Item I: Measures for the Expansion of Trade of Developing Countries as a Means of Furthering their Economic Development

My country, Tanganyika, became a Member of GATT two years ago, that is, immediately on regaining our political independence. We became Members of GATT because we believed in it and in the potential capacity which it has for solving many of the trade problems which are facing the world today. We were not deterred by the criticism which is usually levelled at the GATT that it is the "rich man's club", just as much as we had not been deterred from becoming members of the United Nations because some people referred to it as a "talking shop" and the "Big Five Powers Club". We in Tanganyika still feel that GATT can solve many of the world trade problems provided its Members have the will and the determination to solve these problems.

I came to this meeting with a great hope because I thought that all the contracting parties would approve the eight-point programme of action which has been laid before us - a programme entitled "Measures for the Expansion of Trade of Developing Countries as a Means of Furthering their Economic Development".

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Because of this hope most of us have come to Geneva from long distances putting aside urgent work in our respective countries to join contracting parties to provide evidence that we are terribly concerned at the trend of affairs as revealed in the well-known various studies regarding the problems that less-developed countries are facing today in the realm of international trade and economic development.

When we deal with the problems of developing countries we are dealing with a problem which is as big, if not bigger and as serious, if not more serious, than the disarmament question. We cannot talk of world peace without talking of solutions to the problems of developing countries! Many advanced countries have given and continue to give assistance, financial, technical, and military, to developing countries with a view to helping the latter to develop their economies. How can you give a country money and experts to enable it to develop its agricultural potential and resources and at the same time impose restrictions on the exports resulting from such aid? How can you give money and experts to a country to enable it to industrialize on the one hand and on the other adopt measures which will frustrate and strangle the industries which have been established? To me this does not make sense.

One prominent speaker said yesterday that tariffs and internal taxes on imports from less-developed countries could not be relaxed because revenue was needed for creating funds which would be used to aid less-developed countries. Is this not a contradiction in terms? To me, it sounds rather unbecoming for a very rich country to extract revenue from the products of a country whose income per capita is in the order of £13 to £20 per annum and feel happy about it.

One or two speakers have emphasized a fact which is not in dispute. They have said that it is important for the developed countries to see to it that their economies remain sound for all time if these countries are to continue to be what they are vis-à-vis the less-developed countries. Are these speakers seriously suggesting that the action programme which we have submitted for their implementation will have the effect of damaging their economies? This would be a very curious submission by countries which are so technologically advanced at a time when all we are asking them to do is to buy our primary products and simple semi-processed products. After all the whole purpose of giving aid to less-developed countries is to make these countries less and less dependent on aid from the developed countries.

I am fully aware of the obligations which the EEC countries have towards the Associated African States under the Convention of Association. I am also aware of the moral obligation which the United Kingdom has towards the less-developed countries of the Commonwealth of Nations. All these obligations, whether they take the form of financial aid or preferential treatment in trade
or both are calculated to assist the economic development of the less-developed countries and in the absence of satisfactory alternatives it would be unfair on our part to ask the beneficiaries to forgo the benefits accruing from these obligations. But both the benefactors and the beneficiaries aspire to be faithful Members of GATT and if all of us have the will and the determination, we should be able to moot out an alternative plan which could satisfy all the less-developed countries. I am also aware of the assistance of all kinds which the United States extends to the Latin American group of developing countries; but let us not forget that all these groupings of certain advanced countries with a particular group of developing countries do tend to create divisions which could very easily create an awkward political situation.

I am convinced myself that if the advanced countries of the world were to adopt and implement the eight-point action programme which has been suggested, that is, the abstention from the imposition of new tariff and non-tariff barriers, elimination of quantitative restrictions, duty-free entry for tropical products, reduction and elimination of tariff barriers to exports of semi-processed and processed products from less-developed countries, etc., they would be solving a big human problem. And so, I do earnestly urge the advanced countries to accept the action programme. In this regard I congratulate the United Kingdom Government representative, the United States representative and others who have pledged their support.

When I was a child, my parents used to tell me that Geneva was an ideal place for convalescents to go to and recuperate. We, who have gathered here represent a world which is sick and I do hope that we have come here to make it recuperate. When is man going to stop being inhuman to his fellow man and develop relationships whereby man can live with his fellow man in peace and security?

I say that the eight-point action programme has the green light! For the world - here is the challenge of a great idea! For the eight-point action programme - here is the challenge of world opportunity!

I would like to end by repeating the Chairman's own words: "It is no exaggeration to say that, no matter whether our work is going to meet with success or failure, the world will not be quite the same as before!"