GATT STAFF REPRESENTATION

The staff meeting convoked by Communication No. 3 was held on 8 April 1957. The electoral group representing the P-grades was represented by 15 out of 16 staff members (not counting the Executive Secretary and his Deputy). The electoral group representing the G-grades was represented by 9 out of 19 members.

At the beginning of the meeting the point was stressed by the staff representatives that the best solution for organising the representation of the GATT staff would be to apply the UN Staff Association Statute for the GATT staff association with the changes necessary due to the fact that the GATT staff is less numerous than the staff of the UN. Such a solution seemed also to be appropriate since it matches the situation of the administration of GATT which follows in principle the UN staff rules. This meeting, therefore, was to be the first to be governed by the UN Staff Association rules.

In the sense of these rules, Mr. Staehle was elected chairman of this meeting, which dealt with the following items:

1. **Pension Fund**

   The staff appreciated with gratitude the efforts of the Executive Secretary to arrive at a satisfactory solution concerning the pension fund. It was however stressed that the value of any pension scheme is diminished as long as GATT does not apply permanent contracts and as long as these contracts are not ensured by legal protection.

2. **Permanent contracts**

   The staff drew attention to the fact that in the United Nations the use of the so-called temporary indefinite contract is now limited to very few exceptional cases. Although the GATT staff having temporary contracts...
consider themselves to be protected as if they would have permanent contracts, with the exception of those special situations which could occur from the fact that GATT is a provisional organization only, the staff nevertheless asked the staff representatives to take the necessary steps with the aim of altering the existing contracts into permanent contracts. This request was supported unanimously.

3. Appeals board and Tribunal

The staff was informed that discussions had taken place with the Administration concerning this problem (See Comm. no. 2). The proposal to have an appeals machinery similar to all other international organizations in Geneva is under consideration. The staff representatives explained that before taking action the administration would like to know the feeling of the staff on this question. A possible solution mentioned by the Administration (and the staff representatives thought that such a solution would be the best) was to conclude an agreement with one of the international tribunals - preferably with the ILO Tribunal - as other specialized agencies and similar organizations have done, and to provide only for an ad hoc appeals board (instead of a permanent board). The staff representatives were unanimously requested to take the necessary steps.

4. Staff Rules

The assembled staff acknowledged unanimously that they form a Staff Association and decided that the present staff representatives should prepare draft rules on the lines of the United Nations Staff Association Statute for approval at a subsequent meeting. The UN Rules will, however, have to be applied mutatis mutandis. The changes should be limited to such cases where the application of the United Nations Rules would be too complicated for such a small staff as GATT. It was pointed out by the staff representatives that the adopted rules will be submitted to the Executive Secretary for approval.

The meeting which opened at 18.10 p.m. was closed at 19 p.m.