

13 MAY 1952

SUBJECT: SCHEDULE II - BELGIUM - LUXEMBURG - NETHERLANDS.  
SECTION B: BELGIAN CONGO AND RUANDA-URUNDI

THE GOVERNMENT OF BELGIUM HAS NOTIFIED ITS INTENTION TO REVISE THE STRUCTURE OF THE CUSTOMS TARIFF OF THE BELGIAN CONGO AND RUANDA-URUNDI BY ADOPTING THE NOMENCLATURE OF THE EUROPEAN CUSTOMS UNION STUDY GROUP. THE NOTIFICATION INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

"THIS REVISION WAS MADE NECESSARY BY THE NEED FOR SUBSTITUTING FOR THE 1923 TARIFF A TARIFF THAT WAS BETTER ADAPTED TO CURRENT REQUIREMENTS AND THAT MET THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SITUATION OF NON-METROPOLITAN TERRITORIES. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REVISION IS TWO-FOLD: 1) TO RESTORE HARMONY AS BETWEEN THE VARIOUS TAX SYSTEMS, WITHOUT AUTOMATICALLY INCREASING THE GENERAL LEVEL OF THE AMOUNTS LEVIED; 2) TO PLACE AT THE DISPOSAL OF IMPORTERS AND EXPORTERS ADEQUATE TRADE STATISTICS.

"IN THE FRAMING OF THE NEW TARIFF, DUE ACCOUNT WAS TAKEN OF THE NEED FOR MAINTAINING THE CONCESSIONS INCLUDED IN SECTION B OF SCHEDULE II (BELGIAN CONGO AND RUANDA URUNDI). THE TRANSPOSITION OF THE LATTER WAS EFFECTED WITH THE CLOSEST ATTENTION AND WITH A VIEW TO AVOIDING ANY PREJUDICE TO THE CONTRACTING PARTIES.

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"THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO APPLY THE NEW TARIFF FOR THE BELGIAN CONGO AND RUANDA URUNDI AS OF NEXT 1 JULY 1952. THE EARLY ENFORCEMENT OF THE TARIFF IS INDEED JUSTIFIED BY THE NEED FOR AVOIDING ANY CHANGE IN THE RATE OF IMPORTS AS A RESULT OF ALTERATIONS IN THE DUTY RATES. IF IT WERE TO APPEAR, AS A RESULT OF THE EXAMINATION TO BE MADE, THAT ANY CONCESSION TRANSPOSED INTO THE NEW TARIFF DOES NOT STRICTLY REPRESENT THE EQUIVALENT OF THE INITIAL CONCESSION, LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS COULD BE ENACTED WITH RETROSPECTIVE EFFECT SO AS TO SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF THE PARTY CONCERNED."

THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS FURNISHED COPIES OF THE ATTACHED TABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION TO THE CONTRACTING PARTIES. THIS TABLE SETS OUT THE CHANGES WHICH WILL BE MADE IN THE ITEMS WHICH APPEAR IN SECTION B OF SCHEDULE II AND INDICATES THE CONTRACTING PARTIES WITH WHICH THE CONCESSIONS WERE INITIALLY NEGOTIATED AT GENEVA AND TORQUAY.

CONTRACTING PARTIES WISHING TO COMMENT ON THIS PROPOSED REVISION SHOULD ADDRESS THEIR COMMUNICATIONS DIRECT TO THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT AND SEND A COPY TO THIS OFFICE.

IF NO OBJECTION TO THE PROCEDURE PROPOSED BY THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT IS RECEIVED BY ME BY 20 JUNE, IT WILL BE ASSUMED THAT THE CONTRACTING PARTIES HAVE GIVEN AUTHORITY FOR THE CHANGES TO BE MADE EFFECTIVE PENDING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF A PROTOCOL OF RECTIFICATIONS WHICH WILL BE DRAWN UP AT THE SEVENTH SESSION.

E. WYNDHAM WHITE.

Sent to: 34 contracting parties  
 Chairman of C.P.s

Encl.

copies to: Liaison Officers, U.N. Reps, etc.

(no encl. to Belgium or Luxemburg)