Chairmen.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the following directive be given the Executive Secretary: to publish the reports of committees, supplemented by such sub-committee reports and other documents or extracts therefrom, as may be necessary for a full understanding of such reports.

Mr. LLORENTE (Philippines) pointed out that some delegations attached great importance to certain statements contained in summary records of committees and approved by the committees, and he specified a statement made by his delegation regarding the report of sub-committee A of Committee III concerning preferences, which he thought should be incorporated in the record.

The CHAIRMAN thought that the point was covered in the directive and assured Mr. LLORENTE that the Executive Secretary would take his point into consideration. It would, however, be too large a task to ask the Secretariat to go through all summary records of all meetings.

He asked the Committee to consider now whether a small drafting committee should go over the report.

Mr. COUILLARD (Canada) considered that in view of the high evidential value in case of disputes it was desirable that the reports should be reviewed by the Committee.

Dr. COOMBS (Australia) thought that the time factor was very important and suggested, in view of the delay that waiting until the next meeting of the Committee would cause, that a small reviewing committee of three be established now.

After some discussion it was agreed to nominate a panel of five people, Messrs. Royer, Catudal, Fawcett, Gaiffier and Couillard, any or all of whom, depending on their availability, could be consulted or convened by the Executive Secretary and the Chairman, if they considered it necessary, before the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN asked the Executive Secretary for his views as to how to implement the functions of the Interim Commission as set forth in the Annex to E/CONF.2/C.6/111.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY suggested that the next meeting be held no less than six months following the end of this Conference and, on the assumption that it was to be in Geneva, it might be held following the Economic and Social Council which was scheduled to meet in July. The Secretariat might employ the first three months in the preparation of a draft agreement with the United Nations as provided in paragraph (c) and on the preliminary papers referred to in paragraphs (d), (e) and (f) and in preparatory work on other items of the Annex. For these tasks it would be useful for it to be in New York where there would be close contact with the United Nations, the FAO, the Bank and the Fund. It could also proceed with the inquiry referring to economic development which would involve consultation with the United Nations and with its regional commissions, and it could initiate the arrangements for the preparation of the authentic texts of the Charter in the official languages. The Secretariat might then move to Geneva to draft the documents based on the discussions in New York and prepare for the second session of the Executive Committee.

Mr. KELLOGG (United States) approved of the Executive Secretary's schedule. He suggested that it would be more convenient for many delegations if the meeting of the Executive Committee were either contemporaneous with or following the meeting of the Contracting Parties of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade which was presently scheduled to be held sometime between 1 July and 15 August.

Mr. COUILLARD (Canada) agreed with Mr. Kellogg and hoped that the meeting would be held at the end of July.

Mr. ROYER (France) and Mr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia) also agreed but Mr. Augenthaler hoped that the two meetings would not take place at the same time.

Mr. HEWITT (Australia) considered it impracticable for the Executive Committee to meet at the same time as the Economic and Social Council and wondered whether a July date might not be too early in view of the Executive Secretary's proposed schedule.

The EXECUTIVE SECRETARY thought that the end of July would be feasible depending upon the conference schedule at Geneva.

The CHAIRMAN said that the secretariat would consult with Lake Success regarding the conference timetable at Geneva and that it was the sense of the meeting that the next session should take place between 1 July and 15 August, following the Economic and Social Council and either preceded or /followed by

followed by the meeting of the Contracting Parties of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. He asked the committee whether it approved of the Executive Secretary's plan of work.

Mr. ROYER (France) thought that the agreement with the United Nations could be relatively simple and follow the usual type used for specialized agencies unless it were decided to have a special agreement following the example of the Bank and Fund.

Mr. AUGENTHALER (Czechoslovakia) believed the usual type of agreement adequate.

4. Consideration of budget and secretariat proposals.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that a working party consisting of the Chairman, the two vice-chairmen present and the Executive Secretary meet and report back to the Executive Committee on Wednesday afternoon on this subject.

Dr. COOMBS (Australia) agreed but thought it would be useful to discuss the programme of work set forth in the Annex more fully in order to have a clearer picture of budgetary requirements.

Mr. MARTEN (United Kingdom) suggested that the working party could submit in its paper, not only budgetary proposals but a brief statement of the Executive Secretary's plans.

Mr. COLBAN (Norway) pointed out that most of the duties of the Interim Commission were contained under paragraphs 2 (a) and (b) of the Annex and that the working party should make clear exactly what was involved under these points.

The CHAIRMAN thought that the working party would need a little time to complete its work and suggested that the Committee meet again on Wednesday. He also proposed that Dr. Coombs be added to the members of the working party.

This was agreed.

The meeting rose at 6.00 p.m.
