

Tokyo Session of GATT

The Fifteenth Session of the Contracting Parties of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) was held in Tokyo from October 26 to November 21. This was the first regular session to be held anywhere but at GATT headquarters in Geneva. In accordance with a custom established during recent years, the conference began with a three-day meeting of Ministers from most of the Contracting Parties.

Ministerial statements dealt with five main themes:

- (a) The need to do away promptly with trade discrimination and to remove remaining import restrictions, in keeping with the improved balance-of-payments position of most Contracting Parties;*
- (b) the importance of pressing on with the GATT programme for the expansion of trade — in particular, the solution of the problems of under-developed countries;*
- (c) the problem of imports from low-cost countries;*
- (d) the significance of the European Economic Community (EEC) and of the proposed European Free Trade Association (EFTA);*
- (e) the harmful effects of agricultural protectionism.*

Mr. Léon Balcer, Solicitor General of Canada, represented the Canadian Government at the Ministerial Meeting. The text of his important statement on current international trading problems follows:

BOTH CANADA and Japan are countries of the Pacific. Japan is one of Canada's most important markets and my country is a growing importer of Japanese goods. We value our trade relations with Japan and the close links between our two countries. Canada and Japan have exchanged most-favoured-nation treatment through the GATT. We have found that, when problems arise in our trade, it is possible, in a friendly and constructive way, to find workable solutions acceptable to both countries. We look forward to a steady growth in trade in both directions to the mutual advantage of our two countries. We are most grateful for the hospitality of the Japanese Government on the important occasion of the Fifteenth Session, and especially in connection with the current meeting of Trade Ministers. I trust our deliberations will be as fruitful as our reception in Japan has been gracious and generous.

Canada continues to attach great importance to the basic principles and objectives of the General Agreement and their faithful implementation. This flows naturally from our profound interest in international trade and from the conviction that trade problems are best dealt with on the broadest possible multilateral basis. The GATT embraces over forty countries, which together are responsible for 90 percent of world trade. At this Session, we welcome the participation of Israel