Speech by the Mayor of Annecy

Your Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen, for the first time in our town's history — though indeed it has been visited by eminent persons from almost every country in the world — it is our honour and pleasure to see it the venue of an international conference whose work will continue over several weeks.

May I, therefore, on behalf of the municipality and of our whole population, offer you a sincere and heartfelt welcome?

The eagerness with which each one of us has sought to give you a reception worthy at once of you all, of the nations you represent, and of our tradition of sterling hospitality, afford tangible proof of our joy and our legitimate pride at the honour which you have done us in choosing our resort for your session.

We hope that the restful background of our lake and mountains will lighten the tasks you have before you and will enable you in your hours of leisure to forget all the anxieties of your work, the importance and significance of which we all realise.

The hope that your conference will be completely successful is particularly dear to us as free men who have proved but recently and in the course of long and grievous months of occupation that we place our duty before all else. You will see indeed in our countryside as in our town the humble monuments or the glorious graveyards recalling the supreme sacrifice of the best of our people. But as happened all over France after those cruel years, we speedily and courageously took up our work again and thanks to the goodwill of all we were able in the course of two months to get ready the premises which you required and to rejuvenate our little town which prides itself on being one of the most beautiful in France.

You have made it your aim, within the framework of the United Nations, to re-organize world economy on rational, just and impartial lines through manifold and cordial contacts between nations. Believe me, every citizen of every one of your countries is grateful to you for undertaking that task.

Good luck to you then! May your labours be fruitful so that with the help of God you may restore to an uneasy world a little of the confidence and solidarity it needs to enable it to live in an atmosphere of peace, of honest work and of mutual understanding.

In conclusion, on this day of your inaugural meeting and the better to emphasize our respectful admiration for you, we should be happy if you would all do us the pleasure of coming presently to our civic home where we should like to make you the guests of honour of our town.