

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON

RESTRICTED

Spec(89)33
27 June 1989

TARIFFS AND TRADE

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

Mailing Procedures

Note by the Secretariat

1. At its meeting on 26 April 1989, the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration considered the document dealing with mailing procedures (Spec(89)16).
2. It found a regular and substantial increase in mailing expenses, which have risen from Sw F 233,324 in 1983 to Sw F 574,182 in 1988, leading to a relative increase in this budgetary item, which represented 0.47 per cent of the budget in 1983 and 0.93 per cent in 1988.
3. This rise in costs is accounted for by an increase both in Swiss postal rates and in the number of pages of the documents reproduced (29,321,000 pages in 1983 and 51,063,000 in 1988).
4. The Secretariat has made a constant effort to curb mailing expenses by making the best use of the various possibilities offered by the PTT scale of postal rates and by resorting, wherever possible, to private postal services, which allow savings to be made, sometimes in excess of 10 per cent.
5. As mentioned in document Spec(89)16, in view of the fact that about four fifths of despatches consist of documents and information material, it was suggested that greater use be made of delegation document boxes so as to reduce the number of documents sent by the official or private postal services.
6. On the basis of the proposals of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration, the Secretariat has taken a number of steps. It has requested:
 - (a) all contracting parties represented in Geneva which do not yet have mail boxes at the Centre William Rappard to agree to fetch documents directly from the boxes that will be made available for them in the Secretariat;
 - (b) all contracting parties to review their mailing list, with the suggestion that they reduce the number of documents sent to the minimum consistent with optimum use and, wherever possible, change the type of mailing procedure used so as to reduce postal costs.

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7. Pursuant to various proposals made by Committee members, the Secretariat suggests that the Committee authorize it to establish a document mailing system based on the principle of a single address for each contracting party (document box at CWR, mission in Geneva, liaison address...). Any exception to this rule would lead to billing for the additional costs incurred.

8. Finally, it should be noted that a study of the possibilities offered by the recent development of electronic mail has been undertaken with a view to cutting down on the mailing of documents.