Tariff Negotiations Committee

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE ON CONCLUSION OF JAPANESE TARIFF NEGOTIATIONS

Delegations which have any comments or suggestions to make on the attached press release are requested to give those comments to the secretariat Press Officer, Mr. R. Ford, not later than Monday, 23 May. If no substantive changes are suggested, the release will follow the form of the draft. If there are, a special session of the Tariff Negotiations Committee will be called for their consideration.
Tariff negotiations for the accession of Japan concluded

The tariff negotiations between certain contracting parties and Japan, which have been held at Geneva to enable Japan to accede to the General Agreement have been successfully concluded.

In July 1952 the Government of Japan requested an opportunity to enter into tariff negotiations with a view to acceding to the General Agreement. For various reasons it was not possible, in the intervening period, to arrange for the negotiations to be held. Early in their Ninth Session however the Contracting Parties agreed that tariff negotiations between Japan and contracting parties wishing to negotiate should open in February 1955.

The following countries took part in the negotiations:

The details of the tariff concessions granted by Japan or the other participating countries will be made public by the respective governments at a time to be decided in accordance with their appropriate domestic procedures.

In order to enable Japan to accede two legal instruments have been drawn up. A Protocol of Terms of Accession will be opened for signature at Geneva and, a Decision agreeing to the accession of Japan will be submitted to the vote of the Contracting Parties.

The Protocol of Accession sets out the terms under which Japan will accede to the Agreement and it follows the pattern of the earlier protocols of accession by which other countries have become contracting parties, following tariff negotiations. It provides that Japan will apply all the provisions of the General Agreement and give effect to the tariff concessions in the Schedule annexed to the Protocol. The Protocol will enter into force...
30 days after (a) Japan signs the Protocol and (b) favourable votes on the Decision have been received from two-thirds of the 34 governments which are contracting parties. The Protocol is open for signature at GATT headquarters, Geneva, from 7 June 1955 to 31 December 1955.

The Decision on Accession is based on Article XXXIII of the agreement which states that a government may accede to the Agreement on terms to be agreed between that government and the Contracting Parties and that a decision of the Contracting Parties on accession shall be taken by a two-thirds majority. The Decision states that:

1. the Contracting Parties agree to Japan's accession on the terms set out in the Protocol of Accession;
2. votes on the Decision must be received by the Chairman of the Contracting Parties at Geneva not later than 11 August 1955;
3. the Decision on the accession of Japan constitutes a decision of the Contracting Parties on 11 August 1955, provided that by that date favourable votes have been received from two-thirds of the contracting parties.