Sir,

...... I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of document G/91 containing the formal Decisions, Resolutions, Declarations, and Recommendations approved by the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in 1954-55.

In order to enable governments to make the necessary arrangements for study and action which are required before the Tenth Session, I am setting out below a summary of the principal subjects which involve such action by contracting parties. This summary does not include action required of particular governments by decisions which are not of general applicability.

(i) Subsidies

Under Article XVI of the Agreement, contracting parties are required to submit notification of subsidies which operate directly or indirectly to increase exports or to reduce imports. In accordance with the established practice, notification of changes in existing measures or of new measures of subsidization should be submitted by 1 July 1955.

In this connexion I should like to call your attention to a recommendation agreed to by the CONTRACTING PARTIES on the scope of any future reports, which is set out in paragraph 16 of the Report of Review Working Party II of the Ninth Session (L/334).

(ii) Consular Formalities

At their Seventh Session in 1952 the CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted a recommendation which called for the abolition of consular invoices and consular visas not later than 1956, and recommended rules to be observed by consular authorities pending such abolition. Governments which maintained consular formalities were asked by the CONTRACTING PARTIES to report not later than 1 September each year on steps taken towards abolition.
(iii) Discriminatory Import Restrictions

Pursuant to Article XIV:1(g) the CONTRACTING PARTIES are required to report annually on the discriminatory application of quantitative import restrictions maintained by governments under the provisions of Article XII. For the purpose of preparing such a report in 1955, the CONTRACTING PARTIES agreed at their last Session that procedures previously adopted for this purpose should be continued. Accordingly, governments applying discriminatory restrictions pursuant to the provisions of Article XIV should provide revised answers to the questionnaire which is reproduced in Basic Instruments and Selected Documents, First Supplement, pages 46-48. Such revised answers should be sent to me three months prior to the opening of the Tenth Session, i.e. not later than 27 July 1955.

When agreeing to this procedure at the last Session, the CONTRACTING PARTIES specifically requested that governments supply on this occasion the fullest possible information on the questions asked in the questionnaire.

(iv) Notification of Modification of Restrictions

In discussing the question of implementing the provisions of Article XII of the Agreement the CONTRACTING PARTIES at their last Session once again called attention to the agreed rule requiring that any contracting party modifying its import restrictions furnish detailed information promptly to the Executive Secretary.

(v) Discrimination in Transport Insurance

In accordance with instructions given by the CONTRACTING PARTIES at the Eighth Session, the Executive Secretary presented to the Ninth Session a report on the subject of discrimination in transport insurance. That report concluded that whereas there was prima facie evidence of harmful effects of these practices on international trade, the available data were not sufficiently conclusive to warrant action at this stage. In adopting the suggestion that the matter be studies at the Tenth Session, the CONTRACTING PARTIES agreed that governments should be requested in the meantime to give consideration to the question of the real effects of such discrimination on their trade and to consult the insurance and commercial interests in their countries, so as to form an opinion as to the kind of international measure required, in preparation for a fruitful discussion at the next Session.

Accept, Sir, the assurance of my highest consideration,

E. Wyndham White,
Executive Secretary