GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

CONTRACTING PARTIES
Nineteenth Session

IMPLEMENTATION OF CONCLUSIONS OF MINISTERS

(Note by the Chairman)

1. Reduction of tariff barriers to trade

The Chairman proposes that a Working Party on Procedures for Tariff Reduction should be established with the following composition and terms of reference:

Composition: (to be announced by Chairman)

Terms of reference:

In the light of the discussions which took place during the meeting of Ministers from 27-30 November 1961 and taking particular account of the conclusions (L/1657) reached by the Ministers, to examine new procedures and techniques for the further reduction of tariff barriers on a most-favoured-nation basis.

2. Trade in agricultural products

The Chairman proposes that the CONTRACTING PARTIES take action at this session to give effect to the Ministers' Recommendations by adopting procedures designed to establish the basis for the negotiation of practical measures for the creation of acceptable conditions of access to world markets for agricultural commodities. To this end the CONTRACTING PARTIES may wish to decide:

(a) that progress of the work in this regard be supervised and co-ordinated through the GATT Council of representatives;

(b) that the Council be authorized, inter alia, to establish such preparatory groups as may be necessary;

(c) that a beginning be made early in February 1962 with a preliminary examination of possibilities for solution of the problem of cereals and that for this purpose a group be established initially composed of:

Argentina
Australia
Canada

European Economic Community
United Kingdom
United States
(d) that, as soon as possible thereafter, namely at its February session, the Council should initiate discussion of the problems in other commodities with differing characteristics, for example meat;

(e) that contracting parties be invited to notify any substantial changes in their agricultural policies so that the information assembled from past Committee II consultations can be kept up to date and, further, that Committee II be authorized to consider, when so requested, the carrying out of consultations with particular contracting parties.

3. Obstacles to the trade of less-developed countries

The CONTRACTING PARTIES will no doubt wish to adopt formally the Declaration on Promotion of Trade of Less-Developed Countries contained in the Annex to the Ministers' conclusions (L/1657) as a basis for their future work in this field.

The CONTRACTING PARTIES will also no doubt agree, in the light of the Ministers' discussions and of the conclusions reached by the Ministers:

(a) that immediate steps should be taken to establish specific programmes for action, and where feasible target terminal dates, for progressive reduction and elimination of barriers to the exports of less-developed countries; in this connexion it will be necessary to bear in mind the view of most Ministers that the question of duty-free entry for tropical products should be given careful consideration;

(b) that procedures be drawn up for notifying and reviewing action taken by contracting parties in accordance with the programmes so established, or otherwise taken by contracting parties to improve market opportunities for the exports of less-developed countries.

It is suggested that Committee III would be the appropriate subsidiary body to undertake these tasks and to make Recommendations to the CONTRACTING PARTIES and that, to enable the work of the Committee to begin at an early date, the CONTRACTING PARTIES may wish:

(i) to urge contracting parties to deal with the questions involved as a matter of priority, recognizing that the presentation by contracting parties of specific proposals directed to the objectives set out in (a) above would facilitate expediting the work of Committee III;

(ii) to decide that Committee III should hold a short meeting just before the Council's meeting in February 1962 to arrange its programme of work, taking account of any specific proposals presented by contracting parties, and that the Committee should hold a further meeting in April/May 1962 to carry out the task referred to in (e) above;

(iii) to direct that procedures be drawn up by Committee III for notifying and reviewing action by contracting parties in accordance with the programmes established by the Committee.