

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

RESTRICTED

GPR/M/45

30 April 1992

TARIFFS AND TRADE

Special Distribution

Committee on Government Procurement

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 MARCH 1992

Chairman: Mr. David Hayes (United Kingdom)

1. The following agenda was proposed:

	<u>Page</u>
A. Election of Officers	1
B. Article IX:6(B) Negotiations	1
C. 1989 Statistical Review (Ref. GPR/M/43, GPR/57 and Addenda)	2
D. Implementation and Administration of the Agreement: Modification by the EC of its Entity List, pursuant to Article IX:5(B) (GPR/63 and Add.1 and 2)	2
E. Other Business	3

A. Election of Officers

2. The Committee re-elected Mr. David Hayes (United Kingdom) as Chairman and re-elected Mr. Amichai Perry (Israel) as Vice-Chairman.

B. Article IX:6(B) Negotiations

3. The Chairman reported that he had circulated a draft Agreement on Government Procurement on 20 December 1991, on his own responsibility, as Chairman of Negotiations. The Informal Working Group had met on 16 January to discuss that draft Agreement. The Group had endorsed conclusions which were circulated in writing shortly after. These included, inter alia, agreement that there should be no wholesale re-opening of the draft Agreement, which was considered to be the basis for finalisation. It was nevertheless recognised that certain coverage-related issues (challenge procedures, offsets, self-denial, privatisation and the scope of the Agreement) were not yet ripe for agreement. This remained the case. The Informal Working Group had met again on 19 February. It had noted a timetable for concluding negotiations in April, including a process of requests and offers. The Group had also had useful discussions on the relationship between the draft Agreement and those in the Uruguay Round on

a Multilateral Trade Organization (MTO), a Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) and the General Agreement on Services. These issues remained open, and would be discussed again. Following suggestions at that meeting, a corrected text of the draft Agreement had been issued by the GATT secretariat to participants as a working paper on 10 March. The Informal Group had met again on 24 March. It had noted that offers had been made by Canada, the European Communities, Finland, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. It had also taken note of statements by Austria, Israel and Korea that they too would submit offers. Participants had subsequently been conducting bilateral negotiations here in Geneva to pursue their individual requests on coverage. These had been useful, not least as regards clarifying and evaluating offers made. A further round of negotiations would be held shortly with the aim of finalising the text of the Agreement and its coverage. Dates for these negotiations would be communicated to participants as soon as possible, following consultations.

C. 1989 Statistical Review

4. Review of the 1989 statistics continued from the last Committee meeting of October 1991. The Chairman recalled that at that meeting, the European Community had submitted a number of detailed questions to the delegation from the United States on the United States 1989 statistical report (GPR/57/Add.10) to which the United States had wanted to respond at a later date in view of the detail and technical nature of the questions and the fact that the EC had not provided the questions in writing in advance of the meeting. The delegate from the United States observed that she was now in a position to give an oral summary of the United States responses and that after this meeting she would transmit the replies in writing. Apart from the specific points raised in connection with the United States 1989 statistics, both delegations stressed the need for improving the statistical reporting systems in general and looked forward to co-operating with all Signatories to this end. The Committee took note of the statements from both the United States and the European Community and welcomed the written United States replies. The Chairman stated that he remained open to further discussion of this item in a further Committee meeting.

D. Implementation and Administration of the Agreement

5. The Chairman recalled that last year the European Community had notified the Committee of a revision of its entities list pursuant to Article IX:5(b) (ref. document GPR/63). Inconclusive discussion had taken place during the Committee meeting on 22 November 1991 where the delegate from the United States had submitted a list of questions to the European Community. The European Community had preferred to reply to them at a later stage. Subsequently, the European Community had made two more notifications, adding to its list of entities those of Spain (9 December 1991) and of Greece (6 February 1992) (ref. documents GPR/63/Add.1 and 2). The spokesman of the European Community noted that he was now in a position to give an oral summary of his replies and committed himself to giving them in writing at a later date. The delegate from the United States thanked him for the summary and looked forward to receiving the written replies.

E. Other Business

6. Statistical reports for 1990

The Chairman welcomed the statistical reports for 1990 he had received so far and urged those Signatories who had not yet done so to submit them as soon as possible.

Threshold notification

The Chairman urged those Signatories who had not yet done so to notify to the secretariat their national threshold value for the period 1992-1993.

Date of the next meeting

No precise date for the next Committee meeting was set. The Chairman anticipated scheduling the next Committee meeting in May to consider the two panel reports on the Procurement of Toll Collection Equipment for the city of Trondheim and on the United States Procurement of a Sonar Mapping System.