

COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

Fourteenth Annual Report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES

1. The Decision on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries¹, also known as the Enabling Clause, applies, inter alia, to "regional or global arrangements entered into amongst less-developed contracting parties for the mutual reduction or elimination of tariffs and, in accordance with criteria or conditions which may be prescribed by the CONTRACTING PARTIES, for the mutual reduction or elimination of non-tariff measures..." notwithstanding the provisions of Article I of the General Agreement. This Decision constitutes a standing legal basis² for the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries.

2. The Committee on Trade and Development which has been given primary responsibility for supervision of the implementation of the above Decision, in discussing procedural arrangements for reviewing activities covered by the Decision took note that reviews of the operation of the Enabling Clause could be co-ordinated with its end-of-year reviews of the implementation of Part IV and that information for the purpose of such reviews should be circulated in good time. Thus, the countries participating in the Protocol submit to the CONTRACTING PARTIES their Fourteenth Annual Report.³

I. COMMITTEE OF PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

A. Entry into force and status of ratifications

3. To the time of presenting this Report, the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries, which entered into force on 11 February 1973, had been ratified by fifteen developing countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, India, Israel, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, Romania, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia. Paraguay has signed the Protocol ad referendum pending the completion of its domestic procedures and the Philippines has signed but not yet ratified the Protocol.

¹ BISD 26S/203-205

² The implementation of the Protocol was originally covered by a Decision of the CONTRACTING PARTIES dated 26 November 1971 (BISD 18S/26-28).

³ The first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth Annual Reports were published in BISD 21S/126, BISD 22S/73, BISD 23S/147, BISD 24S/154, BISD 25S/163, BISD 26S/337, BISD 27S/172, BISD 28S/129, BISD 29S/155, BISD 30S/203, BISD 31S/291, BISD 32S/191 and L/6066 and Addenda, respectively.

B. Implementation of the Protocol

4. Participating countries have fully observed the provisions of the Protocol. During the period under review, the articles of the Protocol relating to re-negotiation, withdrawal or modification of concessions, emergency action on imports of particular products, temporary suspension of rights and obligations and the withholding or withdrawal of concessions were not utilized by any participating country. No consultations have been sought on measures which have implications for benefits countries may derive from the arrangement. In connection with the Declaration annexed to the Protocol, membership both in the Protocol and in regional, economic and trading arrangements among developing countries has not so far resulted in the notification of any problems for participating countries.

C. Activities of the Committee

5. The Committee of Participating Countries provided for in the Protocol was established for the purpose of giving effect to those provisions of the Protocol involving joint action and generally with a view to facilitating the operation and furthering the objectives of the Protocol. During the period under review, the Committee has held sessions in February, May and October 1987 under the Chairmanship of Messrs. A. de la Peña and A. Garrido (Mexico) and R. Romero (Peru).

6. In addition to concerning itself with day-to-day issues relating to the operation of the Protocol, the Committee has taken up questions with respect to the expansion of trade among developing countries, having regard to discussions on this subject in GATT and in other relevant international bodies and organizations.

7. Having regard to the relevant provisions of the Protocol Relating to Trade Negotiations Among Developing Countries, the Committee of Participating Countries decided to carry out a review of the schedules of concessions of participating countries with a view to facilitating action aimed at updating and improving the scope and coverage of the concessions on the basis of the considerations and principles embodied in the Preamble of the Protocol. To this effect, the Committee has adopted procedures for review of the schedules of concessions. Pursuant to these procedures, consultations for the purpose of exchanging information and clarifications concerning the review exercise have been carried out. The Committee has taken note of the exchange of views concerning the proposal to liberalize the conditions of access for some additional items of interest to participating countries without prejudice to activities in other fora concerning economic co-operation among developing countries. In this connection several members have already submitted lists of items for which the conditions of access might be liberalized in the framework of the Protocol and have invited other members to submit their lists of items as soon as possible.

8. In the light of the request of Argentina for accession to the Protocol, the Committee of Participating Countries has agreed on procedures for negotiations between Argentina and interested participating countries.

9. Pursuant to Annex A of the Protocol, participating countries have updated information with respect to certification of origin.

II. STATISTICAL DATA

10. Available statistics indicate overall trade among participating countries in products contained in the schedules of concessions. Full details of reported trade in products subject to concessions are shown in addenda to this Report.