

15 January 1960

REPORT OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON TEMPORARY DUTY-FREE
IMPORTATION OF PACKING MATERIALS AND CERTAIN
PROFESSIONAL EQUIPMENT

Addendum

B. TEMPORARY IMPORTATION OF FILMS, CINEMATOGRAPHIC EQUIPMENT AND
PROFESSIONAL EQUIPMENT

1. Temporary Importation of Films

The representative of the CCC explained that insofar as the temporary importation of films was concerned there were four different categories:

- (a) films for non-commercial exhibition;
- (b) films for commercial exhibition;
- (c) films to be processed; and
- (d) films to be shown to prospective buyers.

He considered that only films to be processed would require consideration since most non-commercial films were dealt with under the UNESCO Agreement; commercial films were not meant to get any preferential treatment, and it was likely that films to be shown to prospective buyers would be considered to fall within the scope of the Samples Convention (ECSC). It was considered that the remaining problem, namely films for processing, was sufficiently important to justify a temporary importation procedure. The question of whether an international document should be established for that purpose had not yet been decided.

A number of experts referred to the advantages to be gained from including films to be shown to prospective buyers in the Samples Convention and stressed the disadvantages of creating special provisions for such films.

2. Cinematographic equipment

The representative of the CCC informed the Group that his Organization had expressed itself in favour of adopting a special importation procedure for film equipment and that if considered necessary this procedure could also be extended to cover television equipment.

He informed the Group that his Organization had been supplied with a list of the equipment which would be covered by the proposed convention, but it had not yet been decided whether the convention should contain a list of the products affected or whether it may be more advantageous to have a general description of the equipment and accessories affected so as to permit as large a coverage as possible.

No decision had been taken by the Council as to whether a special international document should be established in this connexion. Also, it was not decided what facilities should be granted and a questionnaire had been distributed in this connexion to the member countries of the CCC. In addition, there were other problems which required further study, such as the **problem of co-production.**

One member of the Group of Experts stressed the importance and urgency which should be given to achieving a convention on film equipment. He felt that a convention on film equipment should be as large as possible and not limited to equipment such as cameras but should include accessories such as costumes.

3. Professional equipment

The representative of the CCC informed the Group of Experts that it was the opinion of the Council's Technical Committee that a convention should be drawn up on professional equipment.

The Council had agreed that the convention should provide for temporary duty-free admission to be made available for (i) articles for the use of technicians; (ii) articles for the use of members of the technical press; and (iii) articles imported by other persons for professional purposes. Facilities were to be limited only to articles which were normally required

by the persons concerned for the exercise of their specialized activities; excluded was equipment imported into a country for purposes of purely commercial exploitation. The Council also expressed itself in favour with an international control document, but agreed that such a document should not be made compulsory.

4. Priority of future action

While the Group considered the problems involved as being very important and requiring international action, there were certain considerations concerning the priority in which the various subjects should be dealt with. As explained previously some experts considered that film equipment should be dealt with first; others were of the view that other technical equipment should be given priority. Finally, it was, however, acknowledged that the possibility of further action depended on the practical possibilities of making progress, and that it would serve no useful purpose to establish any priority.

5. Number of conventions

It was the general feeling of the Group of Experts that it would be desirable to limit conventions to cover the products in question to as few as possible. The majority, however, felt that film equipment should be dealt with in a special convention. A majority was also in favour of confining, if possible, the remaining technical equipment to a single convention. In this connexion a note prepared by the GATT secretariat concerning a general convention covering all types of professional equipment was presented to the Group of Experts, and is attached as Annex III.

C. RECOMMENDATION TO THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

The Group of Experts suggest that the CONTRACTING PARTIES take note of the present progress report and in particular the considerations set out in Parts A and B concerning the Convention on Packing Materials and the prospective international agreement or agreements on certain professional equipment and cinematographic equipment. It is furthermore suggested that the subjects in question will best be advanced by the continued close co-operation of the CONTRACTING PARTIES with the Customs Co-operation Council.