

---

Committee on Import Licensing

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 OCTOBER 1991

Chairperson: Mrs. L.A. Berrig

1. The Committee on Import Licensing held its twenty-ninth meeting on 29 October 1991.

2. The agenda contained in GATT/AIR/3251 was adopted.

A. Information available on Import Licensing Procedures

3. The Chairperson reported that, since the last meeting, replies to the GATT Questionnaire on Import Licensing Procedures had been received from Chile (L/5640/Add.8/Rev.1/Suppl.4), the European Economic Community (L/5640/Add.21/Rev.2/Suppl.1), Hong Kong (L/5640/Add.36/Rev.5), India (L/5640/Add.7/Rev.5), Norway (L/5640/Add.2/Rev.2), the Philippines (L/5640/Add.26/Rev.3) and Switzerland (L/5640/Add.19/Rev.1/Suppl.1). Information on publications had been received from the European Economic Community (LIC/3/Corr.4) and Poland (LIC/3/Add.34). Information on public notice had been received from Egypt, the European Economic Community, Nigeria, Poland and Singapore (LIC/4/Rev.3/Add.1). Information on implementation and administration of the Agreement had been received from Hong Kong (LIC/1/Add.47 and 49), New Zealand (LIC/1/Add.48), Poland (LIC/1/Add.50) and Romania (LIC/1/Add.51).

4. The representative of Romania informed the Committee that his Government had adopted Resolution No. 726 on 14 October 1991 establishing a new system of import and export licensing. Imports into Romania were liberalized and subject to automatic import licensing. In the event that imports were subject to controls, these would be administered by means of non-automatic licensing. The Ministry of Commerce and Tourism could establish temporary quantitative restrictions in the case of an imminent threat to the balance of payments, in order to ensure normal foreign exchange reserves, or at the request of national entities if imports caused or threatened to cause serious injury to producers of like or directly competitive products. The Ministry could also introduce import controls to protect public morals, human life and health, environment and national security. Details of the measures would be published. Automatic and non-automatic licences would be granted within a maximum of 10 days and

would, in general, be valid until the end of the year for which they were granted. The validity of import licences for products subject to quotas would be established in such a way that a blockage in the utilization of quotas was avoided. An unofficial English translation of the Resolution was available in the secretariat for consultation by members of the Committee. Romania's reply to the questionnaire on import licensing would shortly be communicated to the secretariat.

5. The Committee took note of the information provided.

B. Biennial Review of the Implementation and Operation of the Agreement

6. The Committee conducted the sixth biennial review of the Agreement. It was agreed that a revision of the basic document (LIC/17) would be issued incorporating information received since the basic document was prepared (LIC/17/Rev.1).

7. With respect to Section 2.2 of the document, relating to public notice of quotas allocated among supplying countries, the Chairperson drew attention to document LIC/4/Rev.3 dated 10 August 1983 which for many signatories contained the most recent information on public notice. The Chairperson suggested, and the Committee agreed, that the secretariat should prepare, in collaboration with signatories, a revision of the above document.

C. Relationship of the Committee's Work to the Uruguay Round

8. The Chairperson informed the Committee that the situation had not changed since its last meeting. With respect to a general reservation entered by one participant relating to the new text of the agreement, consultations were being pursued by the Chairman of the Negotiating Group on Rule-Making and TRIMs, bearing in mind that work in all areas of the negotiations should be finalized by the beginning of November 1991.

D. Report (1991) to the CONTRACTING PARTIES

9. The Committee agreed on the text of its Report (1991) to the CONTRACTING PARTIES (L/6932).

E. Other Business

10. The Committee noted that its next meeting would normally be held at the end of March 1992 and agreed that the secretariat should make arrangements for the meeting in consultation with the Chairperson and taking into consideration developments in the Uruguay Round negotiations.