

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/6496
3 May 1989

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COMMITTEE ON IMPORT LICENSING
MEETING OF 3 MARCH 1989

Note from the Chairman

1. The Committee held its twenty-third meeting on 3 March 1989, Mr. R. Molloy (Ireland) and Mr. D. Shark (United States) were elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively for the year 1989.
2. The Committee took note of revised, corrected or updated replies to the GATT Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures from Argentina, Finland, Hungary, India and the United States (issued in the L/5640/-series) as well as publications concerning import licensing procedures received from Canada, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Poland and the United States. The Committee also took note of a statement by Hungary concerning a new regulation under which import licensing was abolished, with effect from 1 January 1989, for goods representing approximately 40 per cent of Hungarian imports in convertible currencies. This was regarded by the Hungarian authorities as a major step in the process of economic reform and as a contribution to the objectives of the Uruguay Round.
3. The Committee took note of statements by Chile and the European Communities concerning licensing applied in the Community on imports of apples from Chile. It noted that Chile continued to reserve all its rights under the Agreement on this issue. It also took note of information provided by Finland, at the request of Romania, on import licensing applied by Finland on flat steel bars from Romania and of statements by both parties relating to this question. The Committee agreed to revert to both of these questions, if necessary, at a later meeting.
4. The Committee agreed to hold further informal consultations on the definitions of "import licensing" in Article 1.1 and various terms contained in other provisions of the Agreement.
5. The Committee heard a statement by the United States concerning proposals for improvements in the Agreement which it had presented both to the Committee and to the Uruguay Round Negotiating Group on MTN Agreements and Arrangements. Some participants supported these initiatives. Others suggested that the Negotiating Group on MTN Agreements and Arrangements was the more appropriate forum for such a discussion; the rôle of the

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Committee was to give technical advice to the Negotiating Group. The Committee agreed to revert to the question of its relationship with the Negotiating Group at its next meeting.

6. The Committee agreed to conduct its biennial review of the Agreement in Autumn 1989, when it would hold its next regular meeting. It left open the possibility of scheduling earlier meetings, if delegations so desired, to coincide with those of the Negotiating Group on MTN Agreements and Arrangements.