

an Organization for Trade Co-operation. The main function of the Organization will be to administer the General Agreement. The agreement will enter into force, and the Organization will be established among the governments that have accepted it, after it has been accepted by governments whose territories account for 85 per cent of the total external trade of the Contracting Parties as a whole. At the end of 1955 the agreement to establish the Organization for Trade Co-operation had not entered into force.

#### ACCESSION OF JAPAN

At the ninth session the Contracting Parties also decided to undertake tariff negotiations to enable Japan to accede to the General Agreement. These negotiations between 18 Contracting Parties and Japan were held at Geneva between February and June 1955 and resulted in the accession of Japan on 10 September. At that time 14 Contracting Parties invoked Article XXXV of the Agreement which enabled them to withhold the application of GATT to Japan. This action was a subject of discussion at the 10th session (see below). With the accession of Japan the number of Contracting Parties increased to 35.

#### TENTH SESSION OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

The 10th session of the Contracting Parties was held at Geneva from 27 October to 3 December 1955. The regular business of the session included:

1. Consultation with Contracting Parties which maintain discriminatory import restrictions for the purpose of safeguarding their balance of payments.
2. Annual reports from certain governments and from the European Coal and Steel Community on waivers from GATT obligations granted to them at earlier sessions.
3. New requests for waivers: in one important case Belgium undertook to eliminate quantitative restrictions on imports of agricultural products by the end of 1962.
4. Complaints of breaches of GATT obligations.

Most of the complaints on the agenda of the session were settled or withdrawn and it was not necessary to set up a panel on complaints

which had functioned at previous sessions. There was, however, serious criticism of the compensatory tax on imports which is levied by the French Government on products which are freed from quantitative restrictions when imported from Member countries of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation, and a resolution was adopted calling on the French Government to report to the GATT Inter-sessional Committee on steps taken to reduce or abolish this tax.

At this session the Contracting Parties completed the arrangements for a tariff negotiating conference to begin in Geneva on 18 January 1956. The target date for the completion of the tariff negotiations was set for 1 May 1956.

Further work was done at the 10th session in the field of reducing administrative barriers to trade and also towards reducing discrimination in transport insurance. A draft of an international agreement on commodity problems which would establish a set of principles and procedures for the future negotiation of individual commodity arrangements was discussed. The Contracting Parties also discussed problems related to the disposal of surplus agricultural products, arising from a resolution on this subject adopted at the ninth session. Consultations were held between Japan and certain delegations with a view to resolving the position that arose from the invoking of Article XXXV by 14 Contracting Parties. It was decided to continue these consultations and to review the matter at the 11th session in October 1956.

#### PUBLICATIONS

In 1955 the secretariat of GATT published *International Trade 1954*, a report which presents the work of GATT against a comprehensive account of the main development in international trade in 1954, with extensive statistical material. Following the review of the agreement the secretariat published *Final Act and Protocols, and Agreement on the Organization for Trade Co-operation; Basic Instruments, Volume I (Revised)*, which contains the text of the Agreement after the amendments will have entered into force; and the *Third Supplement to Basic Instrument*, which contains the Decisions and Resolutions and other documentation of the ninth session.