Hong Kong has become, with effect from 23 April, a contracting party to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

Hong Kong is deemed to be a contracting party to GATT by virtue of a declaration made by the United Kingdom Government under Article XXVI:5(c) of the General Agreement which was delivered to the GATT Secretariat on 23 April 1986.

The GATT Secretariat also received on 23 April 1986 a parallel declaration from the Government of the People's Republic of China confirming that, as from 1 July 1997, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will continue to meet the requirements necessary to be deemed a contracting party to GATT as prescribed in Article XXVI:5(c) of the General Agreement.

The addition of Hong Kong brings the total of GATT members to 91.

GATT rules have been applied in respect of Hong Kong since 1948 and until now Hong Kong's interests have been represented from within the United Kingdom's delegation.

Note to Editors

The text of Article XXVI:5(c) of the General Agreement is as follows:

"(c) If any of the customs territories, in respect of which a contracting party has accepted this Agreement, possesses or acquires full autonomy in the conduct of its external commercial relations and of the other matters provided for in this Agreement, such territory shall, upon sponsorship through a declaration by the responsible contracting party establishing the above-mentioned fact, be deemed to be a contracting party."