Note by the Netherlands Delegation

GATT, in the course of its life and in accordance with the main provisions contained in the Agreement, has put considerable emphasis on achieving progress in the tariff field and by doing so thus obtained remarkable success in furthering international trade. However, GATT also has a potentially useful task in the field of trade promotion. Work in this sector would accentuate the second T of GATT.

In the light of documents COM.III/107 and 108 it would seem that two possible tasks of the Centre need to be further analysed before decisions can be taken:

(a) activities of a fact-finding nature
(b) market research activities.

(a) Activities of a fact-finding nature

The Brazilian proposal, reproduced in document COM.III/93, outlines, inter alia, the type of trade information to be collected by the proposed Centre. The subjects listed can be divided into three categories:

I. Those published by other organizations (cf. document COM.III/107). In this case GATT could

(i) refer questioners to such organizations
(ii) to the extent that the contents or periodicity of the information emanating from the other organization is not sufficient, engage in consultations with the other organization, with a view to improvements.

II. Subjects not suitable for systematic collection and subsequent publication at a central point. An example would be "advertising media, rates and addresses". In this case GATT could refer questioners to suitable central points in various countries where such information is obtainable.

III. Subjects which might be suitable for periodic publication by GATT. A subject which would seem to fall within this category is "quantitative restrictions". On this, apparently no world-wide publication exists. Quantitative restrictions of developed countries (Members of GATT) are already being publicized through GATT. The question to be investigated is whether this can be expanded.

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1 This document was originally circulated as a working paper to members of Committee III, as document Int(63)125.
(b) Market research activities

The possibility of market research to be undertaken by the Centre is referred to in a comment of the Government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland reproduced in document COM.III/108. Market research, defined as an investigation of the potentials in a specific market for a particular product, would seem to require a set-up entirely different from that for a fact-finding service.

In conclusion, the Netherlands delegation would like to suggest that Committee III might wish to invite the secretariat to examine further the possible coverage and financial implications of a GATT Trade Information Centre.