1. On 23 October 1981 the following governments had accepted the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade under Article 15.1: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Denmark, European Economic Community, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United Kingdom on behalf of Hong Kong, United States. Argentina, Greece and Yugoslavia have accepted the Agreement subject to ratification. Tunisia has accepted the Agreement under Article 15.2.

2. Twenty-five contracting parties and three non-contracting parties have observer status. Five international organizations (IMF, UNCTAD, ISO, IEC and FAO/WHO Codex Alimentarius Commission) have attended meetings of the Committee in an observer capacity.

3. The Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade met on three occasions during the second year of operation of the Agreement.

4-5 February 1981 (TBT/M/6 and L/5112)
12 June 1981 (TBT/M/7 and L/5163)
20-22 October 1981 (TBT/M/8 and L/5217)

4. The Chairman of the Working Party established by the Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade at its fifth meeting (November 1980) to examine the request for accession presented by Bulgaria, a non-contracting party, under Article 15.3, presented a third progress report to the Committee at its eighth meeting, held on 20-22 October 1981 (TBT/4, TBT/5, TBT/7, TBT/9). The Committee noted a number of statements and the progress report of the Chairman of the Working Party (TBT/M/8, TBT/9). The Committee agreed to meet again, in normal or special session, when a report by the Working Party would be presented to it (TBT/M/8, and L/5217).

5. Signatories of the Agreement have reported regularly to the Committee on measures taken by them to implement and administer the Agreement (TBT/1/Add.1-29). The Committee has examined these reports at each of its meetings. In addition to questions relating to the application of the Agreement by governments and central government bodies, the Committee has discussed steps taken by signatories to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the Agreement by local government and non-governmental bodies (TBT/M/6, item E.1; TBT/M/7, item B; TBT/M/8, items C and D).
6. Among other issues to which the Committee devoted attention, the procedures for notification of technical regulations, standards and certification systems established under the Agreement were examined with a view to improving their efficiency. The Committee adopted a revised format for notifications, accompanied by guidelines for the provision of relevant information, which entered into force in August 1981. (TBT/M/7, item C, TBT/W/35)

7. The Committee discussed ways of improving the efficiency of information systems. Persons responsible for the enquiry points established under the Agreement attended the Committee meeting of 20-22 October. The Committee endorsed several technical proposals for improvement of the information and documentation system provided under the Agreement made by the enquiry point experts.

8. The Committee discussed technical assistance activities of signatories and agreed to keep this matter under review; delegations were invited to furnish information on their activities in this area on a continuing basis (TBT/M/7, item D).

9. The Committee also discussed the activities of regional standardizing and certifying bodies and the participation of signatories in them. A secretariat paper was circulated as TBT/W/30. The Committee agreed to collect some further information on these bodies (TBT/M/8).

10. The Committee discussed a proposal relating to private standardizing bodies and agreed that the secretariat should prepare a factual paper on major standards-writing and certifying bodies within signatories' territories (TBT/M/8).

11. On the basis of proposals from one delegation (TBT/W/24), the Committee considered the possibility of establishing an inventory of processes and production methods that could create technical barriers to trade. The Committee agreed that any submissions made by signatories would be circulated to other signatories.

12. The Committee completed its second annual review of the operation of the Agreement at the October 1981 meeting, according to the agreed format (TBT/M/3, Annex III), on the basis of factual documentation prepared by the secretariat (TBT/6, TBT/6/Suppl.1, TBT/W/25/Rev.2, TBT/W/31/Rev.1, TBT/W/28 and Suppl.1, TBT/W/37, TBT/8).

13. The Committee will hold its next meeting on 4-5 March 1982.