I wish to join the honourable representatives of contracting parties who have spoken before me and to say how much we appreciate the significance and importance of the Tariff Conference which is opening today and whose main objective is to bring about, in full conformity with the objectives of the General Agreement, conditions conducive to an expansion of international trade. My Government is fully aware of the complexity of our task, which is intended to achieve several purposes. In the first instance, it is our intention to endeavour to reach a satisfactory solution to the problems arising out of the introduction of the Common Tariff of the European Economic Community, on the basis of the provisions of Article XXIV of the General Agreement. In view of the primary importance of maintaining and expanding Austria's traditional trade with the members of the European Economic Community, my delegation will be particularly interested in the examination of the Common External Tariff under Article XXIV:5(a).

Furthermore, we shall also attach considerable importance to negotiations with a number of acceding countries, thereby contributing towards a more widespread application of the rules of the General Agreement.

On behalf of Austria, a country which in the past year has actively participated in the determination of the rules and procedures for the conduct of the fifth round of tariff negotiations, I take great pleasure in voicing here today the satisfaction which my Government feels at the opening of this Conference, which, they hope, will yield fruitful results.

Success will attend us to the extent that we shall succeed in lowering customs tariffs in the course of the general round of negotiations scheduled to begin in January 1961.

I beg you to believe, Sir, that the Austrian delegation will make every possible endeavour to contribute to the success of this conference on a mutually advantageous basis, in the spirit of frankness and friendship which is so familiar to us and which we appreciate so much in GATT.