

2. The meetings of the Joint Council shall be chaired jointly by the Parties.
3. Meetings of the Joint Council shall be held alternately in Venezuela and a Member State of CARICOM or such other place as may be agreed between Venezuela and CARICOM.
4. The Agenda for each meeting of the Joint Council shall be settled by the Parties at least one month before each proposed meeting.
5. The Council may regulate its own procedures and may establish subsidiary bodies to assist it in the execution of its functions.

Article 4: LIBERALISATION PROGRAMME

1. Venezuela agrees to grant products originating in Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) free access to its market by means of the implementation of programmes of tariff reduction and the elimination of non-tariff barriers. To this end:

A. the CARICOM Exportable offer will have the following treatment:

- (i) immediate dutyfree access for products set out in Annex I;
- (ii) phased reduction of the duties applicable on products set out in Annex II as follows:
 - (a) starting 1 January 1993 - 75 per cent of the MFN rate of duty will apply;
 - (b) starting 1 January 1994 - 50 per cent of the MFN rate of duty will apply;
 - (c) starting 1 January 1995 - 25 per cent of the MFN rate of duty will apply;
 - (d) starting 1 January 1996 - dutyfree treatment will apply;
- (iii) the MFN rate will apply to the products set out in Annex III;
- (iv) the Joint Council, at its Meetings may consider and decide on any requests by the Parties for the modification of the treatment to be accorded to any item referred to in subparagraphs (i), (ii), and (iii) above;

B. for products other than those listed in (A) above, the MFN rate will apply unless otherwise decided by the Joint Council.

2. For the purposes of this Agreement "duty" shall be understood to mean the customs duties and any other charges of equivalent effect, whether fiscal, monetary, exchange or of any kind, which are incurred by imports. Not included under this concept are rates and analogous charges when they represent the cost of the services rendered.

Article 5: RULES OF ORIGIN

The Rules of Origin to be applied under this Agreement shall be those set out in Annex IV.

Article 6: TREATMENT OF IMPORTS INTO CARICOM FROM VENEZUELA

1. The Parties agree that CARICOM will grant most-favoured-nation treatment in the application of the Customs Tariff in respect of all imports from Venezuela.

2. CARICOM also undertakes to consult with Venezuela in the Joint Council when any changes in the rate structure of the Customs Tariff are contemplated.

3. CARICOM further undertakes that Member States of CARICOM will not, without prior consultation with Venezuela, apply any quantitative restrictions, beyond those currently in place or those authorised under the Treaty establishing the Caribbean Community, with respect to imports from Venezuela.

Article 7: TECHNICAL NORMS

The Joint Council shall study the technical, industrial, commercial norms and those governing public health of the Parties and shall recommend the actions which it considers necessary to ensure that these norms do not constitute an obstacle to trade between the Parties.

Article 8: GENERAL EXCEPTIONS

This Agreement allows the adoption or enforcement by Venezuela or any Member State of CARICOM of measures such as the following, provided that they are not used as obstacles to trade:

- (a) necessary to protect public morals;
- (b) necessary for the prevention of disorder or crime;
- (c) necessary to secure compliance with laws or regulations relating to customs enforcement, or to the classification, grading or marketing of goods, or to the operation of monopolies by means of state enterprises or enterprises given exclusive or special privileges;
- (d) necessary to protect industrial property, trademarks, or copyrights or to prevent deceptive practices;
- (e) relating to gold or silver;
- (f) relating to the products of prison labour;
- (g) imposed for the protection of national treasures of artistic, historic or archaeological value;
- (h) necessary to prevent or relieve critical shortages of foodstuffs in any exporting Party, or
- (i) relating to the conservation of exhaustible natural resources.

Article 9: TREATMENT OF INVESTMENTS