The Seventh Session of the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which opened on Thursday, 2 October, completed its work on Monday, 10 November. The Session was attended by representatives of the 34 contracting parties, as well as by observers from 8 countries and 7 intergovernmental organizations. Mr. Johan Melander, Director of Commercial Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway, and Mr. John A. Tonk, Director of Marketing, Australian Ministry of Commerce, were re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively.

During the Session the Contracting Parties held consultations with countries which are maintaining import restrictions for balance of payments reasons. They dealt with a number of complaints of infringements of the GATT under the Article XVIII complaints procedure. Consideration of the request of Japan to accede to GATT was deferred to an Intersessional Committee. The Contracting Parties finalized the text of a Convention to facilitate the Importation of Samples, and drew up Standard Practices concerning Consular Formalities and Documentary Requirements for Imports of Goods. The Contracting Parties authorized the continuation of Italian preferences for Libyan Products, and made further progress in considering schemes for the general reduction of tariff levels. The Contracting Parties granted a waiver from certain GATT obligations for the six countries which are members of the European Coal and Steel Community.

A detailed Survey of the Session will be issued later this week.

The next Session of the Contracting Parties will meet on 17 September 1953. The Intersessional Committee will meet on 2 February 1953.