GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

PREPARATIONS UNDER WAY FOR GATT MEETING
OF MINISTERS, 16-21 MAY

Preparations for the GATT meeting of ministers, 16-21 May, at Geneva, are reflected in the important working groups which are to meet in March and April.

The GATT Council last month recommended that the ministerial meeting should give directions for the effective liberalization and expansion of trade on a broad front and should consider, inter alia:

(a) arrangements for the reduction or elimination of tariffs and other barriers to trade;

(b) measures for access to markets for agricultural and other primary products;

(c) measures for the expansion of the trade of developing countries as a means of furthering their economic development.

Following the decision in principle of the ministers in November 1961 that a new major attack on tariff barriers should be undertaken, it was decided to create a Working Party on Procedures for Tariff Reduction. Starting on 18 March, this group is examining new techniques for cutting tariffs.

Committee III of the GATT trade expansion programme, which is primarily concerned with expanding the export earnings of the less-developed countries, will meet from 25 March to 5 April. In addition the Group which is examining the special problems faced by less-developed countries which are exporters of tropical products will hold meetings in March and April.

The GATT Council will meet from 22 to 26 April to finalize the agenda and preparation for the ministerial meeting.

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