Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acquaint you with the Decision which was adopted at the eighteenth session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) concerning the commercial policy problems of newly-independent States. In accordance with this Decision, the CONTRACTING PARTIES have instructed me to inform the countries concerned that they are ready to furnish them with advice and guidance on matters falling within the competence and jurisdiction of GATT, and they have authorized me, in consultation with the Council, to take the necessary steps to respond to such requests as may come forward.

The principles which have been adopted to organize and implement this new advisory service of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the General Agreement are defined in note L/1458 and Add.1, the text of which is attached to the present communication. As you will see, the methods which may be adopted in answer to the requests submitted are very elastic and make it possible to respond to the most varied requests. Furthermore, it has been emphasized at the debates in the Council and among the CONTRACTING PARTIES that all decisions concerning methods of technical assistance, including the choice of experts, should be taken in close consultation with each country having recourse to the advisory services of GATT. Lastly, it has been stressed that the secretariat should only deal with the technical aspects of requests for assistance.

If your Government is interested in this new initiative of the CONTRACTING PARTIES, I should be very glad to supply it with any further explanations it may desire, and I am at your disposal to examine with you the concrete possibilities of consultation which we could organize in GATT at your Government's request.
I should also like to emphasize that the organization of these advisory services does not duplicate the activities of the United Nations and of the other specialized agencies dealing with technical assistance, and that we are working in close liaison with the Technical Assistance Bureau and the United Nations Technical Assistance Organization.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

For the Executive Secretary:

J. Royer,
Deputy Executive Secretary.