Item I: Measures for the Expansion of Trade of Developing Countries as a Means of Furthering their Economic Development

My Government has earlier declared its willingness to give favourable consideration to all endeavours to increase export earnings of the less-developed countries.

As regards the different points in the Action Programme before us, I endorse the view that we should do our best to maintain a standstill as to trade barriers. As regards the import treatment, in my country there is no discrimination between less-developed countries and other sources of supply.

Finland has, in the recent years, reduced duties on certain tropical products, amongst other things, on coffee and tea. Last year, the rate of duty on tea was reduced by more than 50 per cent at one stroke, and we are prepared to consider a further reduction or elimination of this duty. As regards other products which have been examined by the Special Group on Trade in Tropical Products.
Spec(63)153
Page 2

Products, I should like to mention that there is no duty on tropical timber imported into Finland. The same applies to several primary products dealt with by Committee III.

As regards reduction and elimination of tariffs levied on semi-processed and processed products from less-developed countries, we are, as far as possible, prepared to consider favourably this matter in the forthcoming round of tariff negotiations.

The implementation of the proposal to reduce progressively internal fiscal charges and revenue duties causes us great difficulties, and I think that our present possibilities are limited in this respect.

In this connexion, I should like to recall especially the substantial reduction made in the duty on coffee in Finland less than two years ago. In my country the consumption of coffee was even before that time one of the highest in the world, and today it equals to 8.8 kgs. per capita. A further reduction of this duty would in our case hardly lead to any notable increase in consumption and might thus not meet the expectations attached to a further reduction of the duty. On the other hand, it would create considerable financial difficulties in my country.

To end the summary of my delegation's standpoint to the Action Programme, I have pleasure in stating that we fully endorse everything that is said on reporting procedures.

END