ARTICLE XVIII - APPLICATION BY CUBA

Application for new Release relating to Henequen and Sisal

1. In August 1949 the CONTRACTING PARTIES granted a release to the Government of Cuba under paragraph 8(b)(i) of Article XVIII, for a period of five years, for the maintenance of a system of import quotas on the fibres of henequen and sisal (cf. BISD Vol. II pages 20 and 50-51). This release expired on 10 August 1954.

2. By telegram dated 6 August 1954 the Government of Cuba advised that it intended to apply for a new authorization from the CONTRACTING PARTIES to maintain the quotas in question. In view of the short period intervening before the opening of the Ninth Session, it was suggested, in an airgram (GATT/AIR/52) of 13 August 1954, that the application by Cuba should be placed on the Agenda and taken up during the first days of the Session. It was further suggested, subject to no objections being raised by a contracting party, that the Government of Cuba should be authorized to maintain the measure until the CONTRACTING PARTIES take a decision on the application. No objection has been raised to this suggestion.

3. In a communication dated 9 August 1954 the Cuban Government has formally applied for an extension of the release granted under Article XVIII, and has submitted a supporting statement providing detailed information on the measure in question. The communication of 9 August, which was received on 27 August, is circulated herewith. A copy of the supporting statement will be sent to each contracting party.

4. As was indicated in the airgram of 13 August, the CONTRACTING PARTIES at the Ninth Session will wish to know of any objection lodged by a contracting party which may be determined to be materially affected by the proposed measure. In accordance with the procedural arrangements any contracting party wishing to object to the measure is requested to notify its objections as soon as possible and in any case not later than 25 October 1954. Any such objections will be considered by the CONTRACTING PARTIES in accordance with the procedures established for the consideration of applications under Article XVIII (cf. BISD Vol. II page 59).
"I have the honour to confirm the contents of my telegram No. 3157 of 6 August, to the effect that the Government of the Republic of Cuba, after having carefully studied the situation prevailing at present, found itself obliged to request the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade for a new release from its undertaking to eliminate the system of quotas, established by Decree No. 1693 of 23 June 1939, on the importation of fibres of henequen and sisal.

"As you are aware, the CONTRACTING PARTIES, on the basis of an application made by Cuba on 28 February 1949 (GATT/CP.3/1/Add.4/Rev.1 of 15 July 1949) and by a decision adopted on 10 August 1949, released Cuba for a period of five years from its obligation to eliminate the system of quotas referred to above. This release will have expired by 10 August 1954.

"The data and facts which have motivated the Government of Cuba to formulate the present request and which are detailed in the memorandum attached to the present communication have been arranged, in general lines, in a similar way as the documentation presented in 1949."

1 A copy of this memorandum will be sent to each contracting party.