

Charter of International Trade Organization, March 24, 1948

(Excerpts) [\(1\)](#)



CHAPTER I - PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

ARTICLE 1

Recognizing the determination of the United Nations to create conditions of stability and well-being which are necessary for peaceful and friendly relations among nations,

The parties to this Charter undertake in the fields of trade and employment to co-operate with one another and with the United Nations.

For the Purpose of

Realizing the aims set forth in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the attainment of the higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development, envisaged in Article 55 of that Charter.

To this end they pledge themselves, individually and collectively, to promote national and international action designed to attain the following objectives:

1. To assure a large and steadily growing volume of real income and effective demand, to increase the production, consumption and exchange of goods, and thus to contribute to a balanced and expanding world economy.
2. To foster and assist industrial and general economic development, particularly of those countries which are still in the early stages of industrial development, and to encourage the international flow of capital for productive investment.
3. To further the enjoyment by all countries, on equal terms, of access to the markets, products and productive facilities which are needed for their economic prosperity and development.
4. To promote on a reciprocal and mutually advantageous basis the reduction of tariffs and other barriers to trade and the elimination of discriminatory treatment in international commerce.
5. To enable countries, by increasing the opportunities for their trade and economic development, to abstain from measures which would disrupt world commerce, reduce productive employment or retard economic progress.
6. To facilitate through the promotion of mutual understanding, consultation and co-operation, the solution of problems relating to international trade in the fields of employment, economic development, commercial policy, business practices and commodity policy.

Accordingly they hereby establish the International Trade Organization through which they shall co-operate as Members to achieve the purpose and the objectives set forth in this Article.

CHAPTER VII - THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE ORGANIZATION

SECTION A - STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS

ARTICLE 71 - MEMBERSHIP

1. The original Members of the Organization shall be:

(a) those States invited to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment whose governments accept this Charter, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 103, by September 30, 1949 or, if the Charter shall not have entered into force by that date, those States whose governments agree to bring the Charter into force in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 (b) of Article 103;

(b) those separate customs territories invited to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment on whose behalf the competent Member accepts this Charter, in accordance with the provisions of Article 104, by September 30, 1949 or, if the Charter shall not have entered into force by that date, such separate customs territories which agree to bring the Charter into force in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 (b) of Article 103 and on whose behalf the competent Member accepts the Charter in accordance with the provisions of Article 104. If any of these customs territories shall have become fully responsible for the formal conduct of its diplomatic relations by the time it wishes to deposit an instrument of acceptance, it shall proceed in the manner set forth in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph.

2. Any other State whose membership has been approved by the Conference shall become a Member of the Organization upon its acceptance, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 103 of the Charter, as amended up to the date of such acceptance.

3. Any separate customs territory not invited to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment, proposed by the competent Member having responsibility for the formal conduct of its diplomatic relations and which is autonomous in the conduct of its external commercial relations and of the other matters provided for in this Charter and whose admission is approved by the Conference, shall become a Member upon acceptance of the Charter on its behalf by the competent Member in accordance with the provisions of Article 104 or, in the case of a territory in respect of which the Charter has already been accepted under that Article, upon such approval by the Conference after it has acquired such autonomy.

4. The Conference shall determine, by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting, the conditions upon which, in each individual case, membership rights and obligations shall be extended to:

(a) the Free Territory of Trieste;

(b) any Trust Territory administered by the United Nations; and

(c) any other special regime established by the United Nations.

5. The Conference, on application by the competent authorities, shall determine the conditions upon which rights and obligations under this Charter shall apply to such authorities in respect of territories under military occupation and shall determine the extent of such rights and obligations.

ARTICLE 72 - FUNCTIONS

The Organization shall perform the functions attributed to it elsewhere in this Charter. In addition, the Organization shall have the following functions:

(a) to collect, analyze and publish information relating to international trade, including information relating to commercial policy, business practices, commodity problems and industrial and general economic development;

(b) to encourage and facilitate consultation among Members on all questions relating to the provisions of this Charter;

(c) to undertake studies, and, having due regard to the objectives of this Charter and the constitutional and legal systems of Members, make recommendations, and promote bilateral or multilateral agreements concerning, measures designed

(i) to assure just and equitable treatment for foreign nationals and enterprises;

(ii) to expand the volume and to improve the bases of international trade, including measures designed to facilitate commercial arbitration and the avoidance of double taxation;

(iii) to carry out, on a regional or other basis, having due regard to the activities of existing regional or other intergovernmental organizations, the functions specified in paragraph 2 of Article 10;

(iv) to promote and encourage establishments for the technical training that is necessary for progressive industrial and economic development; and,

(v) generally, to achieve any of the objectives set forth in Article 1;

(d) in collaboration with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and with such inter-governmental organizations as may be appropriate, to undertake studies on the relationship between world prices of primary commodities and manufactured products, to consider and, where appropriate, to recommend international agreements on, measures designed to reduce progressively any unwarranted disparity in those prices;

(e) generally, to consult with and make recommendations to the Members and, as necessary, furnish advice and assistance to them regarding any matter relating to the operation of this Charter, and to take any other action necessary and appropriate to carry out the provisions of the Charter;

(f) to co-operate with the United Nations and other intergovernmental organizations in furthering the achievement of the economic and social objectives of the United Nations and the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security.

2. In the exercise of its functions the Organization shall have due regard to the economic circumstances of Members, to the factors affecting these circumstances and to the consequences of its determinations upon the interests of the Member or Members concerned.

ARTICLE 73 - STRUCTURE

The Organization shall have a Conference, an Executive Board, Commissions as established under Article 82, and such other organs as may be required. There shall also be a Director-General and Staff.

SECTION B - THE CONFERENCE

ARTICLE 74 - COMPOSITION

1. The Conference shall consist of all the Members of the Organization.

2. Each Member shall have one representative in the Conference and may appoint alternates and advisers to its representative.

ARTICLE 75 - VOTING

1. Each Member shall have one vote in the Conference.

2. Except as otherwise provided in this Charter, decisions of the Conference shall be taken by a majority of the Members present and voting; Provided that the rules of procedure of the Conference may permit a Member to request a second vote if the number of votes cast is less than half the number of the Members, in which case the decision reached on the second vote shall be final whether or not the total of the votes cast comprises more than half the number of the Members.

ARTICLE 76 - SESSIONS, RULES OF PROCEDURE AND OFFICERS

1. The Conference shall meet at the seat of the Organization in regular annual session and in such special sessions as may be convoked by the Director-General at the request of the Executive Board or of one-third of the Members. In exceptional circumstances, the Executive Board may decide that the Conference shall be held at a place other than the seat of the Organization.

2. The Conference shall establish rules of procedure which may include rules appropriate for the carrying out of its functions during the intervals between its sessions. It shall annually elect its President and other officers.

ARTICLE 77 - POWERS AND DUTIES

1. The powers and duties attributed to the Organization by this Charter and the final authority to determine the policies of the Organization shall be vested in the Conference.

2. The Conference may, by a vote of a majority of the Members, assign to the Executive Board any power or duty of the Organization except such specific powers and duties as are expressly conferred or imposed upon the Conference by this Charter.

3. In exceptional circumstances not elsewhere provided for in this Charter, the Conference may waive an obligation imposed upon a Member by the Charter; Provided that any such decision shall be approved by a two-thirds majority of the votes cast and that such majority shall comprise more than half of the Members. The Conference may also by such a vote define certain categories of exceptional circumstances to which other voting requirements shall apply for the waiver of obligations.

4. The Conference may prepare or sponsor agreements with respect to any matter within the scope of this Charter and, by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting, recommend such agreements for acceptance. Each Member shall within a period specified by the Conference, notify the Director-General of its acceptance or non-acceptance. In the case of non-acceptance, a statement of the reasons therefor shall be forwarded with the notification.

5. The Conference may make recommendations to inter-governmental organizations on any subject within the scope of this Charter.

6. The Conference shall approve the budget of the Organization and shall apportion the expenditures of the Organization among the Members in accordance with a scale of contributions to be fixed from time to time by the Conference following such principles as may be applied by the United Nations. If a maximum limit is established on the contribution of a single Member with respect to the budget of the United Nations, such limit shall also be applied with respect to contributions to the Organization.

7. The Conference shall determine the seat of the Organization and shall establish such branch offices as it may consider desirable.

SECTION C - THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

ARTICLE 78 - COMPOSITION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

1. The Executive Board shall consist of eighteen Members of the Organization selected by the Conference.

2. (a) The Executive Board shall be representative of the broad geographical areas to which the Members of the Organization belong.

(b) A customs union, as defined in paragraph 4 of Article 44, shall be considered eligible for selection as a member of the Executive Board on the same basis as a single Member of the Organization if all of the members of the customs union are Members of the Organization and if all its members desire to be represented as a unit.

(c) In selecting the members of the Executive Board, the Conference shall have regard to the objective of ensuring that the Board includes Members of chief economic importance, in the determination of which particular regard shall be paid to their shares in international trade, and that it is representative of the different types of economies or degrees of economic development to be found within the membership of the Organization.

3. (a) At Intervals of three years the Conference shall determine, by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting, the eight Members of chief economic importance, in the determination of

which particular regard shall be paid to their shares in international trade. The Members so determined shall be declared members of the Executive Board.

(b) The other members of the Executive Board shall be elected by the Conference by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting.

(c) If on two consecutive ballots no member is elected, the remainder of the election shall be decided by a majority of the Members present and voting.

4. Subject to the provisions of Annex L, the term of office of a member of the Executive Board shall be three years, and any vacancy in the membership of the Board may be filled by the Conference for the unexpired term of the vacancy.

5. The Conference shall establish rules for giving effect to this Article.

ARTICLE 79 - VOTING

1. Each member of the Executive Board shall have one vote.

2. Decisions of the Executive Board shall be made by a majority of the votes cast.

ARTICLE 80 - SESSIONS, RULES OF PROCEDURE AND OFFICERS

1. The Executive Board shall adopt rules of procedure, which shall include rules for the convening of its sessions, and which may include rules appropriate for the carrying out of its functions during the intervals between its sessions. The rules of procedure shall be subject to confirmation by the Conference.

2. The Executive Board shall annually elect its Chairman and other officers, who shall be eligible for re-election.

3. The Chairman of the Executive Board shall be entitled ex officio to participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference.

4. Any Member of the Organization which is not a member of the Executive Board shall be invited to participate in the discussion by the Board of any matter of particular and substantial concern to that Member and shall, for the purpose of such discussion, have all the rights of a member of the Board, except the right to vote.

ARTICLE 81 - POWERS AND DUTIES

1. The Executive Board shall be responsible for the execution of the policies of the Organization and shall exercise the powers and perform the duties assigned to it by the Conference. It shall supervise the activities of the Commissions and shall take such action upon their recommendations as it may deem appropriate.

2. The Executive Board may make recommendations to the Conference, or to inter-governmental organizations, on any subject within the scope of this Charter.

SECTION D - THE COMMISSIONS

ARTICLE 82 - ESTABLISHMENT AND FUNCTIONS

The Conference shall establish such Commissions as may be required for the performance of the functions of the Organization. The Commissions shall have such functions as the Conference may decide. They shall report to the Executive Board and shall perform such tasks as the Board may assign to them. They shall consult each other as necessary for the exercise of their functions.

ARTICLE 83 - COMPOSITION AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

1. The Commissions shall be composed of persons whose appointment, unless the Conference decides otherwise, shall be made by the Executive Board. In all cases, these persons shall be qualified by training and experience to carry out the functions of the Commission to which they are appointed.

2. The number of members, which for each Commission shall normally not exceed seven, and the conditions of service of such members shall be determined in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Conference.

3. Each Commission shall elect a Chairman. It shall adopt rules of procedure which shall be subject to approval by the Executive Board.

4. The rules of procedure of the Conference and of the Executive Board shall provide as appropriate for the participation in their deliberations, without the right to vote, of the chairmen of Commissions.

5. The Organization shall arrange for representatives of the United Nations and of other inter-governmental organizations which are considered by the Organization to have a special competence in the field of activity of any of the Commissions, to participate in the work of such Commission.

SECTION E - THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND STAFF

ARTICLE 84 - THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

1. The chief administrative officer of the Organization shall be the Director-General. He shall be appointed by the Conference upon the recommendation of the Executive Board, and shall be subject to the general supervision of the Board. The powers, duties, conditions of service and terms of office of the Director-General shall conform to regulations approved by the Conference.

2. The Director-General or his representative shall be entitled to participate, without the right to vote, in all meetings of any organ of the Organization.

3. The Director-General shall present to the Conference an annual report on the work of the Organization, and the annual budget estimates and financial statements of the Organization.

ARTICLE 85 - THE STAFF

1. The Director-General, having first consulted with and having obtained the agreement of the Executive Board, shall have authority to appoint Deputy Directors-General in accordance with

regulations approved by the Conference. The Director-General shall also appoint such additional members of the Staff as may be required and shall fix the duties and conditions of service of the members of the Staff, in accordance with regulations approved by the Conference.

2. The selection of the members of the Staff, including the appointment of the Deputy Directors-General, shall as far as possible be made on a wide geographical basis and with due regard to the various types of economy represented by Member countries. The paramount consideration in the selection of candidates and in determining the conditions of service of the Staff shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, impartiality and integrity.

3. The regulations concerning the conditions of service of members of the Staff, such as those governing qualifications, salary, tenure and retirement, shall be fixed, so far as practicable, in conformity with those for members of the Secretariat of the United Nations and of specialized agencies.

SECTION F - OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 86 - RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED NATIONS

1. The Organization shall be brought into relationship with the United Nations as soon as practicable as one of the specialized agencies referred to in Article 57 of the Charter of the United Nations. This relationship shall be effected by agreement approved by the Conference.

2. Any such agreement shall, subject to the provisions of this Chapter, provide for effective cooperation and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication in the activities of these organizations, and for co-operation in furthering the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security.

3. The Members recognize that the Organization should not attempt to take action which would involve passing judgment in any way on essentially political matters. Accordingly, and in order to avoid conflict of responsibility between the United Nations and the Organization with respect to such matters, any measure taken by a Member directly in connection with a political matter brought before the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of Chapters IV or VI of the United Nations Charter shall be deemed to fall within the scope of the United Nations, and shall not be subject to the provisions of this Charter.

4. No action, taken by a Member in pursuance of its obligations under the United Nations Charter for the maintenance or restoration of international peace and security, shall be deemed to conflict with the provisions of this Charter.

ARTICLE 87 - RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

1. The Organization shall make arrangements with other inter-governmental organizations, which have related responsibilities, to provide for effective co-operation and the avoidance of unnecessary duplication in the activities of these organizations. The Organization may for this purpose arrange for joint committees, reciprocal representation at meetings and establish such other working relationships as may be necessary.

2. The Organization may make suitable arrangements for consultation and co-operation with non-governmental organizations concerned with matters within the scope of this Charter.

3. Whenever the Conference and the competent authorities of any inter-governmental organization whose purposes and functions lie within the scope of this Charter deem it desirable

(a) to incorporate such inter-governmental organizations into the Organization, or

(b) to transfer all or part of its functions and resources to the organization, or

(c) to bring it under the supervision or authority of the Organization,

the Director-General, subject to the approval of the Conference, may enter into an appropriate agreement. The Members shall, in conformity with their international obligations, take the action necessary to give effect to any such agreement.

ARTICLE 88 - INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL, STAFF AND MEMBERS OF COMMISSIONS

1. The responsibilities of the Director-General and of the members of the Staff shall be exclusively international in character. In the discharge of their duties, they shall not seek or receive instructions from any government or from any other authority external to the Organization. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials.

2. The provisions of paragraph 1 shall also apply to the members of the Commissions.

3. The Members shall respect the international character of the responsibilities of these persons and shall not seek to influence them in the discharge of their duties.

ARTICLE 89 - INTERNATIONAL LEGAL STATUS OF THE ORGANIZATION

The Organization shall have legal personality and shall enjoy such legal capacity as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions.

ARTICLE 90 - STATUS OF THE ORGANIZATION IN THE TERRITORY OF MEMBERS

1. The Organization shall enjoy in the territory of each of its Members such legal capacity, privileges and immunities as may be necessary for the exercise of its functions.

2. The representatives of Members and the officials of the Organization shall similarly enjoy such privileges and immunities as may be necessary for the independent exercise of their functions in connection with the Organization.

3. When the Organization has been brought into relationship with the United Nations as provided for in paragraph 1 of Article 86, the legal capacity of the Organization and the privileges and immunities provided for in the preceding paragraphs shall be defined by the General Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, as from time to time amended, and as supplemented by an annex relating to the International Trade Organization.

ARTICLE 91 - CONTRIBUTIONS

Each Member shall contribute promptly to the Organization its share of the expenditure of the Organization as apportioned by the Conference. A Member which is in arrears in the payment of its contributions shall have no vote in the organs of the Organization, if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it in respect of the preceding two complete years. The Conference may, nevertheless, permit such a Member to vote, if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to circumstances beyond the control of the Member.

CHAPTER VIII - SETTLEMENT OF DIFFERENCES

ARTICLE 92 - RELIANCE ON THE PROCEDURES OF THE CHARTER

1. The Members undertake that they will not have recourse, in relation to other Members and to the Organization, to any procedure other than the procedures envisaged in this Charter for complaints and the settlement of differences arising out of its operation.

2. The Members also undertake, without prejudice to any other international agreement, that they will not have recourse to unilateral economic measures of any kind contrary to the provisions of this Charter.

ARTICLE 93 - CONSULTATION AND ARBITRATION

1. If any Member considers that any benefit accruing to it directly or indirectly, implicitly or explicitly, under any of the provisions of this Charter other than Article 1, is being nullified or impaired as a result of

(a) a breach by a Member of an obligation under this Charter by action or failure to act, or

(b) the application by a Member of a measure not conflicting with the provisions of this Charter, or

(c) the existence of any other situation the Member may, with a view to the satisfactory adjustment of the matter, make written representations or proposals to such other Member or Members as it considers to be concerned, and the Members receiving them shall give sympathetic consideration thereto.

2. The Members concerned may submit the matter arising under paragraph 1 to arbitration upon terms agreed between them; Provided that the decision of the arbitrator shall not be binding for any purpose upon the Organization or upon any Member other than the Members participating in the arbitration.

3. The Members concerned shall inform the Organization generally of the progress and outcome of any discussion, consultation or arbitration undertaken under this Charter.

ARTICLE 94 - REFERENCE TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

1. Any matter arising under sub-paragraphs (a) or (b) of paragraph 1 of Article 93 which is not satisfactorily settled and any matter which arises under paragraph 1 (c) of Article 93 may be referred by any Member concerned to the Executive Board.

2. The Executive Board shall promptly investigate the matter and shall decide whether any nullification or impairment within the terms of paragraph 1 of Article 93 in fact exists. It shall then take such of the following steps as may be appropriate:

(a) decide that the matter does not call for any action;

(b) recommend further consultation to the Members concerned;

(c) refer the matter to arbitration upon such terms as may be agreed between the Executive Board and the Members concerned;

(d) in any matter arising under paragraph 1 (a) of Article 93, request the Member concerned to take such action as may be necessary for the Member to conform to the provisions of this Charter;

(e) in any matter arising under sub-paragraph (b) or (c) of paragraph 1 of Article 93, make such recommendations to Members as will best assist the Members concerned and contribute to a satisfactory adjustment.

3. If the Executive Board considers that action under sub-paragraphs (d) and (e) of paragraph 2 is not likely to be effective in time to prevent serious injury, and that any nullification or impairment found to exist within the terms of paragraph 1 of Article 93 is sufficiently serious to justify such action, it may, subject to the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 95, release the Member or Members affected from obligations or the grant of concessions to any other Member or Members under or pursuant to this Charter, to the extent and upon such conditions as it considers appropriate and compensatory, having regard to the benefit which has been nullified or impaired.

4. The Executive Board may, in the course of its investigation, consult with such Members or inter-governmental organizations upon such matters within the scope of this Charter as it deems appropriate. It may also consult any appropriate commission of the Organization on any matter arising under this Chapter.

5. The Executive Board may bring any matter, referred to it under this Article, before the Conference at any time during its consideration of the matter.

ARTICLE 95 - REFERENCE TO THE CONFERENCE

1. The Executive Board shall, if requested to do so within thirty days by a Member concerned, refer to the Conference for review any action, decision or recommendation by the Executive Board under paragraphs 2 or 3 of Article 94. Unless such review has been asked for by a Member concerned, Members shall be entitled to act in accordance with any action, decision or recommendation of the Executive Board under paragraphs 2 or 3 of Article 94. The Conference shall confirm, modify or reverse such action, decision or recommendation referred to it under this paragraph.

2. Where a matter arising under this Chapter has been brought before the Conference by the Executive Board, the Conference shall follow the procedure set out in paragraph 2 of Article 94 for the Executive Board.

3. If the Conference considers that any nullification or impairment found to exist within the terms of paragraph 1 (a) of Article 93 is sufficiently serious to justify such action, it may release the Member or

Members affected from obligations or the grant of concessions to any other Member or Members under or pursuant to this Charter, to the extent and upon such conditions as it considers appropriate and compensatory, having regard to the benefit which has been nullified or impaired. If the Conference considers that any nullification or impairment found to exist within the terms of sub-paragraphs (b) or (c) of paragraph 1 of Article 93 is sufficiently serious to justify such action, it may similarly release a Member or Members to the extent and upon such conditions as will best assist the Members concerned and contribute to a satisfactory adjustment.

4. When any Member or Members, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3, suspend the performance of any obligation or the grant of any concession to another Member, the latter Member shall be free, not later than sixty days after such action is taken, or if an opinion has been requested from the International Court of Justice pursuant to the provisions of Article 96, after such opinion has been delivered, to give written notice of its withdrawal from the Organization. Such withdrawal shall become effective upon the expiration of sixty days from the day on which such notice is received by the Director-General.

ARTICLE 96 - REFERENCE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

1. The Organization may, in accordance with arrangements made pursuant to paragraph 2 of Article 96 of the Charter of the United Nations, request from the International Court of Justice advisory opinions on legal questions arising within the scope of the activities of the Organization.

2. Any decision of the Conference under this Charter shall, at the instance of any Member whose interests are prejudiced by the decision, be subject to review by the International Court of Justice by means of a request, in appropriate form, for an advisory opinion pursuant to the Statute of the Court.

3. The request for an opinion shall be accompanied by a statement of the question upon which the opinion is required and by all documents likely to throw light upon the question. This statement shall be furnished by the Organization in accordance with the Statute of the Court and after consultation with the Members substantially interested.

4. Pending the delivery of the opinion of the Court, the decision of the Conference shall have full force, and effect; Provided that the Conference shall suspend the operation of any such decision pending the delivery of the opinion where, in the view of the Conference, damage difficult to repair would otherwise be caused to a Member concerned.

5. The Organization shall consider itself bound by the opinion of the Court on any question referred by it to the Court. In so far as it does not accord with the opinion of the Court, the decision in question shall be modified.

ARTICLE 97 - MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

1. Nothing in this Chapter shall be construed to exclude other procedures provided for in this Charter for consultation and the settlement of differences arising out of its operation. The Organization may regard discussion, consultation or investigation undertaken under any other provisions of this Charter as fulfilling, either in whole or in part, any similar procedural requirement in this Chapter.

2. The Conference and the Executive Board shall establish such rules of procedure as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Chapter.

CHAPTER IX - GENERAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 98 - RELATIONS WITH NON-MEMBERS

1. Nothing in this Charter shall preclude any Member from maintaining economic relations with non-Members.

2. The Members recognize that it would be inconsistent with the purpose of this Charter for a Member to seek any arrangements with non-Members for the purpose of obtaining for the trade of its country preferential treatment as compared with the treatment accorded to the trade of other Member countries, or so to conduct its trade with non-Member countries as to result in injury to other Member countries. Accordingly,

(a) no Member shall enter into any new arrangement with a non-Member which precludes the non-Member from according to other Member countries any benefit provided for by such arrangement;

(b) subject to the provisions of Chapter IV, no Member shall accord to the trade of any non-Member country treatment which, being more favourable than that which it accords to the trade of any other Member country, would injure the economic interests of a Member country.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 2, Members may enter into agreements with non-Members in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 of Article 15 or of paragraph 6 of Article 44.

4. Nothing in this Charter shall be interpreted to require a Member to accord to non-Member countries treatment as favourable as that which it accords to Member countries under the provisions of the Charter, and failure to accord such treatment shall not be regarded as inconsistent with the terms or the spirit of the Charter.

5. The Executive Board shall make periodic studies of general problems arising out of the commercial relations between Member and non-Member countries and, with a view to promoting the purpose of the Charter, may make recommendations to the Conference with respect to such relations. Any recommendation involving alterations in the provisions of this Article shall be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of Article 100.

ARTICLE 99 - GENERAL EXCEPTIONS

1. Nothing in this Charter shall be construed

(a) to require a Member to furnish any information the disclosure of which it considers contrary to its essential security interests; or

(b) to prevent a Member from taking, either singly or with other States, any action which it considers necessary for the protection of its essential security interests, where such action

(i) relates to fissionable materials or to the materials from which they are derived, or

(ii) relates to the traffic in arms, ammunition or implements of war or to traffic in other goods and materials, carried on directly or indirectly for the purpose of supplying a military establishment of the Member or of any other country, or

(iii) is taken in time of war or other emergency in international relations; or

(c) to prevent a Member from entering into or carrying out any inter-governmental agreement (or other agreement on behalf of a government for the purpose specified in this sub-paragraph) made by or for a military establishment for the purpose of meeting essential requirements of the national security of one or more of the participating countries; or

(d) to prevent action taken in accordance with the provisions of Annex M to this Charter.

2. Nothing in this Charter shall be construed to override

(a) any of the provisions of peace treaties or permanent settlements resulting from the Second World War which are or shall be in force and which are or shall be registered with the United Nations, or

(b) any of the provisions of instruments creating Trust Territories or any other special regimes established by the United Nations.

ARTICLE 100 - AMENDMENTS

1. Any amendment to this Charter which does not alter the obligations of Members shall become effective upon approval by the Conference by a two-thirds majority of the Members.

2. Any amendment which alters the obligations of Members shall, after receiving the approval of the Conference by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting, become effective for the Members accepting the amendment upon the ninetieth day after two-thirds of the Members have notified the Director-General of their acceptance, and thereafter for each remaining Member upon acceptance by it. The Conference may, in its decision approving an amendment under this paragraph and by one and the same vote, determine that the amendment is of such a nature that the Members which do not accept it within a specified period after the amendment becomes effective shall be suspended from membership in the Organization; Provided that the Conference may, at any time, by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting, determine the conditions under which such suspension shall not apply with respect to any such Member.

3. A Member not accepting an amendment under paragraph 2 shall be free to withdraw from the Organization at any time after the amendment has become effective; Provided, that the Director-General has received from such Member sixty days' written notice of withdrawal; and provided further that the withdrawal of any Member suspended under the provisions of paragraph 2 shall become effective upon the receipt by the Director-General of written notice of withdrawal.

4. The Conference shall, by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting, determine whether an amendment falls under paragraph 1 or paragraph 2, and shall establish rules with respect to the reinstatement of Members suspended under the provisions of paragraph 2, and any other rules required for carrying out the provisions of this Article.

5. The provisions of Chapter VIII may be amended within the limits and in accordance with the procedure set forth in Annex N.

ARTICLE 101 - REVIEW OF THE CHARTER

1. The Conference shall carry out a general review of the provisions of this Charter at a special session to be convened in conjunction with the regular annual session nearest the end of the fifth year after the entry into force of the Charter.

2. At least one year before the special session referred to in paragraph 1, the Director-General shall invite the Members to submit any amendments or observations which they may wish to propose and shall circulate them for consideration by the Members.

3. Amendments resulting from such review shall become effective in accordance with the procedure set forth in Article 100.

ARTICLE 102 - WITHDRAWAL AND TERMINATION

1. Without prejudice to any special provision in this Charter relating to withdrawal, any Member may withdraw from the Organization, either in respect of itself or of a separate customs territory on behalf of which it has accepted the Charter in accordance with the provisions of Article 104, at any time after three years from the day of the entry into force of the Charter.

2. A withdrawal under paragraph 1 shall become effective upon the expiration of six months from the day on which written notice of such withdrawal is received by the Director-General. The Director-General shall immediately notify all the Members of any notice of withdrawal which he may receive under this or other provisions of the Charter.

3. This Charter may be terminated at any time by agreement of three-fourths of the Members.

ARTICLE 103 - ENTRY INTO FORCE AND REGISTRATION

1. The government of each State accepting this Charter shall deposit an instrument of acceptance with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who will inform all governments represented at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment and all Members of the United Nations not so represented of the date of deposit of each instrument of acceptance and of the day on which the Charter enters into force. Subject to the provisions of Annex 0, after the entry into force of the Charter in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2, each instrument of acceptance so deposited shall take effect on the sixtieth day following the day on which it is deposited.

2. (a) This Charter shall enter into force

(i) on the sixtieth day following the day on which a majority of the governments signing the Final Act of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment have deposited instruments of acceptance in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1; or

(ii) if, at the end of one year from the date of signature of the said Final Act, it has not entered into force in accordance with the provisions of sub-paragraph (a) (i), then on the sixtieth day following the day on which the number of governments represented at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment which have deposited instruments of acceptance in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 shall reach twenty; Provided that if twenty such governments have deposited acceptances more than sixty days before the end of such year, it shall not enter into force until the end of that year.

(b) If this Charter shall not have entered into force by September 30, 1949, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall invite those governments which have deposited instruments of acceptance to enter into consultation to determine whether and on what conditions they desire to bring the Charter into force.

3. Until September 30, 1949, no State or separate customs territory on behalf of which the said Final Act has been signed, shall be deemed to be a non-Member for the purposes of Article 98.

4. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is authorized to register this Charter as soon as it enters into force.

ARTICLE 104 - TERRITORIAL APPLICATION

1. Each government accepting this Charter does so in respect of its metropolitan territory and of the other territories for which it has international responsibility, except such separate customs territories as it shall notify to the Organization at the time of its own acceptance.

2. Any Member may at any time accept this Charter, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 103, on behalf of any separate customs territory excepted under the provisions of paragraph 1.

3. Each Member shall take such reasonable measures as may be available to it to ensure observance of the provisions of this Charter by the regional and local governments and authorities within its territory.

ARTICLE 105 - ANNEXES

The Annexes to this Charter form an integral part thereof.

ARTICLE 106 - DEPOSIT AND AUTHENTICITY OF TEXTS - TITLE AND DATE OF THE CHARTER

1. The original texts of this Charter in the official languages of the United Nations shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who will furnish certified copies of the texts to all interested governments. Subject to the provisions of the Statute of the International Court of Justice, such texts shall be equally authoritative for the purposes of the interpretation of the Charter, and any discrepancy between texts shall be settled by the Conference.

2. The date of this Charter shall be March 24, 1948.

3. This Charter for an International Trade Organization shall be known as the Havana Charter.

ANNEX L

RELATING TO ARTICLE 78

SELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST EXECUTIVE BOARD

To facilitate the work of the Conference at its first session, the following rules shall apply with respect to the selection of the members of the first Executive Board under the provisions of Article 78:

1. Six seats on the Board shall be filled under sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of paragraph 3 of Article 78 by Member countries of the Western Hemisphere*. If five or more countries of the Western Hemisphere, eligible for election under paragraph 3 (b) of Article 78, have not become Members of the Organization at the time of the election, only three seats shall be filled under paragraph 3 (b). If ten or more of the countries of the Western Hemisphere, eligible for election under paragraph 3 (b), have not become Members of the Organization at the time of the election, only two seats shall be filled under paragraph 3 (b). The seat or seats thus unoccupied sha

ll not be filled unless the Conference otherwise decides by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting.

2. In order to ensure a selection in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 3 (a) of Article 78, the following countries and customs unions shall be deemed to fulfil the conditions set out therein:

(a) the two countries in the Western Hemisphere and the three countries or customs unions in Europe with the largest external trade, which participated in the Havana Conference; and

(b) in view of their potential importance in international trade, the three countries with the largest population in the world.

Should any of those countries, including any country participating in a customs union, not be a Member of the Organization at the time of the election, the Conference shall review the situation; however, the unoccupied seat or seats shall not be filled, unless the Conference otherwise decides by a two-thirds majority of the Members present and voting.

3. In the election of members of the Executive Board under the provisions of paragraph 3 (b) of Article 78, the Conference shall have due regard to the provisions of paragraph 2 of that Article and to the fact that certain relationships existing among a geographical group of countries may in certain cases give such a group a distinctive and unified character.

4. The members selected under paragraph 3 (a) of Article 78 shall serve for a term of three years. Of the members elected under paragraph 3 (b), half, as determined by lot, shall serve for a term of two years, and the other half for a term of four years. However, if an uneven number of Members has been elected, the Conference shall determine the number to serve for two and for four years respectively.

ANNEX M

REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH 1 (D) OF ARTICLE 99

SPECIAL PROVISIONS REGARDING INDIA AND PAKISTAN

In view of the special circumstances arising out of the establishment as independent States of India and Pakistan, which have long constituted an economic unit, the provisions of this Charter shall not prevent the two countries from entering into special interim agreements with respect to the trade between them, pending the establishment of their reciprocal trade relations on a definitive basis. When these relations have been established, measures adopted by these countries in order to carry out

definitive agreements with respect to their reciprocal trade relations, may depart from particular provisions of the Charter, provided that such measures are in general consistent with the objectives of the Charter.

ANNEX N

REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH 5 OF ARTICLE 100

SPECIAL AMENDMENT OF CHAPTER VIII

Any amendment to the provisions of Chapter VIII which may be recommended by the Interim Commission for the International Trade Organization after consultation with the International Court of Justice and which relates to review by the Court of matters which arise out of the Charter but which are not already covered in Chapter VITI, shall become effective upon approval by the Conference, at its first regular session, by a vote of a majority of the Members; Provided that such amendment shall not provide for review by the Court of any economic or financial fact as established by or through the Organization; and Provided further that such amendment shall not affect the obligation of Members to accept the advisory opinion of the Court as binding on the Organization upon the points covered by such opinion; and Provided further that, if such amendment alters the obligations of Members, any Member which does not accept the amendment may withdraw from the Organization upon the expiration of sixty days from the day on which written notice of such withdrawal is received by the Director-General.

ANNEX O

REFERRED TO IN PARAGRAPH 1 OF ARTICLE 103

ACCEPTANCES WITHIN SIXTY DAYS OF THE FIRST REGULAR SESSION

For the purpose of the first regular session of the Conference, any government which has deposited an instrument of acceptance in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 103 prior to the first day of the session, shall have the same right to participate in the Conference as a Member.

Interpretative Notes

AD ARTICLE 86

Paragraph 3

Note 1

If any Member raises the question whether a measure is in fact taken directly in connection with a political matter brought before the United Nations in accordance with the provisions of Chapters IV or VI of the United Nations Charter, the responsibility for making a determination on the question shall rest with the Organization. If, however, political issues beyond the competence of the Organization are involved in making such a determination, the question shall be deemed to fall within the scope of the United Nations.

Note 2

If a Member which has no direct political concern in a matter brought before the United Nations considers that a measure taken directly in connection therewith and falling within the scope of paragraph 3 of Article 86 constitutes a nullification or impairment within the terms of paragraph 1 of Article 93, it shall seek redress only by recourse to the procedures set forth in Chapter VIII of this Charter.

AD ARTICLE 98

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to prejudice or prevent the operation of the provisions of paragraph 1 of Article 60 regarding the treatment to be accorded to non-participating countries under the terms of a commodity control agreement which conforms to the requirements of Chapter VI.

AD ARTICLE 104

Note 1

In the case of a condominium, where the codomini are Members of the Organization, they may, if they so desire and agree, jointly accept this Charter in respect of the condominium.

Note 2

Nothing in this Article shall be construed as prejudicing the rights which may have been or may be invoked by States in connection with territorial questions or disputes concerning territorial sovereignty.

1 United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment, held at Habana, Cuba, from November 12, 1947, to March 24, 1948, Final Act and Related Documents (Habana, Cuba, March 1948), pp. 5, 44-53, 60, 61, 66. Chapters of Charter not printed: II. Employment and Economic Activity; III. Economic Development and Reconstruction; IV. Commercial Policy; V. Restrictive Business Practices; VI. Inter-Governmental Commodity Agreements; and relevant Annexes and Interpretative Notes. The United Nations publication has also been reproduced by photo-offset under the title, Havana Charter for an International Trade Organization, March 24, 1948, Department of State publication 3117, Commercial Policy Series 113. As of December 31, 1949 the United States had not ratified this Charter. [Back](#)

*That is, North, Central and South America. [Back](#)