

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

Spec(74)10
25 April 1974

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

GROUP 3(f) - MEETING OF APRIL 1974

DRAFT

1. Group 3(f) met from 23 to 25 April 1974 in order to take up the programme of work outlined in document MTN/3F/2. The Group undertook a preliminary examination of the material contained in document MTN/3F/W/3 with respect to cocoa, coffee, tea, bananas and pepper in their raw, semi-processed and processed forms and certain vegetable oilseeds, oils and oilcake, with a view to identifying the problems facing these commodities.
2. In recognizing the preliminary nature of the discussion, it was suggested that delegations who wished to do so, might submit additional comments and observations relating to the matters taken up by the Group to the secretariat for circulation to members. The secretariat was also requested to prepare a note containing the main points, including the general observations, made by members on the various items which were discussed on a commodity-by-commodity basis. The note would include requests made by delegations for the provision of certain additional information relating to the products examined. The Group agreed that taking into account the competence of other groups and having regard to the availability of the information requested, the secretariat should provide the relevant details. In this connexion, it was noted that the secretariat may need to contact delegations in order to obtain details regarding certain of the points put forward.

3. Further work on vegetable oilseeds, oils and oilcake was discussed. In this connexion, the Group agreed that the material provided by the secretariat in MTN/3F/W/3 and addendum 6, together with a summary of the comments and observations made by members, should be transmitted to Group 3(e) for consideration when the question of vegetable oilseeds, oils and oilcake was being examined in that body on a global basis. The Group proposed that this matter should be given priority in Group 3(e) having regard to the interests of developing countries in the sector and the special and priority treatment being accorded tropical products in the Multilateral Trade Negotiations. The comprehensive documentation and views of Group 3(e) could then be re-transmitted to Group 3(f) for consideration as appropriate.

4. With regard to the future programme of work, the Group noted that as provided in paragraph 8 of MTN/3F/2 the secretariat was in the process of compiling information for items listed in COM.TD/W/205, where available in the necessary breakdown and detail and having regard to the competence of other groups, along the lines of the material circulated in MTN/3F/W/3 and addenda.

The Group also noted the indicative list of products contained in Annex I of MTN/3F/1 which includes certain items falling within BTN Chapters 25-99 as well as the additional products suggested by certain delegations and listed in Annex 2 of MTN/3F/W/2. It was understood that delegations of tropical producing countries may wish to submit further items for consideration in Group 3(f).

5. The Group agreed that in the further work to be undertaken the secretariat would adopt a flexible approach both with regard to the product coverage and the collection of data taking into account the comments and observations made by members of the Group.

6. Certain members referred to the competence of other groups in respect of some items listed in the documentation, including those contained in Chapters 25-99 of the BTN. It was suggested by the representative of a group of countries that because rice, sugar and sugar products (ex 17.02 and 17.03) and tobacco were also significantly produced in the temperate zone, these items could more appropriately be taken up in Group 3(e). There was general agreement, however, that information collected and discussions which take place in respect of such items in other groups could be brought to the attention of Group 3(f) for consideration as appropriate.

7. Some members suggested that in the collection of information it might be kept in mind that although world trade in certain items may be relatively small, these items could nevertheless be of considerable importance in the exports of a number of developing countries. Where possible, the secretariat might provide a tabulation showing the export dependence of developing countries in respect of the additional products for which data was being collected along the lines of Table I of MTN/3F/W/3. Some members suggested that in the collection of additional data, the secretariat might identify products of particular interest to developing countries where the question of separate tariff classification or sub-classifications could be considered. Concerning the question of total revenue collections from selective taxes on particular tropical products, the secretariat would see what information was readily available on this aspect.

8. In the course of the discussions some members proposed additional items for inclusion in the programme of work. A list of such products will be circulated by the secretariat for the information of members of the Group.

9. At its next meeting, Group 3(f) would take up any further points members may wish to submit in respect of the items already examined in MTN/3F/W/3 and addenda.

In addition to reviewing and analysing the material to be provided by the secretariat for the next meeting, Group 3(f) agreed that its agenda would include the questions of more favourable treatment and special procedures for developing countries in the multilateral trade negotiations as mentioned in the Tokyo Declaration in the context of tropical products.

10. Date of next meeting