

**GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE**

RESTRICTED

L/484

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SAMPLES CONVENTION

Views of Contracting Parties on the Question relating
to "Minimum Facilities"

At their Tenth Session the CONTRACTING PARTIES adopted a report (L/455) dealing, inter alia, with a question which had been referred to them by the Customs Co-operation Council in Brussels. A government considering adherence to the Convention had enquired whether its adoption would preclude the maintenance of facilities which were more liberal than those required by the Convention. The representatives of those contracting parties to GATT which had ratified or acceded to the Convention stated that it had not been the intention of their governments, when the Convention was drawn up, that its adoption should result in the restriction of any wider facilities which might be granted by any government. The CONTRACTING PARTIES, desiring to ascertain whether those governments which had ratified or acceded to the Convention but which were not contracting parties to the General Agreement concurred with this interpretation, instructed the Executive Secretary to communicate with those governments (namely Egypt, Spain and Switzerland) inviting them to associate themselves with it.

The Governments of Egypt and Switzerland have submitted the following replies to the enquiry addressed to them, but no reply has thus far been received from the Government of Spain.

Egypt

"The Egyptian Government would be prepared to accept the following addition to the Convention: 'The terms of this Convention set out minimum facilities. It is not the intention of the contracting states to restrict the wider facilities which are granted or may be granted by certain of them.'"

Switzerland

"The facilities provided for under an international convention are regarded by our administration as minimum facilities to be accorded. Therefore, the accession of Switzerland to such a convention would neither entail a withdrawal of wider facilities provided for under our domestic legislation nor restrict the scope thereof.

"We are, however, of the opinion that each individual convention should contain a clause providing explicitly that the convention shall not entail the withdrawal of more liberal provisions previously accorded by signatory countries."

