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TRAINING COURSES IN FOREIGN TRADE
AND COMMERCIAL POLICY

(Submitted by GATT secretariat)

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TRAINING COURSES IN FOREIGN TRADE

AND COMMERCIAL POLICY

I. Training courses in Geneva

1. The GATT in-service training courses in Geneva have continued on the broad lines set out in the document prepared by the GATT secretariat for the first meeting of the ECA Standing Committee on Trade in ^{1/} September 1962.

2. As in past years two courses are being held in 1963, one English-speaking course and one French-speaking. The latter course is currently in progress. Officials from the following countries have participated in these two courses:

Fifteenth Course (February - July 1963)

Hong Kong

Malta

Indonesia

Nigeria

Korea

Yugoslavia

Libya

Sixteenth Course (July - December 1963)

Argentina

Syria

Cambodia

Togo

Cameroon

Upper Volta

Haiti

^{1/} "Training courses in commercial policy". E/CN.14/STC/14

In addition to the above officials holding UNTA fellowships, officials from the following countries are participating for varying lengths of time in the sixteenth course at the request of their governments: Cameroon, Czechoslovakia, Cuba. Including the participants on the 1963 courses 110 officials from 44 countries have participated in the Geneva courses since their inception in 1956.

3. While, as is indicated above, the broad lines of the courses continue to be as in past years alterations of detail are, of course, made in certain parts of the curriculum so as to take account of the developments and priorities in the work of the GATT.

4. During the balance of the period up to December 1963 the trainees on the present course will, inter alia, follow the proceedings of Working Parties and Committees of particular interest to less-developed countries, receive instruction from the Intelligence Division of the Department of Trade Policy and Intelligence and undertake the normal three-week study tour of certain countries; the detailed itinerary is still to be decided. The comparable tour undertaken in June 1963 by the trainees on the fifteenth course encompassed visits to Brussels, London, Stockholm and Frankfurt.

II. Courses in Africa

1. As was indicated in the document prepared for the first meeting of the LCA Standing Committee on Trade in September 1962 the GATT secretariat, in collaboration with the LCA and with the financial assistance of the

United Nations Technical Assistance Organization, held in 1962 for the first time in Africa short courses on foreign trade and commercial policy. These courses were each of three weeks duration; the first, for French-speaking officials, being held at Dakar from 16 July - 4 August 1962 and the second, for English-speaking officials, at Dar-es-Salaam from 30 August - 19 September 1962. Both courses were directed by Mr. Jean Royer, Consultant to GATT, assisted by Mr. G. Hortling, Counsellor at the GATT secretariat.

2. Each course was limited to fifteen non-local and five local participants. In agreement with the United Nations Bureau of Technical Assistance and the Economic Commission for Africa the nominations made by governments were reviewed by the GATT secretariat and were approved by the Bureau of Technical Assistance on the recommendation of the GATT. The course at Dakar was attended by officials from Mauritania, Dahomey, Niger, Chad, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville) and Senegal, and the course at Dar-es-Salaam by officials from Ethiopia, Somalia, Uganda, Kenya (East African Common Services), Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, Zanzibar, and Tanganyika. Although the course was directed mainly towards junior officials, more experienced officials did, in fact, also participate.

3. The basic feature of the course was to combine discussions of the various aspects of commercial policy with discussions of the practical trade problems which exist in the country where the course was held.

Accordingly the daily programme was arranged along the following lines. In the mornings there was an introductory talk on a topic related to commercial policy; this talk tried to bring out the experience gained in a number of countries, and more particularly in developing countries, in connexion with this particular topic. After a break of about an hour, which enabled the participants to reflect on the subject and to prepare questions, there was a discussion of about two hours between the participants and the instructors. As far as practicable the discussions were not directed towards an analysis of theoretical problems, but were focused on concrete cases and facts. The participants were encouraged to express their views freely and to refer to the particular examples which might be found in their countries or in other countries with which they were familiar.

4. The afternoons were devoted to visits and discussions related to specific practical problems of international trade. The participants had thus the opportunity of discussing with competent people actually engaged in the production and marketing of export products, or in various activities having a bearing on foreign trade, the problems which were faced by the various operators and to gain first-hand information about the methods and procedures applied to achieve the best results for the country concerned. As far as possible these discussions covered the main export products of the host country and enabled participants to follow the export products from the producer to the quayside. Discussions covered

not only production and marketing but also inland transport, insurance, financing of export trade, sea transport, harbour and docking operations, customs clearance, etc. These afternoon visits and discussions were an essential part of the courses. They enabled the participants to appreciate the nature of the actual problems which have to be settled by officials in charge of commercial policy, and the practical problems which face traders. Finally, senior officials of the Government and of the Central Bank gave short talks on the relation between foreign trade and economic development, and the relation of foreign trade to the equilibrium of the balance of payments, as well as on the influence of commercial policy considerations on the national fiscal policy.

5. The success of these first courses prompted the ECA and the GATT, again with the financial assistance of the United Nations Technical Assistance Organization, to undertake further similar courses in Africa in 1963. On this occasion the Government of the Ivory Coast and the Government of Uganda will be the host governments. It has been agreed to extend this year's courses to four weeks and the French-speaking course will be held at Abidjan, Ivory Coast, from 7 October to 2 November 1963 and the English-speaking course at Makerere College, Kampala, Uganda from 18 November to 14 December 1963.

6. The curriculum of the courses, with practical visits and discussions in the afternoons, will be basically the same as in 1962, and

^{1/} For details see "Training courses in commercial policy", E/CN.14/STC/14, pp 4-5.

Mr. Royer will again be the Director, assisted by an official of the GATT secretariat.

7. Nominations made by governments for the courses are examined and approved by the Economic Commission for Africa and the GATT secretariat. Nominations for the French-speaking course at Abidjan have been made by the following countries: Burundi, Dahomey, Mali, Togo, Madagascar, Rwanda, Congo (Leopoldville), Congo (Brazzaville), Chad and the Ivory Coast. Nominations for the English-speaking course in Uganda, which does not begin until the middle of November 1963, were still being received from governments at the time this report was prepared.