

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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ACCESSION OF SWITZERLAND

Request from the Government of Switzerland

The following communication dated 15 September 1956 has been received from the Government of Switzerland. In accordance with the decision of the Intersessional Committee, this question has been included in the Provisional Agenda for the Eleventh Session.

"Since the conclusion of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Switzerland has always shown the deepest interest for the work of the CONTRACTING PARTIES and for the General Agreement itself. Heretofore, Switzerland has always regretted her inability to take a more direct part in the important work of the CONTRACTING PARTIES and to accede to the General Agreement.

"One of the reasons for our abstention has been the inability of the Swiss Government to initiate tariff negotiations with the contracting parties. We think that by the close of 1956, the revision of our customs tariff which was begun several years ago will be completed. Switzerland would then be prepared to open tariff negotiations with the contracting parties during the second half of 1957; with a view to becoming more closely associated with their work. Such negotiations would be based on the new draft Swiss Customs Tariff, as approved by the Federal Council.

"In view of the special problems which the Observer for Switzerland has had occasion to analyze at the Review Session, the Federal Council would prefer that the solution to these problems be reserved during the tariff negotiations and that a solution be envisaged possibly at a later date.

"The Swiss Federal Council would therefore welcome a decision by the CONTRACTING PARTIES enabling its representatives to initiate the accession procedure at the Eleventh Session, in accordance with Article XXXIII of the General Agreement. The Swiss Federal Council would be grateful if the terms for the provisional accession of our country to the General Agreement could be agreed between the CONTRACTING PARTIES and the Swiss representatives."