

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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19 September 1974

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL QUESTIONS

GATT Accommodation - Progress Report

Note by the Director-General

1. Following the decisions taken by the CONTRACTING PARTIES in 1971 concerning the accommodation of the GATT secretariat in the present ILO building, the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration recommended at its meetings of 12 November 1973 and 9 January 1974 that the draft agreement between FIPOI (Fondation des Immeubles pour les Organisations Internationales) and GATT in respect of the rental of part of the present ILO building be approved by the Council and that the Director-General be authorized to enter into firm commitments with respect to the renovation of part of the present ILO building to adapt it to the needs of GATT. It also recommended that the Council approve the financing of the initial expenses by using the balance of the 1973 surplus account (L/3986).

These recommendations were approved by the Council on 28 January 1974 (C/M/93).

The Director-General herewith reports on the further action taken according to the recommendations of the Committee and the decisions of the Council.

2. Lease contract

An official exchange of letters took place on 25 and 29 April 1974 between GATT and FIPOI in order to confirm the agreement in respect of the rental of part of the present ILO building. This exchange of letters states that both parties, i.e. FIPOI and GATT, will sign the formal contract, the draft of which has been approved on both sides, as soon as the detailed figures for rent and the exact total number of square metres to be occupied are known.

3. Organization of work

The work to be done has been studied in further detail and the result at the end of September 1974 may be summarized as follows:

(a) Legal

In line with an agreement by which the Proprietor, FIPOI, and the future tenants, GATT and the UN, agreed to co-ordinate their work, these three parties (maîtres d'ouvrage) signed on 27 June 1974 contracts with the architects and four engineering firms specializing in sanitary installations, heating and ventilation, electricity and civil engineering. These five contracts are drawn up in accordance with the rules and practices approved by the Swiss Confederation.

(b) Technical

In the course of recent months general plans at the scale 1:100 and 1:50 for the architectural work have been finalized and approved by GATT. The engineering firms are currently working out details of the implementation.

At this stage, the initial plans have been confirmed concerning the rearrangement of the Council Room on the ground floor and Conference Rooms D and G on the third floor, in both latter cases with some improvements reaching further than initially foreseen. It has also been decided to equip Room E, also on the third floor, as a conference room.

As suggested by some members of the Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration, the architects have been instructed to arrange Room B (ground floor) as a meeting room rather than as a cafeteria.

On both the ground floor and the third floor, special attention is being paid to all supporting facilities of conference rooms, such as simultaneous interpretation and furniture, telephone booths (for local and long-distance calls), and other facilities for delegates.

Studies concerning the office part of the building which will be renovated by FIPOI are almost finalized.

According to the present timetable, ILO will have vacated the building in April 1975. Work should start immediately after that.

(c) Financial

Calls for tenders will start in the coming months, after completion of the technical studies mentioned above. General inflation will, of course, have an impact on prices. Provisions have been made in order to make a clear distinction between the actual cost as estimated in 1973 (Sw F 5 million) and price increases due to inflation. The overall Geneva increase between 1973 and the April 1974 index in the building sector amounts to 8.7 per cent according to the official Zurich index. It is anticipated that total disbursements in 1974 will amount to Sw F 170,000.