A new international Convention, designed to ease the temporary importation of professional equipment, has been completed and opened for signature by governments, on 8 June 1961. This treaty - the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Professional Equipment - was prepared under the auspices of the Customs Co-operation Council (an intergovernmental organization at Brussels) and the Contracting Parties to GATT, in consultation with UNESCO.

The Convention provides for the temporary admission (i.e. without paying customs duties) of a wide range of articles listed in three annexes, to which each contracting party can adhere separately.

Annex A provides for the temporary importation of equipment needed by the press and by radio or television broadcasting.

Annex B provides similar facilities for equipment used for film production.

Annex C covers equipment needed by persons visiting foreign countries for the exercise of their profession. This would include the equipment (a) needed for the erection, testing, checking and repairing of machinery and plant, (b) used by businessmen and business-efficiency consultants, and (c) imported by specialized scientists, such as experts for undertaking topographical surveys.

In addition to the Convention described above, a further convention providing for the creation of an international carnet for the temporary admission of goods is, at present, being prepared by the Customs Co-operation Council and the GATT, in collaboration with UNESCO. This carnet, to be called the ATA Carnet, will further facilitate the customs formalities in connexion with the temporary importation of such goods, including goods imported under the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Professional Equipment. The ATA Carnet will be distributed in each country by approved agencies and will replace national documents.

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