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GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE INFORMAL GROUP OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HELD ON 30 MAY 1969

Prepared by the Secretariat

1. The Informal Group of Developing Countries in GATT met on 30 May 1969 under the Chairmanship of H.E. Mr. C.H. Archibald, Ambassador of Trinidad and Tobago. The meeting was attended by the representatives of Chile, Colombia, Cuba, India, Israel, Jamaica, Korea, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Uruguay and Yugoslavia.

2. The Group discussed the subject of the examination of the operation of Part IV which was on the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Committee on Trade and Development and the question of participation of developing countries in the forthcoming meeting of the Committee on Trade in Industrial Products.

Examination of the operation of Part IV

3. Speaking at the request of the Chairman, Mr. M.G. Mathur, Assistant Director-General, said that in accordance with the decision taken at the last session of the Committee on Trade and Development, the secretariat had invited contracting parties to submit statements of difficulties they had experienced in the implementation of Part IV and suggestions on how to ensure more satisfactory and effective operation of its provisions. To date, written statements had been received from nine contracting parties. To assist the Committee in considering this matter, the secretariat had circulated a background paper which contained references to past discussions and comments relevant to the subject (COM.TD/W/91), and a summary of the submissions so far received (COM.TD/W/101). It was to be hoped that delegations which had not been in a position to submit written statements would make oral statements at the meeting and that all developing countries would effectively participate in the discussion.

4. Several members of the Group said that every effort was being made to ensure that notifications by their governments would be available for discussion at the meeting. Failing that, they would contribute to the discussion by way of orally stating their views on this subject to which all developing countries attached great importance.

5. It was recalled that the Chairman of the Informal Group, with the assistance of a number of delegations, had prepared a paper entitled "A Study of Part IV" setting out suggestions for improving the implementation of Part IV. It was proposed that this paper be made available to members of the Committee, it being understood, however, that the paper did not represent a joint stand of developing countries and

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that each delegation would be free to take whatever stand regarding any particular point that might be considered appropriate. The Group requested the Chairman to get in touch with the secretariat to arrange for the circulation of that paper.

Participation of developing countries in the forthcoming meeting of the Committee on Trade in Industrial Products

6. The Group discussed the intent and purpose of the two- or three-day special discussion that had been proposed to take place in the above-mentioned Committee in June. Commenting on certain observations on this point at the request of the Chairman, Mr. M.G. Mathur said that the discussion at the forthcoming meeting of that Committee was intended to focus on non-tariff barriers which affected exports of developing countries; it was not intended to discuss barriers maintained by developing countries. The Committee had indeed addressed requests to certain developing countries for information on non-tariff barriers maintained by them. But this was following the established practice of the Committee and the information requested would relate to matters not already covered or explained in consultations under Article XVIII:B. While it was the intention of certain members of the Committee to take up non-tariff barriers of developing countries in the general context of its activities, the two or three days allotted for discussion of problems of interest to developing countries next June would not be related to this aspect of its work.

7. Recalling the discussion of this subject at one of its earlier meetings, the Group agreed that developing countries should make every effort to participate effectively in the discussion and to seek as much information as possible on non-tariff barriers affecting their exports to the markets of industrialized countries.

8. The representative of Uruguay recalled that his country had in the early 1960's resorted to the provisions of Article XXIII with respect of a wide range of trade barriers maintained by developed countries which affected his country's exports and that the data adduced from the consultations under those provisions had been set forth, inter alia, in a report of 1962 (cf. BISD, 11th Supplement pages 95-148). Last year, his delegation had requested that the secretariat up-date that information for reference in compiling a submission for inclusion in the inventory of non-tariff barriers being prepared for the Industrial Committee. The secretariat had complied with the request but had limited its revision work to the industrial sector. The Uruguayan delegation now desired that this work be extended also to cover agricultural products, considering that the Industrial Committee had been asked to include processed foodstuffs in its work programme and that the Committee had been receiving information concerning agricultural products which it normally passed on to the Agriculture Committee for appropriate action. Mr. Mathur assured the representative of Uruguay that the request would be transmitted to the department of the secretariat directly concerned with the matter.