

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Limited Distribution

REPORT (1984) OF THE COMMITTEE ON TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE

1. This report, submitted under Article 15.8 of the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, sets out developments in the implementation and operation of the Agreement since the Committee's last report on 10 October 1983 (L/5548).
2. The Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade entered into force on 1 January 1980. As of 15 October 1984 the following thirty-three signatories have accepted the Agreement under Article 15.1: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, European Economic Community, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United Kingdom on behalf of Hong Kong, United States and Yugoslavia. In addition, Argentina, Greece and Rwanda have accepted the Agreement under Article 15.1 subject to ratification. Tunisia has accepted the Agreement under Article 15.2.
3. The following twenty-three contracting parties have observer status in the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade: Australia, Bangladesh, Colombia, Cuba, Gabon, Ghana, Indonesia, Israel, Ivory Coast, Malaysia, Malta, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey and Zaire. Three non-contracting parties, Bulgaria, Ecuador and Mexico, are also observers. Six international organizations, IMF, UNCTAD, ISO, IEC, FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission and OIE have attended meetings of the Committee in an observer capacity.

Developments since the Committee's last report (L/5548)

4. The Committee has held three regular meetings during the fifth year of operation of the Agreement, on

28 February 1984 (TBT/M/15 and L/5629)

10 July 1984 (TBT/M/16 and L/5665)

16-17 October 1984 (TBT/M/17, to be issued shortly, and L/5702).

5. Parties to the Agreement informed the Committee of the measures taken by them in the review period with respect to the implementation and administration of the Agreement (TBT/1/Addenda 34 and 35, TBT/M/15, TBT/M/16 and TBT/M/17). In this connection, the Committee urged those signatories that had not completed their ratification procedures, as well as those that had not established an enquiry point, to do so without delay (TBT/M/16, paragraph 12). It requested the delegations concerned to draw the attention of their governments to the matter in the light of a note by the secretariat contained in document TBT/W/74/Rev.1 and to report to the Committee (TBT/M/17).

6. During the period under review the Committee adopted a recommendation on the application of the concept of "significant effect on trade of other Parties" contained in Article 2.5 (Preamble part) of the Agreement (TBT/M/16, paragraph 22 and Annex 1). It also agreed on procedures for circulating a projected agenda of work reflecting suggestions and comments by Parties on outstanding items (TBT/M/15, paragraph 28 and TBT/M/16, paragraph 38), for the exchange of information on technical assistance (TBT/M/17) and for circulating a list of products covered by the notifications drawn up by the secretariat (TBT/M/17). It also pursued its discussion of proposals regarding the handling of comments on notifications.

7. Pursuant to the decision on regional standards-related activities taken by the Committee at its three-year review, the Committee heard presentations by the Secretary-General of the European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC), and by the representatives of Pacific Area Standards Congress (PASC) (TBT/M/15, paragraph 17 and Annex) and the European Conference of Post and Telecommunications Administrations (CEPT) (TBT/M/16, paragraph 33 and Annex 2), on the basis of agreed lists of questions.

8. The Committee met in restricted sessions of 29 February, 25 April, 10 July and 11 September 1984, to investigate under Article 14.4 a matter concerning procedures for type approval of heating radiators and electrical medical equipment. The Committee adopted a set of recommendations regarding improvement of the procedures under examination and agreed to keep the matter under review in accordance with Article 14.22.

9. In the light of informal consultations held by the Chairman of the Committee with developing country signatories and non-signatories, the Committee agreed to hold an information meeting on the implementation and operation of the Agreement with those countries, in conjunction with its regular meeting in the Spring of 1985 (TBT/M/17).

10. The Committee held its fifth annual review of the implementation and operation of the Agreement under Article 15.8 at its seventeenth meeting, on 16-17 October 1984, on the basis of background documentation prepared by the secretariat (TBT/M/17, TBT/10 and Suppls 1 and 2, TBT/17 and Suppls 1 and 2, TBT/18 and Suppl.1, TBT/W/25/Rev.9, TBT/W/31/Rev.4 and Corr.1 and TBT/W/62/Rev.1 and Corr.1).