

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

COM(74) 636 final

Brussels, 13 May 1974

RECOMMENDATION FOR A COUNCIL DECISION

authorizing the Commission to open negotiations on behalf of the Community with the Kingdom of Laos and with the Republic of Sri Lanka with a view to concluding separate agreements with those countries on trade in fabrics of silk or of waste silk other than noil and in fabrics of cotton, woven on handlooms

(submitted to the Council by the Commission)

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EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

1. In conformity with the Community's declaration of intent as regards certain developing countries during the GATT multilateral tariff negotiations in 1967, autonomous duty-free tariff quotas of a value of one million units of account were opened by the Community, for all countries, as from 1968 for the following products:

- ex 50.09: fabrics of silk or of waste silk
other than noil, woven on handlooms
- ex 55.09: other fabrics of cotton, woven on
handlooms

As part of the implementation of the declaration of intent as regards trade relations with certain Asian countries, and having regard to the needs of the new Member States in conformity with the Act of Accession, these Community tariff quotas have been doubled for 1974 to the value of 2 million u.a. each¹.

2. Duty-free importation is subject, however, to production to the Community customs authorities of a certificate, issued by the authorities recognized by the Community of the recipient State, certifying that the products in question have been woven on a handloom.

3. India, Pakistan, Thailand and Bangladesh have already concluded separate agreements in which the above terms have been specified and so this year their products will be imported duty-free under the said Community tariff quotas.

¹Council Regulation (EEC) No 3594/73 of 28 December 1973, OJ No L 365 of 31 December 1973

4. On 3 January 1974 and 6 February 1974, the Laostian and Sri Lanka Missions to the European Communities addressed notes verbales to the Commission (see Annexes II and III) stating that their Governments would like the concessions already accorded to India, Pakistan, Thailand and Bangladesh to be extended to their respective countries.

5. As the Community tariff quotas in question were opened for all countries, the Commission considers that favourable replies should be given to these requests and thus recommends that, pursuant to Article 113 of the Treaty, the Council adopt the following decision (Annex I).

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Economic Community, and in particular Article 113 thereof,

Having regard to the Recommendation of the Commission,

Whereas the Governments of the Kingdom of Laos and of the Republic of Sri Lanka have stated that they would like the duty-free quotas opened autonomously by the Community for imports of fabrics of silk or of waste silk other than noil and of fabrics of cotton, woven on handlooms, to be extended to their countries on the same terms as for other exporting third countries;

Whereas action should be taken upon the requests of Laos and Sri Lanka by opening negotiations with those countries with a view to establishing the terms on which the products in question may be imported duty-free under the tariff quotas opened autonomously by the Community for all countries by Council Regulation (EEC) No 3594/73 of 28 December 1973¹;

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¹OJ No L 365 of 31 December 1973

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Sole Article

The Commission is hereby authorized to open negotiations on behalf of the European Economic Community with the Kingdom of Laos and with the Republic of Sri Lanka with a view to concluding separate agreements with those countries on trade in fabrics of silk or of waste silk other than noil and in fabrics of cotton, woven on hand-looms, on the same terms as those specified in the agreements concluded by the Community with other third countries.

Done at Brussels,

For the Council
The President

Vientiane, le 3 janvier 1974

Monsieur le Directeur Général,

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître que le Laos possède un patrimoine artistique qui se traduit dans un artisanat susceptible de prendre une place importante parmi les autres artisanats du Sud-Est Asiatique.

Jusqu'à un passé relativement récent, ses productions étaient destinées uniquement à la consommation locale, la qualité des articles, sans aucun contrôle, ne permettant pas d'envisager leur exportation.

Depuis quelques années, des efforts constants ont été faits pour que la qualité des articles soit conforme aux normes internationales tout en leur gardant leur caractère traditionnel et original.

Parmi les articles artisanaux exclusivement faits à la main, on peut citer principalement des tissus de soie et de coton (écharpes, tapis de table), des objets traditionnels en argent pur (titrage 999), des poteries et des panneaux de bois sculpté etc....

Le Gouvernement Royal du Laos a conscience d'occuper dans ce domaine une place de choix. Il sollicite donc d'être inclus dans la liste des pays autorisés à exporter leurs produits artisanaux dans les Etats membres de la Communauté Européenne.

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Cette demande est faite conformément aux règlements du Conseil de la CEE no 2732/72 du 19.12.1972 (tissus fait à la main) et no 2733/72 du 19/12/72 (autres produits fait à la main), instituant des contingents tarifaires pour ces produits.

Lorsque le Laos sera autorisé à exporter ses produits artisanaux vers le pays membres de la Communauté, il se conformera aux conditions stipulées dans les règlements du Conseil de la CEE précités et, en particulier, à la présentation du Certificat d'Origine dont la signature sera confiée au Directeur du Service National de l'Artisanat et de l'Industrie.

Je vous prie d'accepter, Monsieur le Directeur Général, les assurances de ma haute considération.

ANNEXE III

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA
IN BELGIUM

6 February 1974

Dear Sir,

I wish to refer to my letter no. B/EEC/5A of 23 January 1974 informing you that the Government of Sri Lanka wishes to benefit from the Special Duty Free quota of 2 million units of account for handloom textiles (CET ex 55.09). In the discussion I had with Mr. C. Paoli yesterday, I indicated that Sri Lanka would also like to benefit in the Special duty Free quota of 2 million units of account for Woven fabrics of silk or waste silk, other than noil (CET ex 50.09). This letter is to confirm my request to Mr. Paoli and I shall be glad if the necessary arrangements are made as early as possible for Sri Lanka to benefit from the Community's duty free quota for both categories of handlooms textiles - namely :

C.E.T. ex 50.09
 and
C.E.T. ex 55.09.