

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
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ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS RELEVANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF PART IV

Addendum

The following communication has been received from the delegation of Austria in connexion with the implementation of Part IV.

As in the past years Austria endeavoured also in the period under review to improve the possibilities for developing countries to accede to the Austrian market. The Austrian authorities devoted particular attention to implementing trade policy measures while taking into account the provisions contained in Part IV of the General Agreement.

As already stated during the review in 1975, the second stage of the Austrian Generalized Scheme of Preferences (Federal Law Gazette No. 473/74) entered into force on 1 January 1975. This improvement and enlargement of the Austrian scheme led to a significant increase in imports from beneficiary countries. Statistics show in particular that in the industrial sector the increase (expressed in percentages) in the imports from developing countries which are covered by the GSP was higher than the increase in other imports. This indicates, inter alia, that preferential tariff rates have a positive effect on the exports of developing countries.

The Austrian authorities envisage to proceed as soon as possible to the third stage of tariff reductions within its GSP, covering, in particular, those products which - being "tropical products" - are of significant importance to developing countries.

At the same time the Austrian authorities endeavour to provide developing countries with opportunities to take advantage of the tariff reductions to the largest extent possible. The Austrian representatives abroad inform on a permanent

basis the competent authorities and economic circles of the countries concerned of the relevant regulations and of the possibilities provided for by the Austrian scheme of Generalized Preferences.

Through the "Law concerning imports of hand-made products duty free or at a reduced rate of duty" Austria has implemented a trade measure complementary to the Austrian GSP which contributes significantly to the improvement of trade relations with developing countries in the field of handicrafts. Also in 1976 a series of agreements on the duty-free importation or the importation at a reduced rate of duty have been concluded with exporting countries on the basis of this law; up to now such agreements were concluded with nineteen States: Bangladesh, Egypt, Cuba, India, Israel, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Malta, Malawi, Pakistan, the Philippines, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

Since the last review of Part IV of GATT Austria introduced neither new tariff rates nor quantitative import restrictions.

With respect to trade promotion mention should be made that Austria supports the activities of the International Trade Centre through the secondment of officials at the expenses of Austrian institutions.

As a significant contribution to the efforts of developing countries to develop their trade with Austria the Bundeswirtschaftskammer (Federal Economic Chamber) makes available to these countries the services of the Austrian Trade Delegations which are located all over the world. These delegations as well as the publications issued by the Bundeswirtschaftskammer create pre-conditions for the establishment of business relations and co-operation between enterprises.

From 8 to 12 June 1976 twenty-one GATT trainees were given the possibility - through an excursion to Vienna by a training course - to obtain a comprehensive view of the trade policy and economic structure of Austria by direct contacts with high rank officials and representatives of economy.

In 1976 Austria organized three special training courses for customs officials from developing countries. A training course for twelve field officers from Nigeria took place from 29 March 1976 to 21 May 1976. The second training course was organized for six policy making officers of the Nigerian Customs Administration from 26 April to 21 May 1976. Furthermore, since 2 August and up to 22 October 1976, a special training course for customs officials of high rank from ten countries is taking place in Vienna. In total, Austria offered in 1976 training opportunities in the field of customs administration to thirty-one officials from eleven countries.

In 1976, Austria has furthermore seconded two experts on customs regulations, in particular on rules of origin, to an UNCTAD/UNDP project relating to technical assistance in the field of the Generalized System of Preferences; these experts made their services available to seventeen countries.

Austria is a member of several international commodity agreements already concluded and participates in the elaboration of new agreements by which an improvement of the terms of trade is being sought.

