

25 June 1955

PRINCIPAL DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INSERTION
IN THE SUMMARY RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE
INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE HELD AT GENEVA,
23 - 25 JUNE 1955

Requests by Belgium and Luxemburg for Waivers on Maintenance of quantitative import Restrictions

The requests by Belgium and Luxemburg, contained in L/357 and L/358 and addenda, for waivers from obligations of Article XI with respect to specified agricultural products were examined by the Committee. The Committee decided to refer the problem presented by the Belgian Government to a working party for consideration within the terms of the Decision of 5 March 1955 and to refer the request of the Government of Luxemburg to the same working party. A working party was appointed with the following membership and terms of reference:

Chairman: Dr. H. de Besche (Sweden)

Australia	France	Luxemburg
Belgium	Germany	The Netherlands
Canada	Greece	United Kingdom
Denmark	India	United States
	Italy	

Terms of reference:

1. To consider, within the terms of the Decision of 5 March 1955, the request of the Government of Belgium for a waiver of obligations under Article XI.

- (a) If the Working Party arrives at recommendations for dealing with the request under the terms of that Decision, in a manner which would be acceptable to the Belgian Government, the Working Party should submit a report to the CONTRACTING PARTIES at the Special Session convened for 7 July as a basis for coming to a decision whether to concur in an application under the Decision.
- (b) If, on the other hand, the Working Party fails to arrive at an acceptable recommendation along these lines, it should report to the Committee which, in that event, should meet next week to decide on the procedure to be adopted for further action on the Belgian request.

2. To consider the request of the Government of Luxemburg for a waiver of obligations under Article XI, and to submit a report thereon to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

Austrian Request re the Adoption of the Brussels Nomenclature and the Adjustment of specific Duties

The Committee noted that the Austrian Government had initiated negotiations under Article XXVIII for the modification of many of the items in its Schedule but wished to make certain other modifications which, however, were not intended to affect the protective effect of the concessions. Firstly, the Austrian Government intended to adopt the Brussels nomenclature. On this point, the Committee noted that the CONTRACTING PARTIES had decided at their Fifth Session that changes of nomenclature in schedules could be made by the rectification procedure. Accordingly, it was agreed that the Austrian Government should submit the details of the proposed changes for examination by contracting parties and should consult with any government which requested clarification. Secondly, the Austrian Government intended to express the specific duties in schillings instead of in gold crowns and to suppress the Note to the Schedule which provides that duties may be collected in schilling at the rate of 6.96 per gold crown. To simplify the calculations, however, the Government proposed to multiply the rates by 7 instead of by 6.96. The Committee agreed that, as the intention to multiply the rates by 7 did not appear to be a change which would impair the value of the concessions, it would be appropriate to deal with this matter by a procedure analogous to the procedures for the rectification of schedules. Accordingly the Committee instructed the Executive Secretary to inform the contracting parties of the Austrian Government's intention and to advise that if no objection is lodged within a period of 60 days the Austrian Government would be free to change the specific rates in the manner proposed.

Scheduling of Intersessional Meetings

(a) Working Party on Tariff Reduction:

The Committee considered the desirability, particularly in the light of the new authority of the United States Government to enter into negotiation for the reduction of tariffs, of giving early consideration to plans for tariff reduction. It was the view of the Committee that it was desirable for the Working Party on Tariff Reduction, which had been appointed at the Ninth Session to meet on 29 June.

(b) Working Party on Commodity Problems:

The Committee considered the problems surrounding the selection of a date for convening the Working Party on Commodity Problems. After consideration of the practical difficulties of arranging for a meeting in Geneva in July or August, the difficulties created for governments by a meeting elsewhere than in Geneva and the importance of concluding the Working Party's report in time for consideration before the Tenth Session, The Committee agreed that it would be desirable for the Working Party to be convened in Geneva on 1 September.