Sir,

I have the honour to forward, under separate cover, a copy of document G/70 recording the formal Decisions, Resolutions and Declarations of the CONTRACTING PARTIES in 1953, several of which, together with certain Decisions and Resolutions of the Seventh Session, require action by contracting parties during the coming months.

In order to enable governments to make the necessary arrangements for study and action upon these matters, I am setting out below a summary of the principal subjects on which the CONTRACTING PARTIES have requested that action be taken by governments before the Ninth Session.

1. Review of the Agreement

On 15 October 1954, or at a later date if so recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee on Agenda and Intersessional Business, the CONTRACTING PARTIES will initiate a review of the operation of the General Agreement upon the basis of the experience gained since it has been in provisional operation. In the light of this review they will consider to what extent it would be desirable to amend or supplement existing provisions of the Agreement and what modifications should be made in the arrangements for its administration. Accordingly, contracting parties were invited to submit written proposals and suggestions regarding this review at an early date and if possible not later than 1 July 1954.
2. **Plan for Reduction of Tariff Levels**

The report of the Intersessional Working Party on the reduction of tariff levels, which was submitted to the Eighth Session in document G/53, has been referred by the CONTRACTING PARTIES to governments for study and comment. The Ad Hoc Committee on Agenda and Intersessional Business has been instructed to make arrangements for the completion of the technical examination of this plan and of any other proposals that may be submitted, and to pursue, at such time as may seem appropriate having regard to the prospects of further progress in the process of tariff reduction, the examination of the questions of principle raised by the proposals, against the background of the broader question of the adequacy of the present negotiating procedures. Governments will no doubt wish to make comments of two kinds on this report. It is clear that the views of governments on the questions of principle referred to above, i.e. the acceptability of the plan as a basis for further tariff reductions, may largely depend upon the questions of policy involved in the review of the Agreement and therefore are likely in many cases to be submitted only at such 'time as views on the latter. However, there would appear to be no reason why governments should not submit at an earlier date their views on the technical problems which have still to be resolved. It would greatly facilitate the work of the Intersessional Committee if these could be submitted as early as possible, say, by 1 March 1954.

3. **Subsidies**

Under Article XVI contracting parties are required to submit notification of subsidies which operate directly or indirectly to increase exports or to reduce importation. Notification of changes in existing measures and of new measures of subsidization should be submitted by 1 July 1954.

4. **Balance-of-Payments Questionnaire**

Pursuant to Article XIV:1 (g), the CONTRACTING PARTIES are required to report annually on the discriminatory application of those quantitative import restrictions which are maintained by governments under the provisions of Article XII. Contracting parties will have to bring up to date, not later than 14 July 1954, their answers to the questionnaire in 1/69 which they submitted in 1953. Governments which intend to initiate consultations under Article XIV:1 (g), will have to do so before the end of March 1954.
5. Nationality of Imported Goods

The CONTRACTING PARTIES have submitted to governments for study and comment the proposed definition of origin set out in document L/179. Contracting parties are invited to submit their comments not later than 1 August 1954. In addition, the CONTRACTING PARTIES have recommended certain practices for observance by governments in connection with their requirements as to proof of origin.

6. Documentary Requirements for the Importation of Goods

The code of standard practices for documentary requirements, which was adopted by the CONTRACTING PARTIES at their Seventh Session in 1952, is reproduced on page 24 of the First Supplement to the Basic Instruments and Selected Documents. Governments were asked by the CONTRACTING PARTIES to report not later than 1 August 1954 on steps they have taken to bring their practices into conformity with these standards.

7. Consular Formalities

At their Seventh Session in 1952 the CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted a Recommendation which calls for the abolition of consular invoices and consular visas not later than 1956 and provides rules to be observed by consular authorities pending such abolition. Governments which maintain consular formalities were asked by the CONTRACTING PARTIES to report not later than 1 September 1954 on steps taken towards their abolition.

In due course a more detailed request on each subject will be distributed, but meanwhile I hope that these notes will prove helpful to your departments.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

E. Wyndham White
Executive Secretary