In the opinion of my delegation, there is, in principle, no difference between a country which, by applying a liberal import-regime vis-à-vis the participating Asian countries, has, for example, reached an import-percentage of 40 on the basis of its home consumption of cotton textiles, and a second country which applies the same methods of liberalization as the first country, but which has reached a percentage less than 40.

One of the reasons, underlying the difference between those import percentages might be that the first country has traditional commercial relations with some of the Asian countries which facilitate the sales of cotton textiles on the market of that country and which also facilitate the exports of other articles by that country, whereas such relations do not yet exist between these Asian countries and the second country.

My delegation is aware of the fact that a country such as the United Kingdom has had considerable difficulties when increasing imports of cotton textiles from the Asian Commonwealth countries necessitated the adaptation of the home industry to the new situation. I find it conceivable that the United Kingdom is for this reason requesting exemption from an obligation to apply a growth-factor when Article 3 of the Arrangement would be invoked by that country.

However, as the ultimate aim of this Arrangement is not that each participating importing country should reach, in its imports from the exporting countries, a certain percentage of its national consumption, but that those imports should be liberalized, my delegation would consider it to
be reasonable that, if it would be decided to exempt the first country, for the time being from the obligation to raise still existing quotas on the basis of Article 2 of the Arrangement, the same treatment should be given to the second country, in this case the countries of the Benelux, whose position is the same as that of the United Kingdom from a point of view of liberalization of imports.

In fact, the Benelux countries have completely liberalized the imports of textiles from the Asian Commonwealth countries. Only vis-à-vis Japan a bilateral agreement is in force for three years. This agreement provides for adequate quota's and also for the possibility of consultation if the exporting country would have reason to believe that the quota's should be enlarged.