The item "Consular Formalities" on the Agenda for the Eleventh Session relates to the recommendation adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES on 7 November 1952 urging governments to abolish, as soon as possible, and in any case not later than 31 December 1956, all consular invoices and visas for commercial invoices, certificates of origin, manifests, etc. (BISD, First Supplement, page 25). As that date is now approaching it may be helpful to the CONTRACTING PARTIES in their consideration of this item to have a resume of the present situation. The following notes are based on the information reported by the Technical Group on Customs Administration at the Ninth Session (BISD, Third Supplement, page 91), on information subsequently received from governments concerned and on statements received in response to the request issued on 20 April 1956 in L/485.

1. Contracting Parties which maintain Consular Formalities for a considerable part of their import trade

Brazil

At the Ninth Session the delegate of Brazil stated that his Government accepted "the principle of the recommendation that consular intervention should no longer be required and had the matter under continuous and active study. It was, however, not yet possible for his Government to give effect to the recommendation because of the very considerable impact of such a decision upon long-established procedures and because it had not yet been possible to provide alternative measures providing the necessary guarantees against exchange and control abuses and falsification of statistical declarations." By letter dated 16 July 1956, Brazil has advised that "it does not see a possibility of modifying its position concerning consular formalities", since consular invoices are basic to the administration procedure for the importation of goods.

Chile

At the Ninth Session the delegate of Chile said that "the whole question of taxation and exchange including consular formalities was under review."
Cuba
In L/279/Add.3, the Government of Cuba advised that it was "not in a position to contemplate the abolition of consular formalities in the light of fiscal as well as of administrative reasons."

Dominican Republic, Haiti and Nicaragua stated that their Governments required the presentation of documents issued by consular authorities or endorsed by them.

Peru
The Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported that "for imports by post or by air no consular formality is required when the value of the imported goods does not exceed US $100 and when the value exceeds US $100 a commercial invoice endorsed with a consular visa is accepted instead of the consular invoice which is normally required."

Turkey
The Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported that a consular visa is required for all goods which enjoy contractual rates.

Uruguay
The Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported that no information had been received from the Government of Uruguay but subsequently a copy of the regulations relating to consular formalities was submitted (L/198/Add.11).

2. Contracting Parties which impose Consular Formalities only in certain circumstances

Belgium
By letter dated 16 July 1956, the Government of Belgium advised that, under a decision of 8 March 1956, the Central Licensing Office required that certificates of origin which are needed for imports of gloves of textile material originating in Hong Kong be visaed by the Belgian Consulate in Hong Kong. It is stated that this is the only case in which the Licensing Office imposes consular formalities on imports or exports.

Ceylon
The Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported that "consular visas are required for trans-shipped preferential goods not covered by a through bill of lading;" and that Ceylon had made arrangements to abolish this requirement by the end of 1956.

France
The Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported that the consular visa had been abolished for imports from certain countries which do not require commercial invoices to be endorsed and that this facility would be extended to all countries in that position; imports from many other countries were exempt from all consular formalities subject to
endorsement of commercial invoices; in addition, consignments of whatever origin not exceeding 50,000 French francs in value were exempt from consular formalities.

**Greece**

The Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported that "goods imported through a third country have to be accompanied by a consular certificate of origin if no certificate issued by the customs authorities is available."

**Indonesia**

At the Ninth Session the Technical Group reported that "consular invoices are required for imports of goods from Singapore." By letter dated 6 July 1956 the Government of Indonesia advised that there has been no change.

**Sweden**

The Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported that "consular visas are required only for imports for which health, veterinary or similar certificates are necessary." By letter dated 11 August 1956 Sweden advised that there has been no change.

**United States**

By letter dated 3 July 1956, the Government of the United States has reported as follows:

"As indicated in last year's report, the United States eliminated the requirement for consular certification of invoices, effective 1 October 1955. The few scattered requirements for declarations and certificates (not invoices) to be taken before consular officers have been further reduced during the past year. No fees are required for consular signatures and seals on these miscellaneous forms. The United States considers that its present regulations conform in all respects to the Standard Practices for Consular Formalities recommended by the CONTRACTING PARTIES."

3. **The Standard Practices recommended by the CONTRACTING PARTIES**

In connexion with the recommendation of 7 November 1952 the CONTRACTING PARTIES further recommended that, pending the total abolition of consular invoices and consular visas, governments should reduce progressively the incidence of consular fees and that certain standard practices should be observed by the consular authorities in the country of exportation (BISD, First Supplement, page 26).

In this connexion the Technical Group at the Ninth Session reported as follows:

"The Technical Group noted that Nicaragua and Peru levy a charge for the consular forms which cannot be regarded as the approximate cost of such forms. It was also noted that the consular fees imposed by Chile, Nicaragua and Turkey are a percentage of the invoice amount and not a flat charge as recommended by the Standard Practices. In the case of Brazil the fee is a progressive amount depending on the value. In the case of the Dominican Republic and Haiti, the cost of the consular forms and the consular fees are not known."