

SECTION B.—INTER-GOVERNMENTAL COMMODITY AGREEMENTS IN
GENERAL

Article 58: Commodity Studies

The basis of procedure established in this chapter provides for a careful examination of all aspects of a commodity problem before action is taken, and that such examination should be conducted with adequate representation from all the interests concerned. Thus, any Member which considers itself substantially interested in a commodity is entitled to ask that a study be instituted, and its request must be granted unless the Organization decides that the evidence submitted does not justify the calling together of a study group. The decision to attend a study group rests with individual Members. The study group must investigate and report promptly. Non-Members may attend.

The provisions relative to the formation of study groups are not new, as the principles of procedure and representation laid down are very similar to those used for some years. The same applies to the succeeding article on commodity conferences, the only fundamental difference being that, in the past, study groups and conferences have been called, after consultation between Governments, by one Government acting as host. Such commodities as beef, coffee, cotton, petroleum, rice, rubber, sugar, tea, timber, tin, wheat, and wool have been subject to study and to some form of inter-governmental agreement.

Article 59: Commodity Conferences

It is anticipated that a commodity conference will, in the main, result from the recommendations of a study group. Provision is made, however, for the Organization to convene a conference directly—

- (a) At the request of Members whose interests represent a significant or major part of world production or consumption or trade in a commodity; or
- (b) At the request of Members which consider that their national economies are dependent to an important extent on that commodity; or
- (c) On its own initiative, if information is considered adequate.

In the case of (a) and (b) the requesting Members must provide the necessary information to justify their request. Any Member may attend a conference, and non-Members may be invited.

Article 60: General Principles governing Inter-governmental Commodity Agreements

All Members have equal rights to participate in initial negotiations. Non-Members may be asked to participate on the same basis as Members. There is to be no discrimination as between participating and non-participating Members. Producer and consumer countries are to have equal voice. This wide participation, combined with full publicity of