

Memorandum to Cabinet by the Hon. Minister  
of Commonwealth and Foreign Affairs and  
the Hon. Minister of Industrial Development  
and Tourism

Customs Convention concerning Welfare  
Material for Seafarers

The Customs Convention concerning Welfare Material for Seafarers was established under the auspices of the Customs Co-operation Council on the initiative of and in consultation with the International Labour Organization:

The term "welfare material" means material for the pursuit of cultural, educational, recreational, religious or sporting activities by seafarers and shall include reading material, audio-visual material, sports gear, hobby material and equipment for religious activities (including vestments).

Article 3 of the Convention urges the Contracting Parties to grant conditional relief from import duties and taxes and from all prohibitions or restrictions other than those enforced under regulations concerning public morality or security or public hygiene or health to welfare material which is:

- a) imported into the territory of a Contracting Party for delivery to and use on board a foreign ship engaged in international maritime traffic, lying in a port in that territory;
- b) taken off a ship for delivery to and use on board a foreign ship engaged in international maritime traffic lying in the same port or in another port on the same territory;
- c) taken off a ship for re-exportation;
- d) intended for repair;
- e) awaiting disposal in accordance with paragraph (a), (b) or (c) above;
- f) landed from a ship for temporary use ashore by the crew for a period not exceeding the ship's stay in port.

The Customs reliefs and facilities mentioned in the Convention are already being allowed by the Customs Department and there is, therefore, no objection to Malta's adhering to it on the part of that department.

The Convention/....

The Convention urges further (Article 5) that the facilities granted to welfare material as mentioned above should be extended to welfare material temporarily imported for a period not exceeding six months for use in welfare establishments ashore (i.e. hostels, clubs, recreation centres and places of worship for seafarers).

It is considered, however, that a reservation should be made to this article in the sense that Malta shall consider itself bound by the provisions of Article 5 subject to the condition that temporary free importation of welfare material for the purpose of that article shall be allowed against a deposit covering the import duty chargeable on the imported material, which import duty would be refunded on re-exportation of such material.

Honourable Ministers are invited to agree to Malta's becoming a party to this Convention subject to the above-mentioned reservation.

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21st February, 1966.