The Japanese delegation to the current tariff negotiations for the accession of Japan has asked the Executive Secretary for an explanation of the relationship between the date referred to in paragraph 10 of the Draft Protocol and the date in paragraph 3 of the Draft Decision on Accession that were circulated on 22 April 1955 (L/352/Add.1).

The explanation requested is as follows:

Paragraph 10 of the Draft Protocol provides that the Protocol shall come into force thirty days after favourable votes have been received from two-thirds of the contracting parties to the Decision on the Accession of Japan, provided that Japan shall first have signed the Protocol.

Paragraph 3 of the Draft Decision provides that the Decision shall constitute a Decision of the CONTRACTING PARTIES on 11 August 1955 if the necessary votes have been received by that date.

While the language of the Protocol might be taken to mean that the thirty days would begin to run immediately upon receipt of the necessary votes, it was the intention of the drafters that, if the necessary votes should be received earlier than 11 August, that date should nevertheless be deemed to be the date on which they were cast and the decision taken. Therefore the earliest date on which the Protocol can come into force is thirty days after 11 August 1955.