GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

Multilateral Trade Negotiations
Group "Non-Tariff Measures"
Sub-Group "Government Procurement"

MEETING OF OCTOBER 1976

Summing-up by the Chairman

1. The Sub-Group held its initial meeting on 20 October 1976. It agreed that its meetings should be chaired by the secretariat.

   It invited the Secretary-General of UNCTAD or his representative to attend the meeting as an observer.

2. As agreed at the last meeting of the Group "Non-Tariff Measures", the Sub-Group took up the organization of its work in the light of the documentation available to it both from GATT and OECD sources, having regard to any views expressed concerning requirements for additional material. At the end of the meeting the Chairman made the following summing-up of the discussion on his own responsibility.

3. The Sub-Group had before it a background note on government procurement prepared by the secretariat (MTN/NTM/16) and a communication received from the OECD secretariat containing information on the work being undertaken in the OECD on this subject (MTN/NTM/6). Attention was also drawn to the recent OECD publication - "Government purchasing: Regulations and procedures of OECD member countries".

4. The Group heard a number of statements of a general nature on matters relating to government procurement. Some delegations stated that the work being pursued in this area should take into account the relevant provisions of the Tokyo Declaration relating to special and differential treatment for developing countries, where this is feasible and appropriate, both in respect to rights and obligations.

5. The Sub-Group agreed that on the basis of documentation already available and comments and suggestions made in the course of the discussions the secretariat be asked to prepare in co-operation with interested delegations, a list of elements already identified in the area of government procurement which would be taken up for examination at the next meeting of the Sub-Group.
6. The Sub-Group agreed that delegations could submit suggestions with respect to additional elements which they felt could be taken up for examination.

7. In this context, a number of delegations suggested that in order to expand the information base available for the work of the Sub-Group, delegations from non-OECD countries may be requested by means of a questionnaire to present summary information with respect to policies, practices and procedures on government procurement broadly along the lines available for OECD member countries. The Sub-Group agreed to revert to this matter at its next meeting.

8. There was broad agreement that the OECD should be requested to forward to the GATT secretariat for the purposes of the Sub-Group the Draft Instrument currently under consideration in that body. If available, the examination of the draft instrument at the next meeting would be without prejudice to any decision regarding the negotiating hypothesis which might be adopted by the Sub-Group for its work. The hope was expressed that the Draft Instrument would be made available at the earliest possible date.

9. The Sub-Group agreed that the date of its next meeting would be fixed by the Group "Non-Tariff Measures" at its next meeting.