PARTICIPATION IN WORK OF CONTRACTING PARTIES

Suggestion by the Delegation of the United States

Following the discussion at the first meeting of the Working Party, the Delegation of the United States suggests that a procedure be formulated by the CONTRACTING PARTIES under which less-developed countries which are not prepared at this time to accede to the General Agreement may participate fully in all GATT activities other than those which relate to the rights and obligations of individual contracting parties. The activities in which less-developed countries would participate, in addition to much of the discussion in plenary meetings, would include for example participation in the work of Committee II and III, etc. In consideration of subjects of concern to them, such less-developed countries, contracting parties, and countries which have provisionally acceded would all participate on an equal footing as "participating countries". Participating countries would receive all documentation in connexion with GATT activities, except communications relating to the details of the conduct of particular trade negotiations.

It would appear appropriate that participation by a less-developed country should take place on the basis of an arrangement accepted by it and the CONTRACTING PARTIES (probably by the same two-third's vote now applicable to decisions on accession). The arrangement could include the following provisions:

(a) Acceptance by the new participating country, and by the other participating countries (including contracting parties) of the objectives set out in Article I of the General Agreement Revised;

(b) a statement indicating that when the participating country is prepared to accede to the General Agreement due account will be taken of its stage of development;

(c) participants, whether or not contracting parties, shall afford to one another reasonable opportunities for consultations on their trade problems, either bilaterally or at meetings of all countries participating in activities under the General Agreement (this obligation to apply as between each new participant and those existing participants, including contracting parties, who have signed the Protocol with respect to it);
(d) the participating country shall have the right to participate in all discussions within the GATT, other than those relating to the provisions of the General Agreement defining rights and obligations of contracting parties pursuant thereto;

(e) the participating countries shall receive all GATT documents, except communications relating to the details of the conduct of particular trade negotiations;

(f) participants shall publish and make available to the secretariat information on relevant laws, regulations, statistics, etc.