

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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COMMUNICATION FROM THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Tariff Concessions

The following communication, dated 23 December 1983, has been received from the Delegation of the Commission of the European Communities.

The European Community wishes to inform the contracting parties of the following situation.

The European Community has granted in Schedule LXXII the following tariff concession on newsprint (48.01 A):

A. Newsprint ¹		
- within the limits of an annual tariff quota of 1,500,000 metric tonnes		Free
- other	(at 1.1.84)	5.7
	(at 1.1.87)	4.9

From 1 January 1984 imports of newsprint from EFTA countries will, in accordance with the free-trade agreements between the EEC and those countries, become free of duties. In consequence some adjustment would have to be made to the existing tariff régime on this product to reflect the fact that the EFTA suppliers have been by far the largest beneficiaries of the concession in recent years.

An appropriate reduction in the level of the bound quota was decided in certain similar cases in the past (L/4537, paragraph 5), and the European Community considers that this could also be the right approach in the case of newsprint. This appears to be a better solution than the alternative which would consist in continuing to apply the bound quota at the present level and, as part of an administrative management of the quota, impute imports from all sources against it as has been the practice in the past. In either case, the tariff concession would remain subject to the conditions referred to in the footnote (see also the notes to Chapter 48 in the EEC tariff, which further define newsprint).

The European Community has conducted informal consultations with certain trading partners with negotiating rights in this matter during recent months, and in particular with Canada which has claimed such rights in connection with the newsprint concession. Pending the completion of these consultations a provisional duty-free quota of 500,000 tons has been opened from 1 January 1984, without prejudice to the GATT rights of the EEC or of its trading partners.

¹Entry under this heading is subject to conditions to be determined by the competent authorities.