Introduction

1. The International Meat Consultative Group held its second meeting on 11 and 12 June 1975. The following countries or groups of countries were represented:

- Argentina
- Australia
- Austria
- Brazil
- Canada
- Colombia
- Cuba
- Dominican Republic
- Egypt
- European Communities and its member States
- Finland
- Hungary
- Japan
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Panama
- Poland
- Romania
- Somalia
- South Africa
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Thailand
- United States
- Uruguay
- Yugoslavia

In addition representatives of the ECE, the FAO and the OECD attended the meeting as observers.

Agenda

2. The Group adopted the following agenda:

1. Adoption of the Agenda
2. Participation in the work of the Group by countries interested in international trade in meat (L/4171)
3. Relations with intergovernmental organizations
4. Relations with non-governmental organizations
5. Consultations on current market situation and foreseeable trends
6. Identification of the data required to enable the Consultative Group to carry out its functions, and the procedures for its collection and dissemination (L/4168/Rev.1)
7. Frequency of the Group's regular meetings
8. Date of next meeting
9. Other business
3. The Group was informed that document L/4171 inviting interested countries to participate in its work had been sent to each of the 138 countries listed at January 1975 as members of the United Nations General Assembly. Subsequently these countries were also sent copies of GATT/AIR/1170 convening the Group's second meeting. In the case of the nine United Nations General Assembly members which do not receive GATT documentation as GATT members, associates or observers, the invitation and the airgram were transmitted under cover of notes from the Director-General. In response to these notes the Soviet Union had replied that for the moment it was not able to take part in the work of the Group. The People's Republic of China replied along similar lines but indicated its interest in maintaining contacts with the Director-General and in receiving documentation.

4. It was agreed that, apart from follow-up action called for by the replies it had received or would receive from countries indicating a potential interest in participating in the Group, no further specific action by the secretariat was required at this stage. Membership in the Group continued to be open to any country interested in international trade in meat and individual participants could, if they so wished, pursue bilaterally the invitation in document L/4171.

Relations with intergovernmental organizations

5. It was agreed that the UNCTAD should be invited to be represented at the Group's meetings in an observer capacity, in addition to the ECE, the FAO and the OECD which had already accepted to do so. In this context it was recalled that there would be occasions when the Group would decide to meet or consult without observers being present.

Relations with non-governmental organizations

6. It was decided that it would not be appropriate for non-governmental organizations to be directly associated with the Group but that contacts could be established through the chairman or the secretariat with such organizations on matters of interest to the Group as and when this was considered to be desirable.

Consultations

7. The Group undertook its first consultations on current market conditions and foreseeable trends, which on this occasion were based on submissions and information supplied by participants. The procedure adopted was for individual
participants to make statements on current conditions and foreseeable trends and then, after having heard statements from the observers, to proceed to an exchange of views.

8. It was not considered necessary for the Group on this occasion to attempt to draw conclusions. Consistent with the early-warning function of the Group it was sufficient that the impressions gained from the consultations should be taken into account by participants in their further decision-making in capitals and in their preparations for the next meeting of the Group. It was noted that the Group’s consultations took place in the GATT against the background of contractual commitments which most participants shared, and that one of the things being sought in the early-warning context was a better assessment of whether and to what extent these contractual commitments might come under pressure in the immediate future.

9. To facilitate reflection by participants on the points raised in the consultations it was agreed that statements made by individual participants would, if they so wished, be reproduced and circulated by the secretariat.

Model questionnaire

10. The Group undertook a detailed examination of the draft model questionnaire contained in document L/4168/Rev.1. The observations and suggestions made during the course of this examination are set out in a note by the secretariat in the form of a commentary on the questionnaire draft (IMCG/l dated 12 June 1975). The Australian proposal on prices in the note to table D.1 on page 23 of L/4168/Rev.1 would be circulated in tabular form.

11. It was agreed: (a) that for the next meeting participants would employ their best endeavours to furnish data in accordance with the questionnaire, taking into account, inter alia, the commentary in document IMCG/l and the suggestions to be submitted by the Argentine delegation on the conversion of data to a common weight basis; (b) that in so doing participants would provide a full explanation of the basis on which their data are presented; (c) that the outstanding issues concerning the content and format of the questionnaire would be reviewed at each successive session of the Group in the light of the experience accumulated in using the data in its consultations; and (d) that the data thus supplied together with related documentation would be treated as confidential to the Group.

12. Participants are requested to submit data in accordance with the questionnaire by Friday 5 September 1975.
Frequency of the Group's regular meetings and date of the next meeting

13. The Group would revert at a later stage to the question of the frequency to be established for its regular meetings.

14. The Group is to hold its next meeting in the week beginning 29 September 1975 on dates to be fixed by the chairman in consultation with delegations.

Other business

15. None.