

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/1305

3 October 1960

Limited Distribution

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Seventeenth Session

Original: Italian

ITALIAN CUSTOMS TREATMENT FOR IMPORTS OF SOMALIAN PRODUCTS

Request by Italy for Waiver from Article I

The following communication dated 19 September has been received from the Permanent Delegate of Italy in Geneva:

"With reference to the discussions concerning the above-mentioned item at the sixteenth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, I have the honour to transmit to you the attached memorandum by the Italian Government which is requesting a waiver in respect of Italian imports of Somalian products."

MEMORANDUM

"Somalia, which the United Nations had placed under Italian trusteeship, became a fully sovereign and independent State on 1 July 1960.

"The Italian Government, which has notably contributed to the political and economic advancement of the country, as the United Nations have recognized, is prepared to grant economic assistance to the new State, having regard to the fact that Somalia will require foreign economic assistance for several years to come.

"The memorandum submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES by the Italian Government (document L/1206 of 25 May 1960) includes a statement of the reasons why the Italian authorities would not wish to deny assistance to the young State of Somalia.

"The assistance which Italy intends to furnish in order to promote the development of Somalian economy, which has made substantial progress during the trusteeship period, includes, in particular, the continuation of duty-free treatment for Italian imports of Somalian products.

"The importance of this form of assistance is shown by the statistical table concerning Italian imports of the main Somalian exports which is annexed to the memorandum already submitted by the Italian Government. In all likelihood, exports of these items to Italy will continue in the same proportions in the near future. The Italian Government is of the opinion that if the special customs treatment applied by Italy to goods imported from Somalia were to be discontinued, the future development of the most important branches of production of the country would be hampered with very serious repercussions on the general situation of Somalia, from both the economic and political points of view.

"Therefore, the Italian Government, which is anxious to assist the young State of Somalia, submits to the CONTRACTING PARTIES, a request to be released under Article XXV, from the obligations of Article I of the General Agreement, in order to continue applying - subject to some minor changes - duty-free treatment to the following goods subject to evidence being provided that they come from or originate in the appropriate territory:

- bananas and derivatives (banana flour and flakes);
- cotton;
- oil seeds and oil-bearing fruits;
- fisheries products;
- preserved meat;
- semi-tanned skins.

"With the exception of bananas, Italian imports from Somalia of the above-mentioned items represent only a very small percentage of total Italian imports of these items from other contracting parties.

"As far as bananas are concerned, it should be stressed that production, which has been wholly exported to Italy, constitutes a basic branch of industry in the Somalian economy."