The following remarks were made by the Chairman, Mr. Johan Melander, Norway, at the final plenary meeting of the Sixth Session:

"It has been the practice of my predecessor as Chairman of the Contracting Parties at the close of the session to review the work that had been done and the principal developments in the work of the Contracting Parties since the previous session. This, I think, is a good practice, since it is useful for all of us to assess the progress we are making towards the objectives which we have set ourselves in the General Agreement.

"In the first place, we must note with considerable satisfaction that the ranks of the contracting parties have been strengthened by the accession of Austria, Germany, Peru and Turkey. We look forward to the time when the other countries which negotiated at Torquay - Korea, the Philippines and Uruguay - will also take their places round this table.

"All of us will regret that at this Session the Contracting Parties have had to take note of such a serious deterioration in relations between two of the contracting parties that they have felt it necessary to relieve these contracting parties of their obligations to each other. We must all of us hope that the circumstances which have led to this deterioration will in the near future change and that before very long we may see the end of this abnormal situation.

"Looking back over the six sessions which have taken place, each of them appears as an important stage in the development of this great experiment in international cooperation. The Sixth Session is no exception. We have had a large number of issues before us of very diverse character, including issues of great importance.

"I would refer in the first instance to the question of the administration of the Agreement. I think that, as the result of the discussions in Torquay and here, as we have reviewed the operation of the Agreement in the light of our past experience, we have come to the conclusion that it would be premature to take decisions of a permanent character and premature also to open up at the present time the sort of discussion which in due course will take place regarding the future of the Agreement in accordance with Article XXIX. The time is not, however, far distant when we shall wish to conduct that examination and I suggest that, in the intervening period we should all set our minds seriously to work on the problem. There are undoubtedly some improvements which can be made in the light of our experience. There are a great many changes which many contracting parties would also like to make because of problems in which they have a special interest. But let us, in considering all these possibilities, always bear in mind the importance of not throwing away the ground which we have so painfully won. This mechanism of the Contracting Parties for free and equal consultation on questions of commercial policy is an international development of the first importance. The questions are difficult and delicate. The progress in finding solutions for them will necessarily be slow and difficult. It, therefore, we should avoid the sin of complacency we should also beware of undue pessimism."
"I turn now to some of the other issues which have come up here. First I would like to refer to the work which has been done on the International Chamber of Commerce Resolutions. This I regard as a development of considerable importance, since, together with the standard practices which were adopted at the Fifth Session, it represents the first steps taken by the Contracting Parties acting jointly to carry out obligations contained in Article VIII of the Agreement. This, it seems to me, is a most profitable field for future work by the Contracting Parties and the way in which these questions were tackled at the present Session is a happy augury for our efforts in this field in the future.

"We have also agreed upon procedures which will enable negotiations to take place with countries which are not yet contracting parties but who wish to accede to the Agreement without having to wait until we are ready to embark on a further full-scale tariff conference, which will certainly not be for some years ahead.

"We have also established procedures whereby the results of negotiations between individual contracting parties who wish to add to their schedules to the Agreement can achieve this result.

"Also in the tariff field we have had to face other important problems. The discussion of the question of disparities in the level of European tariffs which was raised at Torquay and further considered at a special session led to the presentation of an important proposal from the French Delegation for automatic reductions in tariffs on a world-wide basis. Arrangements have been made for the examination of this plan and also in connection with the examination of the problem which has been before us for a considerable time, i.e. the position of the low-tariff countries.

"In the field of quantitative restrictions we have carried out the review of restrictions being maintained under the balance-of-payment provisions as required by Article XII:4(a). We cannot regard the report resulting from this review as being an entirely satisfactory document but it is probably the best that could be expected in the circumstances in which the review had to be carried out. More important developments in this field will occur in the course of the next few months when first of all the International Monetary Fund will be carrying on consultations with its members regarding exchange controls maintained by them and, in due course, when the Contracting Parties in their turn consult with certain contracting parties regarding discrimination in the application of import restrictions.

"Finally, we have had brought before us at this Session a number of cases in which individual contracting parties have taken action contrary to the provisions of the Agreement. In each of these cases the contracting party concerned has given assurances of making active efforts to remedy the situation. These represented serious tests of the General Agreement and if, when we meet again at the opening of the Seventh Session we find that these cases have in fact been resolved, I think we shall be able to feel with justification that the Agreement is proving itself.

"I would like to thank the representatives of the contracting parties for their assistance to me as Chairman. The constructive and helpful attitude of the representatives has made my task both an easy and a pleasant one."