GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

5 August 1957

COMMENTS BY CONTRACTING PARTIES ON QUESTIONS DISCUSSED AT HEADS
OF DELEGATIONS MEETINGS AT THE ELEVENTH SESSION

In response to GATT airgram No. 107 of 28 February 1957, and to
the circular letter from the Chairman of the CONTRACTING PARTIES
(MGT/54/57) dated 27 June, concerning the policy discussions at Heads
of Delegations meetings at the Eleventh Session (Spec/238/56), the
following statements have been received:

SWEDEN
(13 March 1957)

"As you remember, it was suggested last year that members of
governments should come together during the Eleventh Session. This
idea was received with positive interest, among others by Sweden.
Later on it became evident, however, that only very few ministers
from non-European countries would be able to be present, and - as it
was judged rather meaningless that almost only European ministers
should attend - the suggestion was dropped for the time being.

"We still consider the question decisive whether non-European
ministers will be able to be present or not. For this reason I
would very much appreciate, if you could give me your views on the
matter in due course, especially on the possibilities for extra-European
countries to be represented by members of governments during the twelfth
session."

FEDERATION OF RHODESIA AND NYASALAND
(21 March 1957)

"My Government endorses, in principle, the conclusions reached
by Heads of Delegations, but is unable to commit itself positively
on the question of Ministerial attendance at sessions of the CONTRACTING
PARTIES. A firm decision regarding the attendance of a Minister at
the Twelfth Session will consequently be made when it can be seen
whether the agenda for that Session will contain any items on which
discussion by Ministers is, in my Government's view, likely to be of
practical value."
The competent Austrian authorities have taken due note of Sir Claude Corea's report on the policy discussion of the heads of delegation during the 11th GATT session and are happy to be in a position to share the basic views expressed in the above report. They want to confirm their opinion that the important functions GATT has exercised so far as a stabilizing and regulating factor in world trade should be maintained and intensified. The prompt ratification of the Protocols of Amendment and of the OTC on the part of Austria is evidence of her willingness to put this opinion into practice.

Attention may be drawn also to the fact that the publicity efforts on behalf of GATT as advocated in point 3 of Sir Claude Corea's report have been carried on for years in Austria to the effect that the significance of GATT is now fully recognized in governmental, industrial and trading circles. This has been one of the reasons for the Austrian Minister of Trade to accept the invitation of GATT to participate at the 11th GATT session. The Austrian Minister of Trade is still disposed to participate at a meeting of Ministers of Trade at the 12th GATT conference.

With regard to the questions raised in point 4 F of Sir Claude Corea's report Austria is in agreement with the view that it is unfortunate that so far it has not been possible to find effective solutions to several important problems within the framework of GATT. However, it has to be pointed out that the Austrian GATT delegation has made extensive efforts in order to find a satisfactory solution of the particularly difficult problem of primary commodities. Furthermore, Austria is ready in principle to collaborate with other GATT members in the examination of important questions like restrictive business practices and administrative obstacles to trade. In this connection it will be necessary to keep in mind the fundamental principles of the General Agreement when trying to arrive at solutions able to harmonize the interests of the different contracting parties.

Finally, the concern of the Executive Secretary regarding the budget as expressed in point 4 G of the report is considered justified. This concern has to be taken into account when establishing the next budget of GATT without neglecting, however, the difficult financial situation of several contracting parties.

The Austrian GATT delegation will be charged, if need be, to specify the above general statement at the meeting of the Intersessional Committee or at the 12th GATT session."
CEYLON  
(24 June 1957)

"Ceylon's Minister for Commerce and Trade hopes to be able to be present at some time during the course of the Twelfth Session of the GATT.

"As regards the matters discussed at meetings of Heads of Delegations in the course of the Eleventh Session, the Government of Ceylon adheres to the principles of the GATT and concurs in the points on which there was a consensus of opinion among Heads of Delegations at the Eleventh Session. It would urge, in particular, that more attention should be paid by the CONTRACTING PARTIES to problems affecting the trade in primary commodities."

NORWAY  
(12 July 1957)

"Since the report dated 17th November 1956, on policy discussions at Heads of Delegations' meetings at the Eleventh Session was issued, Norway has taken further steps to liberalize its trade. The Agreement on the Organization of Trade Cooperation has been signed and a draft agreement on control of restrictive business practices is now being prepared and will be circulated to the CONTRACTING PARTIES in the near future.

"The Norwegian Government will revert to the further questions raised in your letter of 27th last during the next meeting of the Intersessional Committee.

"By these measures the Norwegian Government hopes to have made a certain contribution towards facilitating the attainment of the objectives of the General Agreement."

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA  
(26 July 1957)

"The policy discussions at Heads of Delegations meetings at the Eleventh Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES have been found most useful. My Government do not wish to raise any objections to the suggestions contained in the report of the 17th November, 1956, since in all important respects these suggestions are not at variance with my Government's policy and practice."
"In connection with the September meeting of the Intersessional Committee, it is assumed that, should it appear that all or most Ministers are prepared to attend the Twelfth Session, recommendations will be made regarding attendance by them and an agenda for the Session. I may mention that the responsible South African Minister will in any event be in Switzerland during the first part of the Twelfth Session and will, depending on the recommendation of the Intersessional Committee, attend the first part of the Session as leader of the South African Delegation."