

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

MTN/NTM/1

10 March 1975

Special Distribution

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Group "Non-tariff Measures"

RECORD OF DECISIONS TAKEN ON 4-7 MARCH 1975

Note by the Acting Chairman

1. The Group met from 4-7 March 1975 and took the following decisions. It invited the Secretary-General of UNCTAD or his representative to attend this session of the Group as an observer.

Selection of Non-tariff Measures on which negotiations should be commenced initially

2. The Group agreed that negotiations should be commenced initially on the following topics, it being understood that other measures might be added (see para. 6 below) and that no measure was being excluded from the negotiations:

First grouping

- (a) quantitative restrictions (including import prohibitions and so-called voluntary export restraints);
- (b) import licensing procedures.

Within this grouping, work would commence first on item (a).

Second grouping

- (a) subsidies;
- (b) countervailing duties.

The way that the items in this grouping would be dealt with would be decided in the actual negotiations on them.

Third grouping

- (a) standards;
- (b) packaging and labelling;
- (c) marks of origin.

Within this grouping, work would commence first on item (a). General rules should be drawn up in the area of standards. The applicability of these rules to health and sanitary regulations concerning agriculture and tropical products should be examined by Groups "Agriculture" and "Tropical Products". In order to accommodate the practical problem of adequate representation by all interested delegations, the question of timing of the meetings on these subjects would be borne in mind.

Fourth grouping

- (a) customs valuation;
- (b) import documentation - including consular formalities;
- (c) customs nomenclature;
- (d) customs procedures.

Within this grouping, work would commence on item (a).

3. In response to a question from the floor concerning the relation between work on industrial and agricultural products, the Acting Chairman recalled that in his summing-up the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee at its meeting in February 1975 had stated: "The Agriculture Group will of course be competent for the whole range of agricultural products and for all the elements relevant to trade in these products. To arrive at our common objective, the harmonious and balanced development of all the elements subject to negotiation, it is necessary to underline that if in other groups questions which are likely to concern agriculture are taken up, the Agriculture Group shall concern itself with the matter as regards the agricultural aspects." (MTN/W/10, paragraph 4.)

Establishment of sub-groups

4. The Group agreed to establish four sub-groups each dealing with a grouping on which negotiations are to be commenced initially.

Election of Chairmen of the Group and the Sub-Groups

5. The Group noted that consultations were continuing on this matter. It agreed that the secretariat should reconvene the Group when, after consultation, it was considered that the matter could be dealt with, hopefully within a few days.

Establishment of Procedures for Inclusion in the Negotiations of Non-Tariff Measures not contained in the Initial List

6. The Group agreed that from time to time it will consider the feasibility of taking up additional items, that it is open to any participant to propose additional items, and that after the August recess, the Group will meet to consider the establishment of a second list of non-tariff measures in the same way as it established the first list.

7. The Group agreed that the secretariat should prepare a background note which would gather together the available and relevant information on government procurement.

Establishment of Procedures for Negotiations on Non-tariff Measures not dealt with multilaterally

8. The Group had an exchange of views of this item. The Group agreed that the secretariat prepare a paper setting out the points made and the procedures used in previous item-by-item GATT negotiations and agreed to revert to the matter at its next meeting with a view to reaching some conclusions.

Establishment of a Calendar of Meetings

9. The Group agreed to the following programme of meetings:

21 April-2 May	"Quantitative Restrictions"
5 May-16 May	"Technical barriers to trade"
19 May-30 May	"Customs matters"
2 June-13 June	"Subsidies and Countervailing Duties"
23-27 June	Group "Non-tariff Measures" to review the work and draw up a report to the Trade Negotiations Committee.

10. It was agreed that the Group should be callable on short notice as required.

11. The Group agreed that the secretariat should distribute background papers relating to each of the four groupings in advance of the meetings.