JOINT STATEMENT

by the member States of the
European Coal and Steel Community
to the contracting parties
to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade

"The Member Countries of the European Coal and Steel Community consider that the provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade should take account of the developments of supra-national economic communities such as the ECSC.

"Shortly after the creation of the ECSC, the CONTRACTING PARTIES granted a waiver of the most-favoured-nation clause in order to allow the Community to function, considering the latter to constitute an exceptional case justifying the application of Article XXV. It seems however, to the Member Countries that the evolution of international relations ought to result in supra-national communities being considered not as exceptional cases, but as a new juridical fact to be recognized by an adaptation of the provisions of the General Agreement on the basis of the principles proclaimed in paragraph 4 of Article XXIV of the General Agreement.

"When certain contracting parties establish among themselves economic communities in which they abandon all or a part of their sovereignty in certain fields, they achieve a closer integration of their economies.

"In the General Agreement there are no provisions which explicitly take account of this situation, as communities of this sort did not exist when the General Agreement was signed and as GATT rules were established only for international trade.

"Countries participating in a community might on this account experience some difficulty in continuing to carry out in respect of other contracting parties certain obligations arising out of the present provisions of the General Agreement.

"The Member Countries have no definite proposals to submit to the CONTRACTING PARTIES at present and they therefore do not wish for a discussion on this point for the time being. They reserve their right to raise the question at a later date.