

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

L/6641

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KOREA - RESTRICTIONS ON IMPORTS OF BEEF

Follow-up on the Panels' reports

Communication from Korea

The following communication, dated 6 February 1990, has been received from the delegation of Korea, with the request that it be circulated to contracting parties.

Report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES on the progress of the consultations on the Republic of Korea's restrictions on imports of beef

1. The Government of the Republic of Korea submits herewith a report on the result of the consultations which have been thus far held, in accordance with the recommendations of the Panel reports L/6503, L/6504 and L/6505 adopted at the Council on 7 November 1989.

2. As recommended by the above-mentioned reports and with a view to working out mutually acceptable resolutions of the dispute concerning the Republic of Korea's restrictions on imports of beef, the Republic of Korea held consultations with three respective parties to the dispute since the adoption of the reports as follows:

Korea - New Zealand: Wellington, 18 December 1989

Korea - Australia: Canberra, 21 December 1989

Korea - USA: Seoul, 11 January 1990

As for the United States, the Republic of Korea had two consultations prior to the adoption of the Panel report, that is, on 21-22 August and on 2 November 1989, respectively.

The consultation with Canada is also underway through diplomatic channels at the request of the Government of Canada as an interested contracting party.

3. Despite these endeavours, no solution has so far been found. Given the complexity of the dispute, the three-month period recommended for consultations by the Panel turned out to be insufficient.

4. The main issue at those consultations was the establishment of the timetable for the removal of the Republic of Korea's import restrictions on beef. Australia, New Zealand and the United States called upon the Republic of Korea to present an immediate timetable.

5. It was, however, extremely difficult for the Republic of Korea to propose such a timetable in the course of consultations. The Republic of Korea requested some more time for carrying out an in-depth study on the Korean livestock industry before establishing a workable timetable. As the Republic of Korea pointed out at the Council meeting on 7 November 1989, and on many other earlier occasions, the issue involves substantial political and economic problems arising from the fragile and difficult conditions surrounding Korea's livestock farming.

6. Under the circumstances, the Republic of Korea proposed to increase beef import quota for the coming years pending the final agreement on the timetable, but no agreement was reached.

7. The Republic of Korea will carry on the consultations with the parties to the dispute and other interested contracting parties. The second round of consultations with Australia and New Zealand are scheduled to take place in Seoul on 20-21 February and on 23 February respectively. As regards the United States, the Republic of Korea invited the United States to suggest a date for the next consultation at its own convenience. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its willingness to engage, with sincerity, in further consultations to bring about a mutually satisfactory solution to the dispute within the shortest possible time.