STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. FERDINANDO STORCHI,
UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN TRADE, ITALY,
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We have listened with great interest to the statements made at the meeting yesterday and which - thanks also to your action, Mr. Chairman - made a major contribution to the provision of a concrete basis for our discussion.

A policy in favour of countries in the process of economic development has for a long time already been a permanent feature of action by the Italian Democratic Governments over the past twelve years.

Although we are now confronted with a special situation by reason of the fact that we are precisely on the eve of the formation of a new Government, I believe that I can state here that such a policy will be pursued also by the next Italian Government and can be made effective through direct bilateral trade and financial means and as a result of the policy pursued by our Community and by the international organizations of which Italy is a member.

In this attitude, Italy is firmly guided by the conviction that the problem should be considered through this global approach to which the President of the Council of the EEC, Mr. Schaus, abundantly referred in his statement yesterday.

Furthermore, all this is in full conformity - and I am glad to stress it here - with the orientation of the work of the last meeting of the Council of Ministers of the OECD which agreed on the need for action, either from the point of view of financial intervention or as regards an expansion of commercial exchanges.
Indeed, if we wish truly to tackle with determination and realism the fundamental problem of the developing countries, we must at the same time act at all the levels of production, trade, economy and finance, and not limit ourselves only to a solution focussing on trade liberalization.

Having expressed the general views of my delegation, I should now like to say a few words concerning other more specific considerations relating to certain points in the Programme of Action included under item I of the agenda:

1. As regards tariff and non-tariff obstacles, the proposal for a standstill seems to us to be a reasonable one.

2. As regards quantitative restrictions, I am glad to recall here that in Italy such restrictions on imports of interest to the developing countries have long been eliminated.

3. As regards the problem of fiscal duties and internal charges, we have listened with close attention to the statements made in this respect by several delegations and in particular by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, which has not failed to stress how the strong fiscal pressure existing in Germany cannot but influence possibilities for reduction of such fiscal charges. While, for the same reasons, it has not yet been possible for the Italian Government to reduce such charges, there is no doubt that consumption increases have brought about a considerable expansion in imports of tropical products. As regards coffee, for instance, the increase over the last four years has been by about 300,000 quintals, representing an increase of nearly 40 per cent.

I should like in any case to assure you that the problem is followed with the closest attention by the Italian authorities who are fully aware of the position of the developing countries in this respect.

As regards the other points relating to tariff policy we can only recall the statement made yesterday afternoon here by our Community.

Allow me in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, to reaffirm that the Italian Government will make every possible valid contribution to the success of the work which will follow our discussion.