

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/2854/Rev.1
13 October 1967

Limited Distribution

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Twenty-Fourth Session
9-24 November 1967

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Revision and Annotations

1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The provisional agenda will be submitted for adoption. Proposals for the order of business will be put forward.

2. REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

The Council will meet from 6-8 November to make preparations for the session. A report on the Council's work since the last session in March 1966, including its recommendations for dealing with the items on the agenda for the forthcoming session, will be submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

3. PROGRAMME FOR EXPANSION OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Report on progress under the programme of action initiated by Ministers in 1958 (item proposed by the Director-General):

- (a) Reduction of tariffs - final report on the Kennedy Round;
- (b) Obstacles to trade in agricultural products - further action;
- (c) Obstacles to trade of less-developed countries - multilateral negotiations between developing countries and other action to promote an expansion of their trade.

The Director-General will review progress made under the programme of action initiated by the Ministers in 1958. With respect to reduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade in non-agricultural products, the Director-General will suggest the consideration of some possible lines of future action in the light of Kennedy Round experience. With respect to obstacles to trade in agricultural products, the Director-General has already circulated a note (L/2860). On the third aspect of the Programme, expansion of trade of less-developed countries, the Director-General in addition to reporting on the important developments which have occurred since 1958 will make certain suggestions for future action, including a proposal for a more effective system of consultations with the developing countries on their trade problems. (A paper on this subject will be circulated shortly.)

4. TRADE OF LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

The Committee on Trade and Development will meet from 6-8 November and will report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES on its work since the twenty-third session.

5. TRADE INFORMATION AND TRADE PROMOTION ADVISORY SERVICES

The Advisory Group on Trade Information and Trade Promotion Advisory Services met in June and has submitted its report in document L/2807. The report contains a number of recommendations. The Group's proposals which involve an increase in expenditure have been referred to the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration.

6. FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Director-General will distribute a report on the commercial policy training programme for officials from developing countries, on the joint ECA/GATT training programme for African officials, and on other technical assistance activities since the last session.

7. GATT/UNCTAD RELATIONS

The Director-General will report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES on discussions with the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and on discussions between the two secretariats on matters of common concern to the two organizations.

Proposals for the establishment of a Joint International Trade Centre have been put forward and explained in document L/2839. A document giving further details of financial and administrative arrangements will probably be distributed before the session.

8. BALANCE-OF-PAYMENTS IMPORT RESTRICTIONS

The reports by the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Import Restrictions on consultations carried out since the twenty-third session with the following countries have been approved by the Council, which recommends their adoption by the CONTRACTING PARTIES:

Brazil	(L/2634/Corr.1)	Iceland	(BOP/R/3/Corr.1)
Ceylon	(BOP/R/2)	Israel	(BOP/R/8)
Finland	(BOP/R/4)	New Zealand	(BCF/R/1)
Ghana	(BOP/R/6)	South Africa	(BOP/R/7)
Greece	(BCF/R/5)	Spain	(L/2635)

More recently, the Committee has consulted with the following countries, and the reports will be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 6-8 November:

India	(BOP/R/13)	Spain	(BOP/R/9)
New Zealand	(BOP/R/10)	Turkey	(BOP/R/11)
Pakistan	(BOP/R/12)		

Finally, at a meeting beginning on 16 October, the Committee will carry out consultations with Chile, Finland, Indonesia, South Africa and Tunisia. The reports on these consultations will be submitted to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

9. IMPORT RESTRICTIONS APPLIED CONTRARY TO GATT AND NOT COVERED BY WAIVERS

Notifications received from contracting parties in 1967 have been distributed in the addenda to documents L/2740 and L/2749. A secretariat note has been issued in document L/2837.

10. THE IMPACT OF COMMODITY PROBLEMS UPON INTERNATIONAL TRADE

A note by the Director-General containing some ideas for the examination of commodity problems at sessions of the CONTRACTING PARTIES and on the present situation in respect of various groups of products will be distributed.

11. DISPOSAL OF COMMODITY SURPLUSES

Experience under the Resolution of 4 March 1955 (SS/50-51) on the disposal of surpluses and the liquidation of strategic stocks has been reviewed at recent sessions of the CONTRACTING PARTIES. A request that contracting parties should again submit reports of any disposal or liquidation arrangements in which they may have engaged during the past year has been issued in L/2849 and the statements received will be distributed.

12. TRADE IN COTTON TEXTILES

Reports by the Cotton Textiles Committee have been distributed in documents L/2712 and L/2821. The Committee drew up a Protocol providing for the extension of the Arrangement for a period of three years; this Protocol entered into force on 1 October and has been accepted by all the parties to the Arrangement.

In L/2853, the Chairman of the Committee has suggested that the next annual review of the operation of the Arrangement should take place in the latter part of 1968.

13. CUSTOMS UNIONS AND FREE-TRADE AREAS

Contracting parties participating in the following regional arrangements are expected to report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES on developments since the twenty-third session. In connexion with sub-item (b), the secretariat is preparing a note on the bilateral agreements on agricultural products, as requested at the twenty-third session (SR.23/9).

- (a) European Economic Community - Rome Treaty and agreements of association with Greece, Turkey and African and Malagasy States
- (b) European Free Trade Area - Stockholm Convention and the association agreement with Finland
- (c) Latin American Free Trade Area
- (d) Central American Common Market
- (e) Arab Common Market
- (f) Central African Economic and Customs Union
- (g) United Kingdom/Ireland Free Trade Area

14. ASSOCIATION BETWEEN EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY AND NIGERIA

A working party has been appointed by the Council to examine the Agreement establishing an Association between the EEC and Nigeria (L/2774). If the working party meets and completes a report before the close of the session, this report will be presented to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

15. INITIAL NEGOTIATING RIGHTS

A recommendation by the Trade Negotiations Committee is contained in document L/2867.

16. ARTICLE VI - COUNTERVAILING DUTIES

A recommendation by the Trade Negotiations Committee is contained in document L/2868.

17. ARTICLE XVI:4

At the twenty-first session the CONTRACTING PARTIES opened for acceptance the Second Declaration on the Extension of the Standstill Provisions of Paragraph 4 of Article XVI, relating to subsidies on non-primary products (L2S/50). It was the hope of the CONTRACTING PARTIES that this Declaration

would be accepted by governments which had not subscribed to the Declaration Giving Effect to the Provisions of Article XVI:4 (9S/32), but only one such contracting party has accepted it. The Declaration will expire on 31 December 1967 and the CONTRACTING PARTIES may wish to draw up and open for acceptance a new Declaration.

18. ARTICLE XVIII

Paragraph 6 of Article XVIII requires the CONTRACTING PARTIES to review annually the measures applied under Sections C and D of the Article. The annual reviews at recent sessions were carried out in plenary meetings.

A note on the measures applied by Ceylon under Section C is being prepared. No measures are at present being applied under Section D.

19. CONSULAR FORMALITIES

At the twentieth session the CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted the report and approved the recommendations of a panel of experts (11S/59) which had been appointed to survey the consular formalities still maintained by contracting parties and to recommend ways and means of ensuring their simplification and their elimination in accordance with the Recommendations adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES in 1952 and 1957 (1S/25 and 6S/25). Contracting parties still regularly requiring consular formalities have been invited to submit reports on their reasons for maintaining these requirements and on their future policy.

The reports submitted by Spain, Turkey and Brazil have been distributed in documents L/2855 and Add.1.

20. APPLICATION OF ARTICLE XXXV TO JAPAN

This item has been included in the agenda at the request of the Government of Japan.

21. TURKISH STAMP DUTY

A request by the Government of Turkey for authority to maintain at an increased rate the stamp duty which was covered by the waiver of 20 July 1963 has been examined by the Committee on Balance-of-Payments Import Restrictions. The Committee, in its report L/2824, recommends that this request be granted. A draft decision, which is recommended for adoption, is annexed to the report.

22. MALAWI SCHEDULE

The Government of Malawi, on becoming a contracting party in August 1964, accepted the rights and obligations of the former Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland including the tariff bindings embodied in the Schedule of the former Federation. However, for reasons explained in document L/2816, the Government of Malawi introduced a new customs tariff on 1 January 1967 and has asked for a waiver from the obligations of Article II pending the renegotiation of its Schedule in 1968.

23. REPORTS UNDER WAIVERS

(a) Australia/Preferences

The first annual report by the Government of Australia under the Decision of 28 March 1966 (L4S/23), which authorises the establishment of certain tariff preferences for less-developed countries, has been distributed in document L/2818 and Add.1.

(b) Ceylon/Duty Increases

Under the Decision of 21 January 1967 (L/2738), which is valid until 31 December 1968, the Government of Ceylon is authorized to impose certain duties higher than those specified in the Ceylon Schedule. It is expected that a report by the Government of Ceylon will be received in time for consideration at the session.

(c) Italy/Libya

The waiver authorizing the Government of Italy to grant special customs treatment to certain Libyan products (L3S/24), will expire on 31 December 1967, but the waiver provides that the situation should be reviewed before the end of 1967.

(d) Italy/Somalia

The waiver authorizing the Government of Italy to grant special customs treatment to certain Somalian products (L4S/34) will expire on 31 December, but the Government of Italy has requested an extension.

(e) United States Import Restrictions

It is expected that a report by the Government of the United States, as required under the Decision of 5 March 1955 (3S/32), will be received in time for consideration at the session.

(f) United States/Automotive Products

The first annual report under the Decision of 20 December 1965 (L/S/37) has been distributed in document L/2800.

(g) Uruguay/Import Surcharges

This waiver will expire at the close of the session, but it is expected that the Government of Uruguay will submit a report for consideration by the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

24. PROVISIONAL ACCESSION OF TUNISIA AND UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

As announced in document L/2852 the Government of Tunisia wishes to carry out negotiations with a view to accession under Article XXXIII before the end of the year, at which time the present arrangement for provisional accession will expire.

The Government of the United Arab Republic has requested an extension of the arrangement for its provisional accession.

25. NEWLY-INDEPENDENT STATES

In document L/2757 the Director-General has proposed for consideration a text of a new recommendation for the de facto application of the Agreement between contracting parties and newly-independent States pending their decision on future relations with the GATT.

26. STATUS OF PROTOCOLS

(a) Protocols of Amendment and Rectification

A statement on the Protocols and other instruments which have not yet entered into force will be distributed. A number of Protocols, some of them dating from 1955, have not entered into force because they have not been accepted by one of the contracting parties. The most important of these is the Protocol Amending Part I and Articles XXIX and XXX. The status of these Protocols should be reviewed; some of them are open for acceptance only until the end of the twenty-fourth session.

(b) Protocol Introducing Part IV

This Protocol has not yet been accepted by seventeen contracting parties. It is open for acceptance until the end of the twenty-fourth session. Seven of these seventeen contracting parties have accepted the Declaration of 15 December 1965 on the de facto implementation of Part IV, but this Declaration will also expire at the close of the twenty-fourth session.

27. FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

The Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration is meeting during the week beginning 9 October and its report, dealing principally with budget proposals for 1968, will be submitted to the session.

28. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, the Chairman of the Council and the Chairman of the Committee on Trade and Development for the ensuing year, will be considered in the first instance at a meeting of Heads of Delegations.

Special item for meetings on 22-24 November

REVIEW OF THE WORK OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES THROUGH THE LAST TWO DECADES AND CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE PROGRAMME

It is hoped that contracting parties will arrange to be represented for discussion of this item at the highest possible level, and that as many Trade Ministers as find it practicable will attend.

Meeting of Heads of Delegations

APPOINTMENT OF A NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL

The Director-General has announced his intention to retire at the end of this year. The question of appointing a successor to the Director-General will be considered at a meeting of Heads of Delegations.