

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON  
TARIFFS AND TRADE

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FIRST AGREEMENT ON TRADE NEGOTIATIONS AMONG DEVELOPING  
MEMBER COUNTRIES OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION  
FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
(Bangkok Agreement)

Decision of 14 March 1978<sup>1/</sup>

The CONTRACTING PARTIES to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade,

Considering that the Governments of Bangladesh, India, Laos, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka and Thailand (hereinafter referred to as the "participating States") have notified the CONTRACTING PARTIES that they have concluded a First Agreement on Trade Negotiations Among Developing Member Countries of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as the "Agreement"), dated 31 July 1975 including a first list of concessions;

Noting that the stated objectives of the Agreement and the concessions concluded thereunder are to promote economic development through a continuous process of trade expansion among the developing member countries of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (hereinafter referred to as "ESCAP");

Noting that the Agreement is open for accession to other developing countries in the ESCAP region and is intended to promote the rational and outward oriented expansion of production and trade of the participating States through the benefits to be gained from specialization and economies of scale;

Bearing in mind that developing contracting parties have agreed under Article XXXVII:4 of the General Agreement to take appropriate action in implementation of the provisions of Part IV for the benefit of the trade of other developing contracting parties, insofar as such action is consistent with their individual present and future development, financial and trade needs, taking into account past trade developments as well as the trade interests of developing contracting parties as a whole;

Noting that the establishment of preferences among the developing countries of ESCAP is intended by the parties to this Agreement to be complementary to the efforts of the parties to the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries done at Geneva on 8 December 1971, to expand trade

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<sup>1/</sup> Adopted by the Council (C/M/124)

among developing countries and that membership of the Agreement is not intended to preclude participation in the arrangements embodied in that Protocol;

Recognizing that the Agreement should not constitute an impediment to the reduction or elimination of tariffs and other trade barriers on a most-favoured-nation basis;

Decide that:

Notwithstanding the provisions of Article I of the General Agreement, the participating contracting parties may implement the Agreement in accordance with the conditions and procedures set out hereunder

Provided that any preferential treatment under the Agreement shall be designed to facilitate trade between the participating States and not to raise barriers to the trade of other contracting parties;

- (a) Any preferential concessions or arrangements or any similar measures introduced or modified pursuant to the Agreement shall be notified to the CONTRACTING PARTIES and all useful information relating to the actions taken shall be provided to them by the participating States;
- (b) Each participating contracting party shall afford adequate opportunity for consultations at the request of any other contracting party which considers that any benefit accruing to it under the General Agreement may be or is being impaired unduly as a result of the Agreement. If such consultations have proved unsatisfactory, the contracting party concerned may bring the matter before the CONTRACTING PARTIES, who will examine it promptly and will formulate any recommendations that they consider appropriate;
- (c) On the basis of a report by the participating States on developments under the Agreement, the operation of this Decision shall be reviewed biennially by the CONTRACTING PARTIES in the light of the provisions of the General Agreement and of the objectives stated above. The CONTRACTING PARTIES may, in the course of the reviews, make such recommendations to the participating contracting parties as may be appropriate, including any arising out of any consultations held in regard to the effects of the Agreement on the trade of contracting parties. The CONTRACTING PARTIES may also in the course of the reviews, take such decisions regarding the operation of this Decision as may be appropriate in the light of developments at that time.