

DRAFT PROCEDURES AND RULES FOR THE /GENEVA/ TARIFF CONFERENCE
COMMENCING ON 18 JANUARY 1956
(Recommended by the Drafting Group)

I. Objectives of the Negotiations

1. The CONTRASTING PARTIES, recognizing that customs duties often constitute serious obstacles to trade, have decided to sponsor a tariff negotiations conference based on the principles of Article XXIX of the revised General Agreement and conducted with due regard to the objectives of the General Agreement.
2. The negotiations shall be directed towards the reduction of the general level of tariffs and other charges on imports and, in particular, to the reduction of such high tariffs as discourage the importation of even minimum quantities and shall aim at the exchange of reciprocal and mutually advantageous concessions. Governments participating in the negotiations shall endeavour through common effort to ensure that the results of the negotiations are as great as practicable.

II. Scope of the Negotiations

3. Participating countries may request concessions on products of which they individually, or collectively are, or are likely to be, the principal suppliers to the countries from which the concessions are asked. This rule shall not apply to prevent a country not a principal supplier from making a request, but the country concerned may invoke the principal supplier rule if the principal supplier of the product is not participating in the negotiations or is not a contracting party to the General Agreement.
4. In addition to customs tariffs and other charges on imports, certain regulations, protection afforded through the operation of import monopolies, etc., as provided in Articles II (including the Annexes thereto) III and IV of the revised General Agreement, shall be subject to negotiation in accordance with these rules. Accordingly, requests may be submitted for concessions in respect of these matters in the same way as requests for tariff concessions.

- d. Upon the request of any negotiating country, the Committee shall consider any problems that such country may believe are impeding or unduly delaying the successful conclusion of negotiations.
 - e. The Committee may give advice and make recommendations on any of the foregoing matters and in so doing shall be guided by the principles of Article XXIX.
8. The Committee shall appoint a Tariff Negotiations Working Party, composed of the principal participants in the negotiations, which will assist the Committee in carrying out its functions.
9. The Committee shall make arrangements to prevent the disclosure of confidential material.

V. Methods of Negotiation

10. The negotiations shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules:
- a. The negotiations shall be conducted on a selective product-by-product basis which will afford adequate opportunity to take into account the needs of individual countries and individual industries. Participating governments will be free not to grant concessions on particular products and, in the granting of a concession, they may reduce the duty, bind it at its then existing level, or undertake not to raise it above a specified higher level.
 - b. No participating government shall be required to grant unilateral concessions, or to grant concessions to other governments without receiving adequate concessions in return.
 - c. The binding against increase of low duties or of duty-free treatment shall, in principle, be recognized as a concession equivalent in value to the reduction of high duties. This rule takes account, inter-alia, of the position of countries which, whilst maintaining low or moderate duties on all or most of the products imported from their principal suppliers, find their exports or potential exports generally impeded by high rates of duty.

- d. Insofar as negotiations relate to preferences, the relevant rules to give effect to the applicable provisions of the General Agreement followed hitherto in negotiations sponsored by the CONTRACTING PARTIES shall apply.
 - e. Participating governments shall take into consideration the indirect benefits which they will receive from the negotiations between other governments.
 - f. Participating governments shall give full consideration to the advice and recommendations of the Tariff Negotiations Committee. Each country retains the right to determine for itself whether to accept such advice or recommendations and to decide on the basis of its own assessment whether to accept the results of the negotiations.
11. The participating governments shall refrain from increases in tariffs and other protective measures inconsistent with the principles of the General Agreement and designed to improve their bargaining position in preparation for the negotiations. As a general rule, the basis for negotiations shall be the rate of duty in effect on 1 July 1955.

VI. Timetable for Preparations for the Conference

12. Not later than 1 October 1955 each government intending to participate in the Conference shall transmit:
- (i) a list of requests to each government with which it desires to negotiate. (Fifty copies shall be sent simultaneously to the Executive Secretary for distribution to the other governments intending to participate.)
 - (ii) To the Executive Secretary two copies of the latest edition of its customs tariff and of its foreign trade statistics for 1953 and 1954. (The same information shall be sent to any other government intending to participate which requests it, together with such additional information as may be requested and is readily available.)

VII. Incorporation of the Results in the General Agreement

13. Before the close of the Conference each participating government shall prepare for distribution through the secretariat a consolidated list of the concessions granted and a supplementary list showing the country or countries with which each concession was negotiated.

14. The results of the Conference shall be incorporated in the General Agreement by means of a protocol to which will be annexed the schedules of concessions of the participating governments.