

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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CONTRACTING PARTIES
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CONSULAR FORMALITIES

Reports by Governments

At the twenty-first session, after a review of progress made toward abolition of consular formalities, in which statements were given by some countries concerning the reasons why such formalities were still maintained and the outlook for their removal, it was decided to place this item on the agenda of the twenty-second session, in order to carry out another review (SR.21/3, page 28).

The contracting parties which are believed still to require consular formalities regularly are: Argentina, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua, Peru, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and Uruguay.

Contracting parties are reminded that shortly after last year's debate on this subject reports from two contracting parties were received and circulated. These are:

L/2187 - Spain

L/2202 - Brazil

A communication from the Government of Sweden on this subject was also circulated at that time in L/2201. Reports received recently from contracting parties maintaining consular formalities are reproduced below.

ARGENTINA

The permanent representative of Argentina has submitted the following statement:

"As will be remembered, the Argentine Government decided to remove all consular formalities in October 1961. Some time later it was found necessary to re-introduce fees in the country of origin of the goods, at least pending a re-organization of national administrative structures which would enable a decision to be taken as to whether this requirement could be dispensed with. The re-organization is now in progress and the Argentine Government will take a final decision on this problem at the appropriate time bearing in mind the recommendations of experts which were accepted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

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"Meanwhile, I should point out that the levy of consular fees is the only form of intervention still maintained by my country, which has completely abolished all the former requirements for consignment of exports to Argentina. From the point of view of simplification, it can be said that consular measures have been reduced to a minimum and very considerable progress has been made in this direction as compared with the system previously applied; this should be interpreted as proof of the attention which the Argentine Government pays to recommendations of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

"The CONTRACTING PARTIES have already been informed of the reasons which obliged my country to re-introduce the levy of consular fees in the country of origin, and for the time being those reasons are still valid.

"My Government will inform the CONTRACTING PARTIES without delay of any new developments in connexion with this problem."

TURKEY

The permanent representative of Turkey has submitted the following statement:

"The bill pertaining to the elimination of fees paid for certificates of origin and legalization has been adopted by the Parliament and came into force on 2 July 1964.

"The second bill, which aims to amend the existing provisions pertaining to procedures and legalization is at present in the agenda of the plenary session of the lower House.

"Although the bill nominally maintains the institution of certificates of origin for goods imported into the country, it changes substantially the existing provisions by empowering the Ministry of Customs to lay down the conditions of legalization of certificates of origin by specified authorities.

"The bill exempts the following goods from the provision of a certificate of origin:

- (a) goods the c.i.f. value of which are determined by Ministry of Customs and Monopolies and the origin of which can be established through trademarks and signs;
- (b) goods which are non-commercial and bear trademarks and signs of the factories by which they are manufactured.

"In this connexion I would like to draw your attention to the fact that the obligation to produce consular legalization in exceptional cases that come under force majeure has been removed by the import regulation dated 4 July 1962."

UNITED STATES

" This report is submitted in compliance with the recommendations of the GATT with respect to consular formalities.

" There has been no change in United States requirements since the report made in 1957 and included in document L/721 of 29 October 1957. A consular visa is required only on certain declarations, namely:

1. alcoholic liquors imported in vessels under 500 metric tons;
2. wild mammals and birds;
3. certain domesticated animals, poultry, and animal by-products.

" In the case of item (1), consular action is required as a measure for anti-smuggling purposes, and in the case of items (2) and (3), in connexion with the enforcement of animal quarantine regulations. No fees are levied in connexion with these visas, and they are not regarded as of significant commercial importance. The United States considers that these regulations conform in all respects to the Standard Practices for consular formalities recommended by the CONTRACTING PARTIES. No consideration is being given at the present time to the modification or elimination of these regulations. "