ADMISSION OF LAOS AS A CONTRACTING PARTY TO THE
GENERAL AGREEMENT

Declaration by the Government of France pursuant
to Article XXVI:4(c)

The following communication, dated 13 September, has been received from the French Government:

"The French Government, having signed the Protocol of Provisional Application of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, notified the CONTRACTING PARTIES of the list of countries and territories of the French Union where the latter was applicable. Laos was included in that list.

"The Pau Agreements of 8 March 1949 empowered the Royal Government of Laos to negotiate and sign trade agreements and to establish customs legislation and regulations.

"Consequently, I beg to inform you that the French Government, in agreement with the Royal Government of Laos, intends to exercise its competence as recognized under Article XXVI:4(c) of the General Agreement, which reads as follows:

'If any of the customs territories, in respect of which a contracting party has accepted this agreement, possesses or acquires full autonomy in the conduct of its external commercial relations, such territory shall, upon sponsorship through a declaration by the responsible contracting party establishing the above-mentioned fact, be deemed to be a contracting party.'

"I beg you therefore to consider this communication as representing the declaration provided for under Article XXVI:4(c) and to notify the governments of the contracting parties accordingly.

"I should also be grateful if you would take steps to include the question of the admission of Laos in the agenda for the Eleventh Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, at which the French delegation will assume the sponsorship provided for under Article XXVI."