
HIGH AUTHORITY

Information Service

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

U.K.-Community Tariff Agreement Signed

The Governments of the United Kingdom and the six member states of the European Coal and Steel Community, together with the Community's High Authority, today signed in Luxembourg a tariff agreement substantially reducing customs duties on iron and steel products in the United Kingdom and the Community.

Under the terms of the agreement the United Kingdom will reduce its tariffs on a wide range of iron and steel products from the current level of 15-33 1/3% ad valorem to a maximum of 10%, with an appropriate adjustment of the alternative specific rates.

On their side the member states will apply rates not exceeding those resulting from the harmonization of their external tariff when the transition period ends on February 9, 1958. These maximum rates will vary between 3 and 12% ad valorem.

Signature of the agreement constitutes acceptance by the Governments of the six Community countries and of the United Kingdom of proposals made by the Council of Association between the United Kingdom Government and the High Authority at the Council's sixth session on October 24.

It is a further token of the close association between the Community and the United Kingdom initiated by the Agreement of Association of December 1954. It comes at a moment when the Community has fulfilled its Treaty obligations to harmonize its external tariffs, and is the first international commercial agreement negotiated by the Community on the basis of its harmonized tariff.

If any of the signatories wishes to increase these customs duties, the agreement provides for prior consultation between them on possible courses of action to avoid the necessity for increased duties, or, if no agreement is reached, on the extent of the increase to be effected.

It is provided that nothing in the agreement should affect the obligations of the signatories under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (G.A.T.T.), and the concessions made under the agreement are therefore extended to all other G.A.T.T. signatories under the most-favoured-nation clause.

The agreement was signed on behalf of the Governments and the High Authority by:

Belgium: M. Roger Teymans, Ambassador to Luxembourg;
France: M. le Nail, Chargé d'Affaires;
Germany: Count Karl von Spreti, Ambassador to Luxembourg;
Italy: Sig. Antonio Venturini, Ambassador to Luxembourg;
Luxembourg: M. Paul Wilwers, Commissioner-General for Economic Affairs;
Netherlands: Dr. A.H. Philipse, Ambassador to Luxembourg;
United Kingdom: Sir William Meikleraid, Head of United Kingdom Delegation to the High Authority;
High Authority: M. Dirk Spierenburg, Member of the High Authority.