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AT BRUSSELS, CONGO (LEOPOLDVILLE)
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Item I: Measures for the Expansion of Trade of Developing Countries as a Means of Furthering their Economic Development

My delegation has great pleasure in stating that it has carefully examined the report of Committee III which is before this meeting. The report is of obvious interest, and in particular certain parts of it which constitute a new approach in the search for constructive and adequate solutions and in regard to implications which are inevitable, at least, if one considers the present situation of many of the less-developed countries.

I believe it may be of interest, Mr. Chairman, to emphasize that among what we generally refer to as the less-developed countries there are some which are particularly less developed and that solutions considered adequate for certain countries for all problems connected with under-development may only become so at a much later stage in the case of certain other less-developed countries. We are asking for increased export earnings and what we want is an effective increase.

In this respect I have greatly appreciated the statements made so far by delegations whose reflections have not been limited to one or other aspect of these problems. They rightly believe that these problems should be tackled in a general manner.
All these problems have been touched upon, if not taken up, in the various documents prepared by the GATT secretariat. I believe that all the delegations present here are aware of this. By way of example, I may recall that in his remarkable statement the Brazilian Minister for Commerce referred to the discouraging international trade statistics published in the United Nations "Monthly Bulletin of Statistics". The table shows a sharp rise in the volume of exports of primary products including those of tropical origin, while in the same period the export earnings of the exporting countries fell by 8 per cent.

It is clear, therefore, that the problem is one of erosion of prices of the raw materials imported by the industrialized countries and those prices should be stabilized before we envisage taking the risk of embarking on trade liberalization so long as no effective system of market control has been agreed upon. Such measures would undoubtedly have consequences as severe as anything we know today.

I was also glad to hear the Minister representing Ghana point out that while it had granted duty-free entry to imports of certain tropical products, the United Kingdom Government had made good the loss in customs revenue by means of a tax on consumption of those products; I could give many more similar examples taken from statements made in this assembly. This clearly shows that an adequate solution must be found to the problems before us by considering the situations pertaining to the economies of each of our less-developed countries so that solutions appropriate to each of our problems can lead to general resolutions which would meet the needs of all the less-developed countries in an equitable manner. For that, it is necessary to complete studies of these problems which are as yet unfinished. In other words, simultaneous solutions must be found to the problems before us:

- problem of stabilization of prices on world markets, problem of organization of markets, problem of agricultural policies involving subsidies or protectionism on the part of highly developed countries;

- problem of the interchangeability of raw materials which causes hesitation among less-developed countries desirous of diversifying their agriculture, substitution of consumption taxes for customs duties;

- aid to infant industries in our less-developed countries. Indeed this industrialization calls for specific standards and the highly industrialized countries must show towards the efforts of the less-developed countries the sympathy which they deserve.

Small-scale customs preferences are only a minor point among all the more important matters before us.
May I say here in all modesty that we, the States associated with the European Economic Community, belong to a group of less-developed countries whose national economic situation as we all know does not permit us to accept unconditionally at this meeting any resolutions of general scope, having regard to the fact that the Special Group agreed that the commodity studies made under the terms of reference given to it by Committee III should be supplemented. I am glad to say that from many of the statements made, I have gained the impression that save for a few differences of view we, the less-developed countries, are on the way to tackling the real problems jointly, and within the framework of GATT we know that the secretariat has always spared no effort to seek adequate solutions to our problems. On behalf of my country, I call on the highly developed countries to assist the GATT secretariat in its difficult task by considering effective practical measures with respect to the difficult economic situation of the less-developed countries.