Observations by the French Delegation on Article 14 of the Draft Charter

It follows from the present wording of Article 14 that customs advantages, in connection with importation, apply to all products originating in Member countries. On a strict interpretation, this article would preclude export countries being taken into consideration. In other words, customs advantages would be granted to products harvested or manufactured in Member states, even if it be sold and exported by other countries, whether Members of the Organization or not, and the conditions of direct consignment could not be imposed by importing states.

This provision which should be read in conjunction with Article 10, paragraph 6, to which the French Delegation has already drawn attention is incompatible with France's traditional legislation under which customs advantages depend both on country of origin and country of export.

The French Delegation feels obliged to point out that, in the opinion of its Government it is not desirable, at a time when French ports, which were so severely damaged by the war, are in process of reconstruction and require every help from public authorities, to make any change in existing legislation which, hitherto, has not given rise to any difficulty in any of the bi-lateral or multi-lateral agreements concluded by France. France is not in a position to adapt her legislation immediately to the terms of Articles 14 and 15. In any event she would need some time to make the necessary changes.