TANGANYIKA BECOMES A CONTRACTING PARTY TO GATT

During the course of the meeting of Ministers held at Geneva, 27-30 November 1961, the Ministers were informed by Mr. S.A. Maswanya, Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in Tanganyika, that, on the achievement of his country's independence on 9 December 1961, it wished to be deemed to be a contracting party to GATT, in conformity with paragraph 5(c) of Article XXVI of the Agreement. Under the terms of this provision the United Kingdom has sponsored the application of Tanganyika. The decision of Tanganyika to accede to GATT was warmly welcomed by Ministers.

At the meeting of the Contracting Parties on 9 December the representative of Tanganyika, Mr. E. Halwenge, took his place.

"It is a happy coincidence", Mr. Halwenge said, "that at midnight last night Tanganyika became a sovereign independent country which enables my Government to be represented at this session here this morning. Tanganyika intends to play its part fully in maintaining the principles on which GATT was based and will continue to pursue the liberal policies which have characterized its trade relations.

"As stated at the ministerial meeting by the Honourable Mr. Maswanya, the Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, in terms of world trade Tanganyika's share is relatively small. Nevertheless, Tanganyika's need to improve her world trading position and to secure fair access on the world market for her products is very real. In this connexion the Government of Tanganyika regards the General Agreement as a practical arrangement for improving conditions of world trade, and more particularly a practical method of recognizing the special difficulties of the newly-developed countries," Mr. Halwenge said.
Speaking on behalf of the United Kingdom Government, Sir Edgar Cohen, Permanent Delegate to GATT and Leader of the United Kingdom delegation, said: "It is with very great pleasure that, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, which has most gladly acted as sponsor, I welcome Mr. E. Halwenge, the representative of Tanganyika, the newest contracting party. This is an occasion on which the Contracting Parties can congratulate themselves also, for this must be the first international gathering at which a representative of Tanganyika takes his seat, since his country achieved its independence only at midnight... The promptness of its accession suggests that Tanganyika will be a particularly keen member, with a valuable and constructive contribution to make to our deliberations.

"Tanganyika has had full internal self-government since 1 May 1961, and it now makes its entry into the comity of nations. Under the inspiring leadership of its Prime Minister, Mr. Julius Nyerere, this young country has already shown its determination to maintain internal stability and to play a full part in international life, in Africa and the world. With a population of some 9½ million it was the largest of the remaining British dependent territories... Its exports - sisal, coffee, tea, cotton, gold, diamonds and other mineral products, are important in world trade. Tanganyika will have a natural interest in the problems common to developing countries, and particularly in those which face producers of tropical products. Our studies and debates will be reinforced by a new voice of interest and importance to us all."

The accession of Tanganyika brings the number of contracting parties to forty.