



UNITED NATIONS

SECRETARIAT



13080 ST/AI/254
3 February 1978

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff holding G-4 visas

From: The Under-Secretary General for Administration and Management

Subject: DUTY AND TAX-FREE ENTRY OF BAGGAGE AND
EFFECTS INTO THE UNITED STATES

1. The purpose of this instruction is to clarify certain requirements of the United States Government regarding duty and tax-free entry into the United States of the personal effects and household goods of staff and their family members who hold International Organization (G-4) visas. Administrative instruction ST/AI/169 of 14 November 1966 and information circular ST/ADM/SER.A/1228 of 27 February 1968 relating to the subject are hereby superseded.

2. The entry free of customs duties and internal revenue taxes of baggage and effects of holders of G-4 visas is governed by sections 148.87 and 148.88 of the United States Customs Regulations. Baggage and effects are defined in section 148.81 (b) of the Customs Regulations as articles which were in the possession of a person abroad and are being imported in connexion with the person's arrival and which are intended for the bona fide personal or household use by the person requesting free entry.

3. Baggage and effects may be permitted duty and tax-free entry in connexion with the staff member's:

(a) Original entry on initial appointment or on change of duty station; or

(b) Any subsequent entry following official travel, as on United Nations business or return from home leave.

4. Duty and tax-free entry will not be allowed for any articles which are:

(a) Imported as an accommodation to others;

(b) Imported for sale or other commercial use;

(c) Not in the physical possession of the traveller abroad, such as items (i) purchased by mail order; (ii) left for repairs or alterations (i.e., clothing etc.), which were not completed at the time of departure from the country visited; or (iii) to be made to order and not available at the time of departure from the country visited (i.e., furniture, rugs, clothing etc.).

5. If duty and tax-free entry is requested for new effects, including automobiles, alcohol and tobacco products, the United States Government requires receipts or other documents to substantiate that the purchase was made and possession was taken by the staff member or eligible family members in the country where the article was acquired.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO PRODUCTS

6. The United States Government has informed the United Nations that specific limits established for duty and tax-free entry of alcohol, cigars and cigarettes following travel covered in paragraph 3 (b) above are thirty-six (36) quarts or litres of alcoholic beverages (including wines and liquors), one case (10 cartons) of cigarettes, and one box containing no more than fifty (50) cigars. Any excess is subject to customs duties and taxes.

AUTOMOBILES

7. An automobile for personal or family use may be accorded duty and tax-free entry in connexion with the arrival of a staff member, but no more than two automobiles may be granted free entry in a three-year period.

8. Automobiles which do not meet the safety and emission standards established in the United States National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 may be imported under an exemption granted to members of the Secretariat holding G-4 visas but may not be sold in the United States unless they are brought into conformity with United States emission standards. The host Government's regulations specify that imported vehicles which do not conform to United States emission standards must be exported or retired from use at the end of a staff member's assignment in the United States and that violators may be fined up to \$10,000 per vehicle by the United States Government.

IMPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Unaccompanied shipments

9. All shipments made in conjunction with official travel should be addressed:

Staff member's name
c/o Traffic Unit
United Nations
New York, N.Y. 10017
U.S.A.

10. Holders of G-4 visas who wish to apply for duty and tax-free entry of unaccompanied shipments are required to contact the Traffic Unit, Purchase and

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Transportation Service, at Headquarters in person in order to arrange for customs clearance, and must submit a "Request for free entry of effects into the United States" (Form PT.40) with the required receipts for any purchases made abroad.

11. Demurrage charges, which accrue whenever a staff member's unaccompanied shipment reaches the United States before the staff member is available to complete customs formalities, are payable by the staff member and are not subject to reimbursement. Staff members are therefore advised to schedule their shipments to reach the United States after their own arrival in the country.

Accompanied baggage

12. Holders of G-4 visas arriving in the United States on official travel who wish to be accorded duty and tax-free entry privileges for accompanied baggage should notify the Travel Unit, Purchase and Transportation Service, of their place and date of arrival, name of carrier and flight number at least ten days in advance of their scheduled arrival so that this information may be sent to the customs authorities at the port of entry through the United States Mission to the United Nations. This information should be provided by letter to "United Nations Travel Unit, New York, N.Y. 10017, U.S.A." or, if necessary, by cable to 'UNATIONS NEWYORK'.
