GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

Fourth Session of Contracting Parties to General
Agreement to open at Geneva 23 February

In accordance with the decision taken at the third session held at Annecy in 1949, the fourth session of the contracting parties to the General Agreement will open at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday 23 February at 3 p.m. The session is expected to continue throughout March.

Among the leaders of delegations will be L. Dana Wilgress, who is Canadian High Commissioner in London; Henry F. Grady, United States, who is U.S. Ambassador to Greece, Sir Stephen L. Holmes, United Kingdom, and M. Max Suetens, Belgium, who is Chairman of the Interim Commission of the I.T.O.

It is expected that the session will be attended by representatives of twenty four contracting parties, with the exception of Cuba which is at present engaged in economic negotiations with the United States. These comprise the original twenty three contracting parties plus Haiti which has recently become a contracting party. The original twenty three contracting parties were: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, France, India, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Syria, United Kingdom and United States. It is expected that the countries which negotiated at Annecy with a view to joining the General Agreement will be represented by delegates or observers: Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, Greece, Haiti, Italy, Liberia, Nicaragua, Sweden and Uruguay. Of these, Haiti has already become a contracting party; Greece and Liberia have already signed the Annecy Protocol of Accession and will shortly become contracting parties. Further, those countries which have stated their intention of negotiating for the first time in the 1950 tariff negotiations may also be represented by observers: Austria, Western Germany, Guatemala, Korea, Peru, Philippines and Turkey. The International Monetary Fund and the Organization for European Economic Cooperation will also send observers.

No tariff negotiations will be undertaken in conjunction with this session of the contracting parties; but arrangements for the 1950 tariff negotiations due to open on 28 September will be discussed.

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure the meetings of the contracting parties will be held in private. The adoption of the agenda will be the first item to be considered. After this item has been completed the agreed agenda with a guidance for press correspondents will be made available.

The services for the meetings will be provided as on previous occasions, by the secretariat of the Interim Commission of the I.T.O., under Eric Wyndham White, Executive Secretary.