

Chapter XVI.—Disputes and Complaints

ARTICLE 40

(1) Any dispute concerning the interpretation or application of this Agreement, which is not settled by negotiation, shall, at the request of any Participating Government party to the dispute, be referred to the Council for decision.

(2) In any case where a dispute has been referred to the Council under paragraph (1) of this Article, a majority of Participating Governments or Participating Governments holding not less than one-third of the total votes may require the Council, after full discussion, to seek the opinion of the advisory panel referred to in paragraph (3) of this Article on the issues in dispute before giving its decision.

(3)—(i) Unless the Council unanimously agrees otherwise, the panel shall consist of—

(a) two persons, one having wide experience in matters of the kind in dispute and the other having legal standing and experience, nominated by the exporting countries;

(b) two such persons nominated by the importing countries; and

(c) a chairman selected unanimously by the four persons nominated under (a) and (b), or, if they fail to agree, by the Chairman of the Council.

(ii) Persons from countries whose Governments are parties to this Agreement, shall be eligible to serve on the advisory panel.

(iii) Persons appointed to the advisory panel shall act in their personal capacities and without instructions from any Government.

(iv) The expenses of the advisory panel shall be paid by the Council.

(4) The opinion of the advisory panel and the reasons therefor shall be submitted to the Council which, after considering all the relevant information, shall decide the dispute.

(5) Any complaint that any Participating Government has failed to fulfil its obligations under this Agreement shall, at the request of the Participating Government making the complaint, be referred to the Council which shall make a decision on the matter.

(6) No Participating Government shall be found to have committed a breach of this Agreement except by a majority of the votes held by the exporting countries and a majority of the votes held by the importing countries. Any finding that a Participating Government is in breach of the Agreement shall specify the nature of the breach.

(7) If the Council finds that a Participating Government has committed a breach of this Agreement, it may by a majority of the votes held by the exporting countries and a majority of the votes held by the importing countries suspend the Government concerned of its voting rights until it fulfils its obligations or expel that Government from this Agreement.

Chapter XVII.—Signature, Acceptance, Entry into Force and Accession

ARTICLE 41

(1) This Agreement shall be open for signature from September 15 to October 31, 1953, by the Governments represented by delegates at the Conference at which this Agreement was negotiated.

(2) This Agreement shall be subject to ratification or acceptance by the signatory Governments in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures, and the instruments of ratification or acceptance shall be deposited