At the last meeting of the Heads of delegations, the representative of Sweden gave certain indications as to the progress of the negotiation of the European Free Trade Association, and announced the intention of the seven governments concerned to submit the Convention to the CONTRACTING PARTIES under paragraph 7 of Article XXIV soon after it was signed.

The representative of Sweden indicated that it would be for the CONTRACTING PARTIES to decide on the methods to be applied in the examination of the Convention. He went on to suggest that there might be advantage in following the procedure adopted in the case of the Treaty of Rome where questions were coordinated and submitted to the Governments prior to the examination of the Treaty.

It seems to me also that there would be advantage in following this procedure and I would therefore put forward the following proposals as a basis for discussion:

Assuming that the Treaty was made available to the secretariat on or around 15 December, it should be in the hands of contracting parties in both working languages by the end of the year. The governments will need time to study the text and I would suggest that they should have until 31 January 1960 to communicate their questions to the secretariat. The secretariat would then need a few days to collate the questions received and submit them to the seven governments parties to the Convention. It might be expected therefore that the collated questions would be transmitted to the governments concerned by 15 February 1960. I would suggest that the replies to the questions should be communicated by 15 March 1960. It might then be desirable to have a short meeting of the Intersessional Committee, possibly immediately following the spring meeting of Committee III, at which there would be an opportunity for dealing with any questions arising out of the exchange of questions and answers, and for deciding any points necessary to prepare for the consideration of the Convention by the CONTRACTING PARTIES, presumably at their spring session. Nothing in these procedures would of course preclude the right of any contracting party, in accordance with the normal procedures, to call for a more extended meeting of the Intersessional Committee, or even for a special session if it was considered that the problems arising out of the exchange of questions and answers made such a course desirable.

To summarize, the programme would be as follows:

- 15 December: Convention to be communicated to Executive Secretary
- 31 December: Text of Convention to be communicated by Executive Secretary
to contracting parties
- 1960:
- 31 January: Questions to be submitted by contracting parties
- 15 February: Questionnaire to be submitted to the parties to the Convention
- 15 March: Replies to be submitted by parties to the Convention
- 28 March: Meeting of Intersessional Committee

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