

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Group "Non-Tariff Measures"

Sub-Group "Government Procurement"

MEETING OF JUNE 1977

Summing-up by the Chairman

1. The Sub-Group met on 14-15 June 1977.
2. The Sub-Group invited the Secretary-General of UNCTAD or his representative to attend the meeting as an observer. It noted the communications received from the Chairmen of other Groups and Sub-Groups (MTN/NTM/W/101).
3. At the end of the meeting, the Chairman made the following summing-up of the discussions on his own responsibility.
4. The Sub-Group undertook, on the basis of the background documentation available to it, a detailed examination of major issues and approaches in the negotiations on government procurement focussing more particularly on matters relating to non-discrimination, transparency, surveillance and dispute settlement, purchasing entities and thresholds. The question of differential treatment for developing countries was taken up under each of the issues examined. In the course of the discussions, members of the Sub-Group elaborated on the list of points contained in the check-list (MTN/NTM/W/96), raised a number of additional points and offered comments and suggestions with respect to solutions which might be appropriate in the area of government procurement.
5. There was a broad measure of agreement that an overall solution might take the form of a code on government procurement embodying a set of detailed provisions and commitments covering the various issues that arise for consideration in this area.
6. The Sub-Group agreed that the secretariat should be asked to prepare a revised check-list of points contained in document MTN/NTM/W/96 on the basis of the additional comments, suggestions and proposals made in the course of the examination. In this connexion, it was understood that members should continue to feel free at future meetings of the Sub-Group to raise for consideration any additional points they might wish to take up.

7. The Sub-Group also discussed its future work programme. It agreed that it should move to a more concrete stage in the examination and negotiation of specific issues in the area of government procurement. It was noted that bilateral and plurilateral consultations between interested delegations on an informal basis could be expected to facilitate progress towards this end. The Sub-Group further agreed that delegations be invited to submit, in time for circulation before the next meeting, draft provisions relating to specific issues, including possibilities for differential treatment for developing countries, which might be included in a code on government procurement. The submission of such draft provisions would not prejudice the negotiating position of any delegation in any area of the negotiations on government procurement.

8. The Sub-Group agreed that at its next meeting it would focus its attention on the issues under consideration with the assistance of the draft provisions and the other background documentation available to it.

9. Attention was also drawn to GATT/AIR/1363 inviting delegations to provide certain information on their countries' government procurement policies and practices by 15 July if possible. The hope was expressed that such information could be provided within the time-frame suggested.

10. The Sub-Group agreed to hold its next meeting in the autumn, the exact date to be fixed by the Chairman in consultation with delegations.