

GATT/AIR/68

18 JULY 1955

SUBJECT: DECISION ON THE ACCESSION OF JAPAN TO THE GENERAL AGREEMENT

UNDER THE TERMS OF THE DRAFT DECISION, WHICH WAS TRANSMITTED TO CONTRACTING PARTIES TOGETHER WITH THE PROTOCOL ON THE TERMS OF ACCESSION DATED 7 JUNE 1955, VOTES ON THE DECISION MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES AT GENEVA NOT LATER THAN 11 AUGUST 1955. THE DECISION CANNOT TAKE EFFECT BEFORE THAT DATE. SINCE UNDER ITS TERMS THE PROTOCOL OF ACCESSION CANNOT ENTER INTO FORCE UNTIL THE THIRTIETH DAY AFTER A FAVOURABLE VOTE HAS BEEN CAST, THE EARLIEST DATE ON WHICH JAPAN CAN BECOME A CONTRACTING PARTY WILL BE 10 SEPTEMBER 1955.

THERE WILL UNDERSTANDABLY BE CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC INTEREST IN JAPAN'S ACCESSION, AND AN IMPORTANT QUESTION THEREFORE ARISES AS TO THE TIMING AND CONTENT OF ANY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS RELATING TO IT. SO FAR AS THE SECRETARIAT IS CONCERNED I WOULD PROPOSE TO ANNOUNCE ON 11 AUGUST ONLY WHETHER THE REQUIRED MAJORITY HAS BEEN RECEIVED WITH NO INDICATION OF THE WAY IN WHICH PARTICULAR CONTRACTING PARTIES HAVE VOTED. I WOULD INDICATE AT THE SAME TIME THAT ANY FURTHER DETAILS AS TO THE ATTITUDE OF INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTING PARTIES TO JAPAN'S ACCESSION WOULD BE MADE AT THE TIME JAPAN'S ACCESSION BECOMES EFFECTIVE, I.E. ON 10 SEPTEMBER 1955. I WOULD HOPE THAT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE FOR INDIVIDUAL CONTRACTING PARTIES TO FOLLOW THE SAME COURSE AND I SHOULD BE GRATEFUL TO KNOW IF THIS WOULD PRESENT SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES FOR ANY CONTRACTING PARTY.

E. WYNDHAM WHITE