

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Group "Tropical Products"

## GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZATION OF NEGOTIATIONS ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS

The Trade Negotiations Committee, at its February meeting, agreed, inter alia, that a Group "Tropical Products" should be established to organize and conduct the negotiations in this sector.

The Group "Tropical Products" held its initial meeting from 10 to 14 March 1975, when it discussed guidelines for the organization of negotiations on tropical products in the light of the relevant provisions of the Tokyo Declaration and the technical and analytical work which had been carried out during the preparatory stages of the negotiations. After statements by delegations concerning the substantive approaches which might be adopted for negotiations on tropical products having regard to the problem areas identified and suggestions for solutions put forward by delegations, the Group agreed on the attached guidelines for the organization of negotiations in this sector of international trade.

The Group also agreed that its next meeting would commence the week beginning 16 June 1975 under the chairmanship of Ambassador G.O. Martinez (Argentina).

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZATION OF NEGOTIATIONS  
ON TROPICAL PRODUCTS

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- (i) Individual participants or groups of participants of developing countries would be invited to submit lists of initial requests to other participants<sup>1</sup> in whose markets they have an interest as exporters of tropical products indicating in specific terms the tariff items and the products for which they would wish to secure concessions and the nature of the concession or concessions relating to obstacles to trade being sought. Participating developing countries would submit their initial requests for concessions to the participants concerned by 16 May 1975, it being understood that those unable to meet this date would submit their requests as soon as possible thereafter. It is also understood that request lists may be modified or requests for additional concessions submitted as the negotiations proceed and in the light of trade policy developments. To facilitate the submission of requests, a suggested pro-forma would be made available by the secretariat.
- (ii) Arrangements would be made for appropriate consultations with respect to the request lists both among participants making requests and between participants making requests and the participants to which requests are addressed.
- (iii) Copies of the request lists would be filed simultaneously with the secretariat which would circulate such lists to all participants in the negotiations.
- (iv) The Group would meet in early June to review the status of requests and would consider arrangements for the presentation and possible circulation of initial offers.
- (v) Questions as to how special and priority treatment may be ensured in this sector, which need to be considered on a multilateral basis, would be taken up at the June meeting of the Group and at subsequent meetings.
- (vi) The Group would keep under review the progress made in the negotiations on tropical products and take such action as is needed to achieve the objectives of the negotiations. The Group would report periodically to the Trade Negotiations Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> Tropical products may be the subject of negotiations between developing countries in accordance with special arrangements or procedures which have been or which may be accepted for such negotiations.

(vii) The Group would, as appropriate, review and examine questions relating, inter alia, to non-tariff measures which are found not to lend themselves to negotiations on a product-by-product basis and which may need to be taken up in the context of solutions which might be worked out in regard to such measures on a multilateral basis either in the Group "Tropical Products" or in other areas of the negotiations as appropriate, taking into account the special and priority treatment to be accorded to the sector of tropical products.

(viii) The inter-connexion between negotiations on tropical products and those on other products would continue to be borne in mind. Activities on tropical products would be co-ordinated as necessary through the Trade Negotiations Committee with points of common interest being taken up in other groups, keeping always in view the need for giving special and priority treatment to tropical products.

(ix) Problems facing trade in tropical products, when they require multilateral action, may be examined by this Group, wherever appropriate, with a view to facilitating access to markets as well as to considering, as appropriate, measures designed to attain stable, equitable and remunerative prices for tropical products, while taking into account the competence and work of other fora, particularly those concerned with specific commodities.

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(i) The Group agreed that negotiations on tropical products would be initiated without prejudice as to what may or may not be considered a tropical product.

(ii) Full account would be taken of the relevant provisions of the Tokyo Declaration including the principle of non-reciprocity.

(iii) Full account would also be taken of the solutions already proposed during the technical and analytical work carried out in Group 3(f).

(iv) It was noted that the secretariat would provide such background information as may be needed in connexion with commercial policy measures and prices including up-to-date information on GSP rates and other trade policy developments covering also recent agreements affecting tropical products. Work would proceed on points relevant to the trade negotiations which were drawn to the attention of Group 3(f).

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It was further noted that, on the basis of the reports to be submitted to the Trade Negotiations Committee by the Group, the Trade Negotiations Committee may wish to consider as appropriate any further action that may be required taking into account, inter alia, developments in the negotiations as a whole, and the desirability of having concrete results in as broad an area as possible with respect to tropical products at the earliest possible date bearing in mind that the Ministers stated in the Tokyo Declaration their intention that the trade negotiations be concluded in 1975.