GATT Intersessional Committee to meet on Monday 2 February

The GATT Ad Hoc Committee for Intersessional Business will meet on 2 February at Geneva.

The task before the Intersessional Committee arises from the Decision of the CONTRACTING PARTIES during their Seventh Session, October - November 1952, that the request of the Government of Japan for an opportunity to negotiate for accession to the GATT required further consideration as to "the conditions and timing under which the application can be pursued". The Committee was asked "to undertake a detailed examination of the matters involved in this application"and to report on them to the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

Background. In July 1952 the Government of Japan notified its desire to negotiate for accession to GATT under the special procedure (approved at the Sixth Session) for the holding of tariff negotiations intersessionally between a country wishing to accede to the GATT and those contracting parties which wished to negotiate with her. A number of contracting parties indicated that owing to the importance of Japan in international trade they considered that the application should be examined at a session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES before any action was taken on the application.

At the Seventh Session, October - November 1952, the CONTRACTING PARTIES discussed some of the problems raised by Japan's application and decided that the conditions and timing under which the Japanese application could be pursued should be referred to an intersessional committee. In order to take advantage of the presence of Japanese representatives who attended the Seventh Session as observers, the members of the Ad Hoc Committee for Agenda and Intersessional Business (which existed between the Sixth and Seventh Sessions) met the Japanese representatives in order to obtain information which would be useful to any future committee considering the Japanese application. At the end of the Seventh Session a new Intersessional Committee was appointed and the date of 2 February 1953 was decided upon for the meeting of the Committee to pursue this question.

The members of the Intersessional Committee are:

Australia       Cuba       Italy
Belgium         Denmark    Pakistan
Brazil          France      Union of South Africa
Canada          Germany     United Kingdom
Chile           India       United States

The Chairman of the Intersessional Committee is the Chairman of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, Mr. Johan Melander, Director of Commercial Policy, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

END OF RELEASE.