

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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11 July 1975

Multilateral Trade Negotiations

Group "Agriculture"

DRAFT SUMMING-UP BY THE CHAIRMAN

1. The Group met on 9, 10 and 14 July 1975 and took the following actions. The Group invited the Secretary-General of UNCTAD or his representative to attend this session of the Group as an observer.
2. The Group took note of the work done in the Sub-Groups on Grains, Meat and Dairy Products, and decided that work in these Sub-Groups should be actively and intensively pursued, the dates of meetings to be decided by each Sub-Group.
3. Recalling that the Sub-Groups were themselves organizing their work, the Group noted the need for the work in the three Sub-Groups to move forward in parallel as far as possible.
4. The Group heard proposals for the establishment of further sub-groups for certain products. While reaffirming its earlier decision that further sub-groups might be added, the Group considered that it was not desirable to set up such sub-groups at the present time.
5. The Group agreed that in its work it would bear in mind that certain products fell within the purview of the Group "Tropical Products".
6. In accordance with the agreement reached in the Group "Non-Tariff Measures" (MTN/NTM/6, paragraph 11), the attention of the Group was brought to paragraph 2(vi) of the summing-up of the Chairman of the Sub-Group "Quantitative Restrictions" (MTN/NTM/2). The text of this paragraph reads

"The negotiations encompass quantitative restrictions on agricultural products.

It was noted that agricultural products would be considered in accordance with

the summing-up of the Chairman of the Trade Negotiations Committee at its meeting of February 1975. Some delegations indicated their intention to consider quantitative restrictions on agricultural products in this Sub-Group. Some other delegations indicated their intention to consider such quantitative restrictions in the Agriculture Group."

7. The Group discussed questions relating to the procedures to be followed in respect of quantitative restrictions on agricultural products, as well as in respect of other tariff or non-tariff measures on products not covered by the three Sub-Groups. Various proposals were put before the Group.

8. The following proposal was made:

"In accordance with paragraph 2 of the Summing-up by the Chairman of Group "Agriculture" (document MTN/AG/1), the Group agreed on the following work programme for the treatment of tariff and non-tariff measures affecting agricultural products other than those already covered by the product sub-groups:

(i) the secretariat was requested to furnish to the members of Group

"Agriculture" the list of tariff or non-tariff problems raised in other groups or sub-groups which also affect agricultural products, and a statement of notifications presented by participating countries concerning quantitative restrictions on agricultural products;

(ii) the Group agreed, as an initial step, to undertake a process of information, examination and dialogue with respect to all tariff and non-tariff measures affecting agricultural products. This process would take place through detailed bilateral or plurilateral consultations or discussions.

It would be based on the notifications mentioned in sub-paragraph (i) above

and on communications which the countries concerned might notify to the secretariat in respect of any tariff or non-tariff measure affecting agricultural products that was of direct interest for their trade.

Following those consultations and discussions, Group "Agriculture" would analyze, as a second step, the situation then obtaining and would engage discussions on specific suggestions - whether or not of multilateral scope - that might be made by countries having participated in the consultations and discussions, with a view to action on any individual measure.

The result of that work would be communicated to the other Groups, in accordance with paragraph 2 of the Summing-up by the Chairman of Group "Agriculture".

9. There were differences of opinion as to whether this proposal was in conformity with the mandate of Group "Agriculture" as set out, in particular, in paragraph 2 of MTN/AG/1. The Group agreed to revert to this proposal at its next meeting.

10. The following further proposal was made:

"As a step towards the implementation of the provisions of the Tokyo Declaration as regards the establishment of special procedures for the negotiations between developed and developing countries, the Group decided that developing countries be invited to present to the developed countries in this Group lists indicating their negotiating interests in the agricultural field both with respect to products and measures, looking towards discussions - bilateral, plurilateral or multilateral - aimed at identifying the possible negotiating interests of the developing countries. To help in this task the

secretariat would receive notifications including copies of these lists and would prepare an up-to-date catalogue of tariffs and non-tariff measures faced in developed markets by the products notified by the exporting developing countries. After this stage of information, the developing countries shall decide if in the effective negotiating stage they will submit their requests for concessions in the Group "Agriculture" or in other negotiating groups or sub-groups."

11. This proposal was supported by some delegations, could not be accepted by another delegation, while some further delegations felt that a decision of this kind would be premature as it concerned the establishment of special procedures which in their view should be established after, or at the same time as, general procedures. The Group agreed to revert to this proposal at its next meeting.

12. Some delegations believed that the above two proposals were complementary, and might be merged.

13. As regards quantitative restrictions, these proposals were tabled:

(a) The proposal was made that in respect of the position of the delegations which had indicated, or might indicate, their intention to consider quantitative restrictions on agricultural products in Group "Agriculture", the Group should adopt, mutatis mutandis, the procedures agreed upon in the Sub-Group "Quantitative Restrictions", as set forth in paragraph 6 (i) to (iv) inclusive, of document MTN/NTM/2.

(b) It was also proposed that in view of the discussions which had taken place in the sub-group on quantitative restrictions, in respect of quantitative restrictions on agricultural products, the Group should agree:

(i) As an initial step towards the working out of solutions, a process of information, examination and dialogue should be undertaken with respect to existing quantitative restrictions on agricultural products, taking into account, inter alia paragraph 3(e) of Tokyo Declaration and the work already initiated by the sub-groups on grains, meat and dairy products. This process should elucidate, inter alia, whether restrictions are maintained in accordance with the General Agreement and should also elucidate the economic and social circumstances underlying particular restrictions in importing countries.

(ii) This process of information, examination and dialogue would take place through detailed bilateral or plurilateral consultations or discussions between countries maintaining restrictions and countries notifying a direct trade interest in these restrictions through the secretariat. These consultations or discussions might include specific suggestions for action in regard to individual restrictions. Flexibility should be allowed for developing countries to participate adequately in this process.

(iii) The results of these consultations or discussions would be reported to the next meeting of the Group by the countries involved in each of the consultations or discussions for analysis of the existing situation by the Group.

In this connexion, the Group noted the view of some delegations that it would not be very productive to apply such a process of information, examination and dialogue only to quantitative restrictions.

(c) It was also proposed that the Group agree that there be only one procedure for the notification of quantitative restrictions.

14. The Group agreed to revert to the proposals regarding quantitative restrictions at its next meeting.

15. The Group noted the proposal that had been put forward in the Group "Tariffs" and "Non-Tariff Measures" that the procedures for dealing with non-tariff measures which related to particular tariff items should be related to and integrated with whatever procedures are agreed upon for tariff negotiations.

Information to the Trade Negotiations Committee

16. The Group agreed that the Chairman should make an oral report to the Trade Negotiations Committee covering the work of the Group and its Sub-Groups.

Calendar of meetings

17. The Group, noting that its Sub-Groups would themselves set the dates of their meetings, agreed that it might meet again in the week beginning 1 December 1975.