

# GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

RESTRICTED

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Limited Distribution

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## PAPUA NEW GUINEA/AUSTRALIA FREE-TRADE AREA

The following communication has been received from the Permanent Mission of Australia.

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I have the honour to transmit to you on behalf of the Government of Australia and of Papua New Guinea the text of the Papua New Guinea/Australia Trade and Commercial Relations Agreement for the information of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

The Agreement was signed in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on 6 November 1976, and will come into force when notes are exchanged between the two Governments concerned, notifying each other that their respective constitutional and other requirements for ratification have been complied with.

The Agreement establishes a free-trade area which consists of Papua New Guinea and Australia. It will replace the Memorandum of Understanding, signed in December 1973, which applied to trade and commercial relations between Australia and Papua New Guinea in the period between the granting to Papua New Guinea of self-government and its attainment of independence, and which was subsequently extended in April 1975, to cover the period between Papua New Guinea independence and the conclusion of a long-term trade and commercial relations agreement between the two countries.

Substantially all the trade between Australia and Papua New Guinea is already free of restrictive duties and regulations of commerce. The new Agreement will provide for a continuation of this situation, and will ensure that Papua New Guinea will not, by virtue of attaining independence, be placed in a less advantageous position in relation to its trade with Australia than that which it obtained prior to its attaining independence. Papua New Guinea will itself continue to apply (including in respect of imports from Australia) a one column customs tariff to that relatively small proportion of its imports to which protective tariffs apply.

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The text of the Agreement and the annexes thereto will be circulated as an addendum to this document.

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