I am most grateful for being given an opportunity to address this meeting of Ministerial representatives of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the GATT.

I also greatly value the opportunity of coming to Tokyo and I should like to express my appreciation of the excellent arrangements which have been made for us by the Imperial Government of Japan. In Nigeria we have long been familiar with the products of Japanese industry, for Japan is our second largest supplier of imports, ranking next to the United Kingdom. During the few days that I have been here I have gained some idea of the way of life of the people who produce these manufactures and I shall return to my country with impressions of cheerful, skilful and energetic workers and of most hospitable hosts.

In our trading relations we have consistently applied the principles of the GATT. Our customs tariff is entirely non-discriminatory, being the same for all the countries of the world. Nigeria accords no imperial preference. We also have a most liberal import licensing policy. We have always given our
support to international efforts to stabilize prices for primary products, not only where our interest as an exporting country is affected, as in the case of tin and cocoa, but also as importers of wheat-flour and sugar. These policies, which we have pursued, are evidence of our conviction of the need of understanding and co-operation in the solution of the problems which arise in international trade.

We have also attempted by our domestic arrangements to add to the stability of the incomes of our people. Through our marketing system we have gone far towards protecting our farmers from short-term fluctuations in world prices for oilseeds, cocoa and cotton. We cannot, however, protect ourselves from adverse external developments in demand for our produce and the trends in earnings over the last few years have been most discouraging. Although we have succeeded in increasing the quantity of our exports, our earnings from our principal exports have actually declined. Thus, in the four-year period from 1955 to 1958, although our twelve main exports increased in quantity by 13 per cent, their total value was actually less than in 1955. At the same time the prices of our imports have increased. What is the use of working harder if we get less in return? These are conditions which, if they are allowed to continue, foreshadow difficult problems for my country in the future.

In particular we are alarmed by developments in Europe. Nearly a third of our exports in 1958 went to the countries which form the European Economic Community, mainly to the Netherlands and Germany, whose tariffs have been generally low. We are concerned at the future prospects for the greater part of this trade, which is being endangered by the possibility of higher tariffs, new preferences and perhaps managed markets. Quite candidly it seems unfair to us that these Six countries should be considering increased discrimination against us in favour of other African territories when we in Nigeria do not discriminate against their exports to us and indeed treat them with complete liberality.

I am convinced that given goodwill on all sides, the difficulties which I have set out can be overcome. I welcome the statement of the Italian Ministerial representative of the decision of the Six to set up an ad hoc committee to study the general questions of any action in favour of the less-developed territories. I assume that this committee will consider the problems I have mentioned. I am sure that it is not beyond the powers of our experts to devise practical solutions which will meet the legitimate requirements both of the six countries which form the European Economic Community and of third countries, including Nigeria.

I have followed with great interest the reference in the speeches of other Ministerial representatives to the various problems which are causing concern in the GATT at the present time, especially those related to under-developed countries and agricultural exports. My country is affected by many of these problems and is following the work of Committees II and III with close attention. I have also noted in all the speeches the fund of goodwill towards under-developed countries and the general determination to find practical solutions to
all these problems. It is in the consciousness of this spirit of goodwill and in the conviction that the GATT is an institution which should command the support of every trading nation, that I look forward to the time, which is not now far distant, when Nigeria, as an independent country, will send its own representative to the sessions of the GATT.

I would like to conclude with a phrase in the Hausa language, perhaps the first time the language has been used at a meeting of this kind. "Allah ya kara mana lafiya", which, being translated, may be rendered as "May God increase our prosperity".