

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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TARIFF CONFERENCE - 1956

Tariff Negotiations Committee

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND MEETINGS

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 25 January, at 4 p.m.
and on Thursday, 26 January 1956, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. P. Koht (Norway)

- Subjects discussed:
1. Rules of Procedure
 2. Status of the European Coal and Steel Community
 3. Review of Consolidated Offers Lists
 4. Appointment of Tariff Negotiations Working Party
 5. Election of Vice-Chairman of the Tariff
Negotiations Committee

The Tariff Negotiations Committee was set up after the Heads of Delegations had agreed to its composition and had appointed Mr. Paul Koht (Norway) as its Chairman. In accordance with Rule 7 of the Rules and Procedures for the tariff negotiations, which provides that the Committee shall be "composed of all governments which have submitted consolidated offers lists", the composition of the Committee was as follows:

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Australia | France |
| Austria | Federal Republic of Germany |
| BENELUX (Belgium, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Luxemburg) | Italy |
| Canada | Japan |
| Cuba | Norway |
| Denmark | Sweden |
| Dominican Republic | Turkey |
| Finland | United Kingdom |
| | United States |

As decided by the Heads of Delegations, other participating governments would become members of the Tariff Negotiations Committee as and when their consolidated offers lists had been distributed.

1. Rules of Procedure

The Committee examined and adopted the Rules of Procedure suggested to it by the Heads of Delegations as set out in document TN.56/7.

2. Status of the European Coal and Steel Community

The member States of the European Coal and Steel Community indicated that the High Authority of the Community was authorized under Section 14 of the Convention containing the Transitional Provisions of the Treaty to negotiate on behalf of the six Member States of the Community and was instructed by the Council to negotiate on their behalf with Austria with respect to the types of special steels included in the common market. They consequently requested that the High Authority be accorded by the Conference the necessary facilities to enable it to carry out this responsibility.

The Committee decided to invite the representatives of the High Authority, in order to enable it to carry out the mandate entrusted to it by the Member States, to participate without vote in both ordinary and executive sessions of the Committee.

The question of the distribution to the High Authority of consolidated offers lists of participants, and vice versa, was referred by the Committee to the Tariff Negotiations Working Party. Note was taken that the Heads of Delegations, with the concurrence of the parties concerned, had agreed that the consolidated offers list of Austria should be given to the High Authority and vice versa.

Mr. STRNAD (Czechoslovakia) stated that the position of his Government with respect to the ECSC and with respect to the relations of the ECSC with the CONTRACTING PARTIES - which had been explained to the CONTRACTING PARTIES at their Seventh and Eighth Sessions - had not changed. The CONTRACTING PARTIES were, in the view of his Government, a body composed of Governments and it was only they who were entitled to conduct negotiations held within the framework of the Agreement.

3. Review of Consolidated Offers Lists

The Committee agreed to the following text embodying the objectives of the review of consolidated offers lists and the procedures to be followed in the conduct of that review.

"I. OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the review should be to examine each consolidated offers list in order to ascertain whether it contributes to the objectives of the negotiations as laid down in Article XXIX and the rules and procedures adopted for the conference by the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

II. PROCEDURES

1. An examination by the Tariff Negotiations Working Party of each list in order to lay before the Tariff Negotiations Committee the facts relevant to the objectives laid down above.
2. An examination by the Tariff Negotiations Committee of the report by the Tariff Negotiations Working Party with respect to each list.
3. A general review by the Tariff Negotiations Committee of the offers of participating governments taken together in order to determine the extent to which the objectives of the conference are being achieved."

4. Appointment of Tariff Negotiations Working Party

The Committee appointed the Tariff Negotiations Working Party, composed as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Benelux | Italy |
| Canada | Japan |
| Cuba | Sweden |
| France | United Kingdom |
| Federal Republic of Germany | United States |

with the following terms of reference:

1. to assist in the conduct of negotiations;
2. to perform such other tasks as may be assigned to it by the Tariff Negotiations Committee.

Mr. P.A. Forthomme (Belgium) was appointed Chairman of the Tariff Negotiations Working Party. In case of his absence the Working Party would make its own arrangements.

Dr. STANDENAT (Austria) requested assurances that there would be no delegation of powers from the Tariff Negotiations Committee to the Working Party, and that observers would be entitled to attend meetings of the Working Party. He further wished to enquire whether votes would be taken in the Working Party. If so he felt that observers should have the right to vote on questions in which they were interested.

The CHAIRMAN replied that there was an inherent delegation of powers every time the Committee entrusted a specific task to the Working Party. However, the Working Party would in any case be required to report to the Committee. On the question of observers he ruled that anyone entitled to

attend meetings of the Tariff Negotiations Committee had the right to attend meetings of the Working Party as an observer under the same conditions as those laid down for the Tariff Negotiations Committee (Rules of Procedure, TN.56/7). With regard to the question of voting in the Working Party, it was customary that where unanimity was not reached in the Working Party the minority views would be recorded in the report to the Tariff Negotiations Committee.

It was further agreed that the Tariff Negotiations Committee would consider an enlargement of the Working Party if its own membership were sufficiently increased to warrant it.

5. Election of Vice-Chairman of the Tariff Negotiations Committee

The Committee elected as its Vice-Chairman the Chairman of the Tariff Negotiations Working Party, Mr. Forthomme (Belgium).