Some countries maintained that bilateral agreements had no place in a multilateral agreement such as the GATT. This was not only against the spirit but also the letter of the General Agreement. GATT has no provisions permitting discriminatory agreements except for countries in balance-of-payments difficulties. They proposed, as a first step, that all bilateral agreements, whether based on a clearing arrangement or providing for settlement in convertible currency, should be notified by 1 July 1970. Secondly, an interpretative note should be drawn up prohibiting bilateral agreements having a restrictive or discriminatory effect on trade. They further proposed that all bilateral agreements should be eliminated over a period of three years and in the meantime no bilateral agreements should be renewed. Any contracting party maintaining a bilateral agreement should consult with the CONTRACTING PARTIES. Those operating under Article XII or XVIII:B should consult in the Balance-of-Payments Committee.

Other countries pointed out that the maintenance of bilateral agreements was not motivated by the desire to increase one's bargaining position. The same arguments mentioned in the case of quantitative restrictions were valid for quotas allocated under bilateral trade agreements, mainly the protection of sensitive sectors of production, market disruption, social reasons, etc.

Some countries stated that the proposal for elimination and surveillance of bilateral agreements should only be applied for developed countries. They claimed that in the case of developing countries, bilateral agreements were a means to maximize trade. They asked notifying countries to suggest other means to achieve this end.
It was pointed out that it would be necessary to ensure that all duplication with existing notifications should be avoided.

The question of bilateral agreements with State-trading countries was discussed. On the part of the notifying countries it was claimed that bilateral trade agreements with countries with centrally-planned economies were entered into mainly in order to get a more favourable trading position than that of other countries. They should, consequently, be terminated at an early date. A member of the Group representing a centrally-planned economy described the different types of trading relationships of his country. Bilateral agreements between centrally-planned countries and developing countries had proved to be beneficial to both parties and should continue to exist, a view which was supported by some developing countries which in general favoured the maintenance of bilateral agreements, at least as long as these countries are in balance-of-payments difficulties. Bilateral agreements with developed countries should, in his view, be eliminated.