THAILAND JOINS GATT

Thailand will become the 88th Contracting Party to GATT on 20 November 1982.

Thailand's Protocol of Accession to GATT was signed today by H.E. Dr. Pracha Guna-Kasem, Thailand's Ambassador and Permanent Representative in Geneva. Accession takes effect 30 days after signature of the Protocol.

The terms of this Protocol were negotiated in April 1982 in a working party whose report was approved by the GATT Council in July. The Decision on Accession was taken by GATT's member States in a postal ballot earlier this month.

On becoming a contracting party to the General Agreement, Thailand will be able to participate fully in all GATT's work, including the Ministerial Session in Geneva next month, and will benefit from all tariff concessions negotiated by GATT contracting parties since the inception of the General Agreement in 1948; these concessions are bound against increase in the tariff schedules of GATT's member States.

With its accession to GATT, Thailand has agreed to bind a certain number of its customs duties under the GATT consistently with its development, financial and trade needs. These customs duties are listed in the tariff Schedule attached to Thailand's Protocol of Accession.

On Thailand's accession, all five members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) will be members of GATT.

GATT's basic aim is to liberalize and to achieve greater security in world trade through the reduction or elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers, and by providing a forum for negotiation over current international trade issues, thereby contributing to economic growth and development. The General Agreement has a number of provisions which deal particularly with the trade interests and needs of developing countries; some of these provisions were reinforced as a result of the Tokyo Round of multilateral trade negotiations in GATT which concluded in 1979.