

GATT/AIR/405

27 JULY 1964

SUBJECT: PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR AUTUMN 1964

AT ITS MEETING ON 6 JULY THE COUNCIL AGREED A PROGRAMME FOR MEETINGS OF SEVERAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES IN THE PERIOD SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER (C/M/21). THIS PROGRAMME HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED IN DOCUMENT L/2241. THE PROGRAMME PROVIDES FOR A MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF THE GATT IN RELATION TO LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, BEGINNING ON 14 SEPTEMBER, BUT AS FOR THE WORKING GROUP ON PREFERENCES, THE ACTION COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE III THE COUNCIL AGREED THAT THE TIMES OF MEETINGS SHOULD BE DECIDED BY THE CHAIRMAN AFTER CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS AND TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE DISCUSSIONS AT THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES.

IN THIS CONNEXION THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL INVITED INTERESTED MEMBERS TO MEET WITH HIM INFORMALLY ON THE FOLLOWING DAY. THE INFORMAL MEETING WAS ATTENDED BY SEVENTEEN MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL, WHO EXCHANGED VIEWS AS TO THE TIMING OF THE MEETINGS NOT YET SCHEDULED. SOME MEMBERS WERE OF THE OPINION THAT THE WORKING GROUP ON PREFERENCES SHOULD MEET AT THE SAME TIME AS THE LEGAL COMMITTEE. SOME OTHERS FELT THAT THE WORKING PARTY SHOULD NOT BE RECONVENED UNTIL THERE WERE GROUNDS FOR EXPECTING THAT GOOD PROGRESS COULD BE MADE AND THAT IT WOULD BE ABLE TO ENGAGE IN A SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION OF THE BASIC ISSUES INVOLVED. THE CHAIRMAN SAID THAT HE WOULD TRY TO ARRANGE TO MEET EARLY IN SEPTEMBER WITH THE CHAIRMEN OF THE FOUR BODIES MENTIONED ABOVE AND MEANWHILE, HE SUGGESTED, DELEGATIONS SHOULD KEEP IN TOUCH WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH HIM SO THAT IT COULD BE DECIDED EARLY IN SEPTEMBER WHETHER THE WORKING PARTY ON PREFERENCES COULD BE USEFULLY RECONVENED AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING OF THE LEGAL COMMITTEE.

THE CHAIRMAN ASKED THE SECRETARIAT TO CIRCULATE NOTES ON THE ISSUES REQUIRING CONSIDERATION IN THE AUTUMN. THE FOLLOWING REMARKS MAY BE HELPFUL IN THIS CONNEXION. FURTHER NOTES WILL BE DISTRIBUTED LATER.

THE FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK (L/2195/Rev.1) WAS SUBMITTED TO THE CONTRACTING PARTIES AT THEIR TWENTY-FIRST SESSION. AFTER LENGTHY DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING HELD ON 20 MARCH (SR.21/11), IT WAS AGREED THAT DISCUSSIONS ON THE PROPOSED DRAFT CHAPTER SHOULD BE CONTINUED IN THE COMMITTEE WITH A VIEW TO RESOLVING THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES, THAT THE COMMITTEE SHOULD PREPARE THE TEXT OF AN AMENDING PROTOCOL AND SHOULD CONSIDER THE POSSIBILITY OF PROVIDING FOR THE PROVISIONAL APPLICATION OF THE NEW CHAPTER PENDING THE ENTRY INTO FORCE OF THE PROTOCOL. THIS WORK WAS TO BE COMPLETED AND A REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL BY 30 SEPTEMBER, SO THAT APPROPRIATE RECOMMENDATIONS COULD BE MADE TO THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES.

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THUS IT IS EVIDENT THAT THIS COMMITTEE, WHEN IT MEETS ON 14 SEPTEMBER, WILL HAVE A HEAVY PROGRAMME OF WORK WHICH SHOULD BE COMPLETED, IF POSSIBLE, WITHIN A FORTNIGHT. IT WOULD CLEARLY FACILITATE THE COMMITTEE'S TASK IF CONTRACTING PARTIES WHICH ENTERED RESERVATIONS ON THE DRAFT CHAPTER ANNEXED TO THE FIRST REPORT WERE TO INDICATE IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING WHETHER THESE RESERVATIONS ARE MAINTAINED OR WITHDRAWN AND ALSO IF CONTRACTING PARTIES WISHING TO SUBMIT NEW PROPOSALS IN THE LIGHT OF SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS WERE TO DO SO BY THE END OF AUGUST.

AT THE TIME OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE WORKING PARTY ON PREFERENCES, DURING THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES, THERE REMAINED SOME FUNDAMENTAL DIVERGENCIES OF VIEWS. THEREFORE, THE WORKING PARTY WAS NOT ABLE TO SUBMIT AGREED CONCLUSIONS AND INSTEAD, IN PRESENTING ITS PROGRESS REPORT (L/2196/Rev.1), IT SOUGHT GUIDANCE AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR ITS FUTURE WORK. AFTER DISCUSSION OF THIS REPORT, ON 20 MARCH (SR.21/11), THE CONTRACTING PARTIES AGREED THAT A MORE DETAILED STUDY OF THE TERMS, CONDITIONS AND PROCEDURES TO GOVERN PREFERENTIAL ARRANGEMENTS WAS WARRANTED. GOVERNMENTS WERE INVITED TO GIVE EARLY CONSIDERATION TO THESE MATTERS AND THE COUNCIL WAS INSTRUCTED TO RECONVENE THE WORKING PARTY AT THE EARLIEST DATE THAT ITS TASK COULD BE USEFULLY RESUMED. IT WAS THOUGHT DESIRABLE THAT FURTHER DISCUSSIONS SHOULD BE SO ARRANGED THAT A REPORT MIGHT BE SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL IN TIME TO ENABLE THE COUNCIL TO MAKE A SUBMISSION TO THE SPECIAL SESSION.

THE ACTION COMMITTEE SHOULD ALSO MEET BEFORE THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES. THE COMMITTEE SHOULD TAKE STOCK OF PROGRESS MADE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONCLUSIONS RELATING TO THE ACTION PROGRAMME, WHICH WERE ADOPTED AT THE MEETING OF MINISTERS IN MAY 1963, AND SHOULD DECIDE UPON ITS FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME. A PROGRESS REPORT SHOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE SPECIAL SESSION. TOWARDS THE END OF OCTOBER WOULD SEEM AN APPROPRIATE TIME FOR THE COMMITTEE TO MEET FOR THESE PURPOSES.

THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR COMMITTEE III INCLUDES, IN PARTICULAR, (a) A REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE ELIMINATION OF BARRIERS AFFECTING EXPORTS OF LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, (b) AN EXAMINATION OF FURTHER PRODUCTS OF EXPORT INTEREST TO LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, FOR WHICH A NEW LIST WITH RELEVANT DATA IS BEING PREPARED, AND (c) STUDIES OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS, FOR WHICH DATA ARE BEING ASSEMBLED IN RESPECT OF SEVERAL CONTRACTING PARTIES. IN ADDITION, AT THE TWENTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES (SR.21/9), A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS WERE PROPOSED FOR FUTURE STUDY BY THE COMMITTEE, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF PRICES OF PRIMARY COMMODITIES. THE PREPARATORY WORK FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO COMPLETE AND, THEREFORE, IT SEEMS ADVISABLE TO ENVISAGE THAT THE NEXT MEETING WILL NOT BE HELD UNTIL AFTER THE SPECIAL SESSION OR EVEN EARLY IN 1965.

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