It gives me great pleasure to be given the opportunity as the leader of the Ghana delegation to address this august assembly on behalf of the Government of Ghana. The deliberations of this Session are of vital importance to us in Ghana and it is for this reason that I venture to address you at this time.

Included in the agenda which has been prepared for discussion at this Session are several matters of considerable importance to the Government of Ghana. First, and in our view most important, is the question of the Rome Treaty and the effect its provisions will have on trade between Ghana and the six Messina countries. You will already have heard at previous sessions the fears which we entertain about the effect of the proposed 9 per cent duty on imports of cocoa beans into the Rome Treaty countries from overseas producers who are not politically associated with the Treaty countries. We value the high level of both our export and import trade with the Treaty countries and we sincerely hope that steps will be taken during this Session to advance negotiations on what can be done to avoid damage to our mutual interests.

Ghana is also interested in the free trade area discussions although, as at present advised, we do not see that the creation of a free trade area will affect our overseas trading prospects to anything like the same extent as the Rome Treaty. As we see the position, Ghana's present exports to the United Kingdom, consisting as they do of cocoa, timber, bauxite, diamonds and limited quantities of oilseeds, will be unlikely to be affected by imports of such products to the United Kingdom from the rest of the free trade area.

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On the reverse side of the picture the only likely gain to Ghana would be in cases where our exports to the United Kingdom were processed into finished products which would find an improved market in other parts of the free trade area. Nevertheless, Ghana is fully aware of the importance of the free trade area to the United Kingdom and other prospective members and would not wish to stand in the way of any suitable arrangements which may be negotiated between the parties concerned.

The third item on the agenda, in which my delegation will be closely concerned, is the consultations proposed in regard to import restrictions now in force in Ghana. Here, I can say, that we have a most excellent record and one which we are certain will stand up to the closest scrutiny. In regard to the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation countries we achieved a very high level of liberalization some years ago and this has gradually been extended until it approximates to 100 per cent under present conditions.

Our imports from the dollar area, principally the United States and Canada, have increased in recent years owing to a progressive relaxation of licensing controls. More than three years ago we permitted imports of flour from North America to enter Ghana under Open General Licence. Two years ago we started a scheme to reserve 15 per cent of our dollar spending for the importation of non-essential consumer goods of practically every type. This scheme took some time to gain momentum but in 1957 we licensed one million dollars of such imports and this year the total is likely to be nearer two million dollars. For the rest we issue licences for all types of machinery and spare parts on a basis fully adequate for Ghana's requirements. In fact, in the last twelve months we have successfully introduced a scheme whereby importers are permitted to hold stocks of tractors, earth-moving equipment and motor vehicles in anticipation of demands from local users whose operations are regarded as important in the development of our country. And, I am happy to tell you that when I left Ghana a few days ago the Government were considering further relaxations of dollar controls along the lines of those announced by the United Kingdom Chancellor of the Exchequer at Montreal.

Finally, I want to say a few words about Ghana's trade with Japan. In this case we still maintain import licensing largely as a legacy of the arrangements which were in force prior to Ghana's Independence in March 1957. Despite this, Japanese imports into Ghana during 1957 were valued at £10.3 million. In fact, Japan has outpaced all other suppliers to the Ghana market and is now second in importance only to the United Kingdom which, I am glad to say, maintains its traditional position as our main supplier and the best customer for our exports. In case you are under the impression that our import restrictions against Japan are unduly restrictive I would only say that of the licences issued to importers for the trade year 1 October 1957 to 30 September 1958 only 54 per cent
utilization had been reported up to the end of July 1958. This figure includes forward bookings as well as actual imports and will be sufficient to illustrate that the present restrictions are largely a formality. Nevertheless, my Government does not wish to abolish these arrangements particularly as imports into Japan from Ghana are negligible under present conditions. (We trust that the Japanese Government will continue to do what it can to correct this position).

And, lastly, Ghana will be concerned in the discussion on the application of Article XXXV to Japan. This is a matter on which we find it essential to reserve our position. We are a very young country, largely dependent on agricultural production; for our export earnings, we are basically dependent on cocoa. During the past seven years the Ghana Government has been making strenuous attempts to diversify the economy by the creation of agricultural and consumer industries. This, as you know, is a slow process but we are hoping to forge ahead during the Second Five Year Development Plan which is due to start in July 1959. Up to the present a great deal of work has gone into the improvement of basic services - provision of water, electricity, trunk roads, now ports, railways - all of which are forerunners of industrial development. Now the industries are beginning to spring up and we certainly cannot expose them to the risk of competition from outside sources before they have grown strong enough to stand on their own feet. For these reasons we must continue to reserve our position under Article XXXV although we have no present intention of invoking its provisions.

I trust that I have not taken up too much of your time or spoken in too great detail on matters of primary interest to Ghana. Should this be so, I can only crave your indulgence, and assure you that my remarks are intended to illustrate the keen interest that we in Ghana take in the proceedings of this most important forum for international trade and our fervent desire to see its deliberations bear fruit in an expanding world economy. Thank you.