I wish to associate myself with all my distinguished colleagues who have spoken in praise of the generous hospitality extended to us by the Japanese Government who are playing host to the fifteenth meeting of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

My delegation is impressed by the excellent arrangements made for the staging of this conference and for the splendid manner in which provisions have been made for catering to our creature comforts. For this thanks are due to the Japanese Government and the Executive Secretary and his aides.

In this modern age of science, when we are on the threshold of a new era of jet propulsion and space travel, our world has shrunk and peoples living in distant countries have become neighbours. This has made possible not only easier and greater flow of thoughts and ideas but has facilitated increased flow of goods and commodities between the different regions of this one world.

The peoples of my part of the world, freshly emancipated from colonial domination which resulted in the economic exploitation of these areas are today trying to adapt themselves to modern techniques in the planning of an economic pattern of life which will enable them to enjoy fuller and richer life as prevalent in the more progressive countries of the west.

Asia was the cradle of man's civilization. It was in this region man first flourished and succeeded in harnessing the forces of nature for improved living conditions. It was again in Asia that knowledge of arts and sciences, of mathematics and astronomy, of architecture and medicine was first developed. And most important of all, it was in Asia that all the great religions of the world were revealed for the guidance of man. It was from Asia that vast hordes of people moved eastward to found the Chinese and Japanese culture and westward to give rise to the civilizations of the valleys of the Nile, the Euphrates and Tigris. Man's migratory movement continued in gradual stages to Greece and Rome and then onward to the whole of Europe. Later - much later - man's spirit of adventure led to the search for a new trade route to India which resulted in the discovery of the New World.

It may, therefore, seem strange that the peoples of Asia in the background of their ancient civilization with all their cultural heritages and the legacy of their early knowledge of arts and sciences failed to keep...
pace with the march of progress in other countries. The answer is provided by history. It was man's lust for power and thirst for riches that led to the subjugation of the peace-loving peoples of the East by imperialistic powers of the West. That in essence is the why and wherefore of the birth of colonialism, which marked the dark age - of man's exploitation of man.

Agricultural and raw materials produced by the toil, sweat and tears of the peoples of Asia went to feed the expanding industries of European countries. Even more tragic was the fact that goods manufactured and processed in Europe out of the raw materials of Asia were shipped back for sale in our Asian markets. Thus, the gap between the living standards of the peoples of Asia and the peoples of Europe widened.

But it is fortunate that in recent years enlightenment has begun to manifest itself. Not only did the imperial powers recognise the right of self-determination of the peoples held in subjugation by them, but they have come forward to right the wrong that was done by providing technological and economic assistance to the countries which had remained under-developed. But centuries of neglect cannot be remedied in a few years. The peoples of under-developed areas will continue to need for some time the help and assistance of progressive and developed nations of the world, if God's bounty to man is to be made available to all His children.

We now live in an era not only of global politics but of global economics. Time was when countries could think in terms of isolation and be self-sustaining. Today all countries of the world have become interdependent. Therefore, we have to work together in all spheres of human endeavours so that we can attain that higher and more noble goal of mankind for a richer and fuller life for all the peoples in an atmosphere of freedom, equality and economic security.

My delegation, therefore, feels that international instruments, associations and organizations, such as the one with which we are directly concerned today, are attempts by the international community of nations to achieve the objectives of sharing prosperity because we all recognise that free societies cannot survive in poverty, nor can there be peace in the world when there is great disparity between the living standards of the have and the have-not nations.

Having made these general opening remarks, I would like now to confine myself to some of the important issues which agitate our minds in this session.

The convertibility of some of the important currencies have presented us with a new situation. It provides an opportunity for further progress for the elimination of import restrictions. We, therefore, welcome this progress as a step forward, but, we feel, we must emphasize that external convertibility has not in any way improved the acute foreign exchange difficulties of many less-developed countries like that of mine, whose foreign trade, particularly in primary commodities, faces the problem of fluctuating and falling prices. While, on the one hand, the prices
of manufactured or processed goods have remained either steady or have shown an upward trend, the world prices of raw materials or primary commodities have been very unstable with the result that it is difficult for less-developed countries or countries not highly industrialized to have a stable economy or participate freely in unrestricted international trade and commerce. We, therefore, welcome in principle the approach towards elimination of restrictions, but we have, unfortunately, not found it possible as yet to do away with it entirely. We have had to enter into bilateral trade agreements or into barter or near barter arrangements for the purpose of the disposal of our surplus commodities. But the volume of our trade covered by such arrangements has been relatively small. Insofar as our import policy is concerned we have tried to make our imports global without imposition of any discriminatory restriction against the dollar areas.

My delegation feels that the discriminatory treatment meted out to Japan by resort to Article 35 is unfair. She has had to face tremendous problems in rehabilitating her war-shattered economy and has honourably acquitted herself in meeting her war and other reparation obligations. She is now a bastion of democracy in this part of the world and as such is entitled to fair and equitable treatment by virtue of her full membership in this organization. We, therefore, plead for the withdrawal of discriminatory treatment to Japanese imports by countries invoking Article 35.
I would like to offer the appreciation of my delegation for the work done by the three Committees set up for the expansion of trade. Committee I had recommended that a conference be convened in September of 1960 to hold a general round of consultations for tariff concessions and to negotiate with Member States of the European Economic Community, in the light of the problem created by their common tariff arrangements. On this issue my Government's position is that since most of the custom duties have revenue implications, we are unable to offer any substantial concessions. I may add that in the case of less-developed countries the acute shortage of external earnings restricts the volume of their imports. Availability of foreign exchange in less-developed countries is so limited that imports have to be restricted with a view to enabling them to import only essentially needed manufactured goods. Tariff obstacles in the industrialized countries should, however, be removed in order to enable less-developed countries to market their products. To the extent that the projected round of negotiations in 1960 will provide an opportunity for adjusting the tariffs of the industrialized countries with a view to increasing the quantum of earnings of less-developed countries, we welcome them. My delegation is of the view that such tariff negotiations between industrialized countries and less-developed ones should not strictly or rigidly be reciprocal.

On the question of expansion of trade of agricultural products the recommendations of Committee II were accepted at the fourteenth session for consultations by contracting parties on their agricultural policies. I may state generally that up to the limit of our needs in food grains and within the limits of the availability of foreign exchange food grains are imported to meet the deficit between consumption and production within the country.

The commodity and price stabilizing arrangements adopted so far do not solve the problems of the major commodities in which Pakistan is interested. We have experienced wild fluctuation in price and progressive deterioration in our external earnings. We also witnessed the efforts of influential countries to have international agreements of restrictive nature on such commodities, at a time when their prices were at the lowest level. We strongly feel that countries producing raw materials are entitled to reasonable protection against such efforts by industrial countries to depress prices to suit their pocket books.

My Government is vitally interested in the question of increasing the opportunities of earning foreign exchange by less-developed countries. The work of Committee III, therefore, is of profound importance to us. We feel that while considerable progress has been made in the work of Committees I and II, very little progress has been made in the work of Committee III.

Mr. Chairman, we are all aware that, while there has been considerable expansion in the trade of industrialized countries, unfortunately the less-developed countries did not share in this expansion. It was realized by the CONTRACTING PARTIES that success of efforts for expansion of trade by less-developed countries depend entirely on their ability to expand exports. Increased external earnings were needed to finance the growing volume of their imports and their development programmes.
The Haberler Report recommended that efforts be made by the highly industrialized countries to assist the promotion of exports from less-developed countries, particularly in the field of simple manufactured goods. We, therefore, strongly urge that specific steps be taken by the industrialized nations to ensure that export of manufactured goods from less-developed countries do not face any obstacles in the form of quantitative or other restrictions. The objective of the General Agreement is to offer proper opportunities for the international division of labour and for the regional distribution of industries, based on the most favourable conditions prevailing in such regions for the promotion of such industries. We are aware that there is a legacy of chauvinistic economic ideas which have to be eliminated. The objective of GATT, as we see it, is to offer a way to sure and steady progress, towards international division of labour and regional distribution of industries, eliminating the restrictive legacies of the past. Concrete steps in this regard may, therefore, be taken immediately to attain this objective. The external earnings of less-developed countries may be augmented by the export of goods needing simple process of manufacture. It will enable these countries to increase their purchases from industrialized countries. The volume of international traffic in trade will increase thereby resulting in benefits to the less-developed as well as advanced countries.

Turning now to the question of regional groupings, I would like to say that doubts have been expressed as to whether these regional groupings were compatible with the ideals and objectives of GATT. In the past, some of us felt that on many points, such as the general level of tariffs, the provisions relating to agricultural products and association of overseas territories with the six members of the EEC, the situation was not clear and the wisdom of the formation of such groupings was not free from doubt. The CONTRACTING PARTIES should consider very carefully whether the means adopted to attain the objectives of these regional groupings would injure the young economies of less-developed contracting parties. The high tradition of common concern which GATT built up with the efforts of all contracting parties over the past so many years will, I feel, help in solving these problems to the satisfaction of all contracting parties, having due regard for their common basic interests. Full information on measures adopted by these regional groupings should be freely and frankly available to the CONTRACTING PARTIES, to enable them to initiate consultations with such regional groups for rational adjustments.

The CONTRACTING PARTIES outside such regional groupings not only seek to maintain trade with such regional groups at their present level, but will be justified in seeking to share in any expansion of trade which might develop. We should continue to endeavour to strengthen further the high ideals of GATT and harmonize all programmes for expansion of trade and commerce with the world-wide objectives of the GATT.

Man's urge for God's plenty for himself and the generations to come, free from the stresses, strains and fears of an atmosphere charged with hate, hostility and radio-active fall-out - clean or otherwise - cannot be denied. His salvation and the fulfilment of the promise made to him by God in His Benign Mercy and Benevolence rest on the cornerstone of co-operation and partnership of all peoples in liberty, equality, dignity and honour.