GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

APPOINTMENT OF MR. W.T. DOIG AS ADVISOR IN CONNEXION WITH 1957 PROGRAMME OF CONSULTATIONS ON BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS

The Executive Secretary of the GATT announces the appointment of William Torrance Doig (Australia) as consultant and advisor to the secretariat in connexion with the series of consultations on quantitative restrictions and balance of payments problems which will be held at Geneva during 1957. Mr. Doig will be assisted by M. Raoul A. Arents (Belgium) who has also joined the GATT secretariat temporarily.

The background of this programme lies in the decision of the Contracting Parties to GATT, which was taken at the Eleventh Session in November 1956, to invite individual contracting parties which are still restricting imports for balance of payments reasons to enter into consultations, under the terms of Article XII:4(b), before the end of the Twelfth Session, i.e. before the end of 1957. Some twenty contracting parties will take part in the consultations, which are scheduled to start in June 1957. The purpose of these consultations is to consider whether these restrictions are being applied in ways which are least harmful to the flow of international trade or whether they could produce less injurious effects if applied in alternative ways. These consultations are expected to throw new light on the prospects for further progress towards the relaxation and eventual elimination of such restrictions.

Mr. Doig, who has been given leave of absence by the Australian Government, is at present Counsellor, External Affairs, Australia House, London. Born in 1912, Mr. Doig has held a number of important positions in the academic world and in government service. Before the war he was a Senior Lecturer in Economics at the Canterbury University College Extension Department, Christchurch, New Zealand. After completing military service, he became an Assistant Director in the Ministry of Post War Reconstruction, Canberra. In 1947 Mr. Doig was adviser on the Australian Delegation to the Preparatory Commission of the U.N. Conference on Trade and Employment. He has been a delegate to a number of U.N. and Specialized Agency conferences, being Australian Representative on the Economic Committee of the U.N. General Assembly 1951/52. After joining the Department of External Affairs he was, in 1948/50, Chargé d'Affaires, Australian Legation, Rio de Janeiro. During that period he was a member of an Australian trade mission to several South American countries. In 1950/52 Mr. Doig was Head, Economic and Technical Assistance Branch, Department of External Affairs, Canberra; and from 1953 to 1956, Chargé d'Affaires, Australian Embassy, Dublin.
M. Arents, who has been seconded by his Government, has been a member, since 1949, of the Belgian delegation to most of the sessions of the Contracting Parties to GATT. He has also taken part in missions of an economical and financial character in many European countries. For the past ten years M. Arents has been collaborating with Professor J. van Tichelen, Director General of the International Conference and Economic Agreements Section of the Belgian Ministry of Economic Affairs.