The Tariff Negotiations Committee, at its meeting on 15 January (GATT/TN.2/36/7), approved the recommendations of the Working Party (submitted in GATT/TN.2/33) and fixed 28 February as the date for the completion of all bilateral negotiations and 22 March as the date for signature of the Final Act. Since then the Working Party has met informally on several occasions to review the progress of negotiations. At a meeting held yesterday it was found that 52 negotiations have been completed, 96 are in progress and 2 are scheduled to begin on Monday next. Of the negotiations under Article XXVIII, 44 have been brought to a conclusion and 28 are still in progress.

At a meeting to be held on 19 February the Working Party intends to prepare a final report to submit to the Tariff Negotiations Committee prior to the closing date fixed by the Committee. In anticipation of this meeting, the Chairman of the Working Party wishes to address two requests to delegations:

1. Delegations which have given notification of withdrawal or modification of concessions under Article XXVIII and which anticipate difficulty in completing their negotiations by 23 February should advise the Secretariat so that the Working Party may discuss the situation which will arise if one or more of these negotiations should be uncompleted at the close of the Torquay Conference.

2. In fixing 28 February as the date for the completion of bilateral negotiations the Committee approved the recommendation of the Working Party that in special circumstances a short extension of time might be given for the completion of negotiations which are then within sight of conclusion and could be finished in the first few days of March. Delegations which anticipate that they may wish to have recourse to this facility should advise the Secretariat so that the negotiations involved may receive special attention by the Working Party.

Communications under paragraphs 1 and 2 should reach the Secretariat not later than 6 p.m. on Friday 16th.