

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva  
on Thursday, 17 September 1953, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Johan MELANDER (Norway)

- Subjects discussed:
1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman
  2. Adoption of Agenda
  3. Statement by Chairman
  4. Order of Business

### 1. Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

The CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted the proposal of the Ad Hoc Committee on Agenda and Intersessional Business that the Chairman's term of office, which was to expire on 2 October, be extended for the duration of the Eighth Session thus avoiding a change in the chairmanship during the Session; the election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the following year would be held towards the end of the Session.

The CHAIRMAN paid a tribute to the memory of J. A. Tonkin, former Vice-Chairman. Mr. Tonkin had played an important part in the work of the Organization and his inspiring leadership had greatly contributed to furthering progress in the field covered by the General Agreement.

Mr. CLARK (Australia), speaking in the name of the Australian Delegation, thanked the Chairman for his kind tribute to a colleague who had never spared himself in promoting the aims of the Organization.

The CONTRACTING PARTIES then approved the recommendation of the Committee that a Vice-Chairman should be elected for the period of the Eighth Session and the Chairman called for nominations.

Mr. LAFAY (France), seconded by Mr. KARMARKAR (India) and supported by Mr. CLARK (Australia) and Dr. HELMI (Indonesia), proposed the leader of the Pakistan Delegation, Mr. Akhtar Husain. Mr. Husain was elected unanimously.

Mr. AKHTAR HUSAIN (Pakistan) thanked the CONTRACTING PARTIES for the honour they had paid his country in electing him Vice Chairman.

2. Adoption of Agenda (G/46/Rev.2)

The CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted the agenda items as listed in the Provisional Agenda.

3. Statement by Chairman

The CHAIRMAN thanked the representatives of the CONTRACTING PARTIES for extending his term of office for the duration of the Eighth Session. He addressed the contracting parties on the work before them and formally opened the Session. (The Chairman's statement is reproduced in Press Release 113. Corrigendum: On Page 3 of this Press Release, the fifth word, in the penultimate line, should read "review" instead of "resume".)

4. Order of Business (G/46/Rev.2)

The CHAIRMAN, referring to the recommendations of the Intersessional Committee on the order of business, suggested that the morning and afternoon meetings of the following day be devoted to general statements by Heads of Delegations, and that discussion of Article XXVIII be deferred until 21 September.

Mr. HASAN ISIK (Turkey), referring to the recommendations of the Intersessional Committee, agreed that it was difficult to adopt a rigid programme for the order of business; nevertheless most delegations required to know some time in advance (perhaps three days), when questions would come up for discussion. He also asked what criteria had been applied in determining the items to be discussed in the first days.

The CHAIRMAN replied that obviously the CONTRACTING PARTIES could alter their order of business at any time. It might be convenient to fix times for ten or fifteen items, and then move on later to another group of items. The reason for the recommendation of the Intersessional Committee, in proposing early debates on certain items, was that some governments considered these items so important that they had sent Cabinet Ministers, who, however, could not be long away from their home countries.

Mr. MUNOZ (Chile) considered that the fears of the Delegate for Turkey were unfounded and agreed with the proposal in view of the explanations afforded by the Chairman. In view of the presence of Cabinet Ministers at the Session, and in order to save their time, he felt the matter of determining the order of business should be left to the discretion of the Chairman.

Mr. SVEC (Czechoslovakia) understood the difficulties of the Delegate for Turkey which were perhaps due to technical reasons resulting from the novelty of certain items. However, items of that kind could hardly be decided in a preliminary discussion, and they would be debated in the following weeks. He therefore supported the proposal of the Intersessional Committee.

The order of business as proposed by the Committee for the first days of the Session was therefore adopted, viz.:

1. Article XXVIII,
2. Difficulties arising out of the Application of Article I,
3. Accession of Japan.

The meeting rose at 4:30 p.m.