

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

TBT/W/23

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Special Distribution

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## Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade

### INTERNATIONAL LABORATORY ACCREDITATION CONFERENCE

#### Note by the secretariat

1. Document TBT/W/13 dated 25 August 1980 gave information on the International Laboratory Accreditation Conference (ILAC) and the meeting of the Conference that was to be held in Paris in October 1980. The Chairman of the meeting (Mr. A. Bryden of France) has since communicated the text of the Resolutions adopted for the information of the Committee. The full text of the Resolutions in English and French is available for consultation in the secretariat. This document summarizes the main points of interest to the Committee.
2. The current objectives of ILAC are defined as follows:
  1. To promote the exchange and dissemination of information and ideas on laboratory accreditation, laboratory accreditation systems and other arrangements for assessing the quality of test results.
  2. To facilitate and encourage the acceptance of test results from accredited laboratories, inter alia, through bilateral and multilateral recognition of laboratory accreditation systems.
  3. To cooperate and collaborate with interested international organizations on matters related to laboratory accreditation and other testing arrangements.
3. The meeting agreed that its work should be carried forward on a number of fronts:
  - 3.1 As a means of reviewing those legal obstacles that impede the recognition or acceptance by one country of another country's laboratory accreditation system or the recognition of test reports issued by a recognized or accredited laboratory in a foreign country, a small working group was established to collect, disseminate and analyse information concerning bilateral or other agreements for the recognition of laboratory accreditation systems.

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Each national delegation was urged to encourage, in its own country, studies of cases of complaints due to the reluctance to recognize test results from other countries. It was agreed that if such reluctance is found to be due to obstacles on the national level, steps should be taken on national level to overcome them.

3.2 It was agreed that an International Directory of Testing Arrangements and Testing Laboratory Accreditation Systems should be published and an Editorial Committee was established for this purpose.

3.3 A Task Force was asked to prepare:

1. Guidelines for the operation of laboratory accreditation systems,

2. Criteria for operation of internal quality control systems for laboratories,

3. Criteria for arranging the initial and subsequent calibration of the equipment used by testing laboratories,

4. Criteria for operation of proficiency testing programs by accreditation systems.

3.4 Work on definitions is being continued in collaboration with ISO and a bibliography on laboratory accreditation is being prepared by the United States' National Bureau of Standards.

3.5 It was agreed that national delegations and international organizations involved in ILAC activities be encouraged to provide as much assistance as possible, particularly in regard to information, to developing countries interested in the subject of laboratory accreditation.