The CHAIRMAN stated that, as indicated in GATT/AIR/3678, this Special Session had been convened to consider the appointment of the successor of the present Director-General to the CONTRACTING PARTIES of GATT 1947, Mr. Peter D. Sutherland. Following the consensus reached in consultations held over the past nine months, noting the decision reached in the General Council of the WTO earlier this morning, and bearing in mind the co-existence between GATT and WTO, the CHAIRMAN proposed that the CONTRACTING PARTIES agree to formally appoint Mr. Renato Ruggiero as the Director-General of the CONTRACTING PARTIES of GATT 1947 effective as from 1 May 1995.

It was so agreed.

The CHAIRMAN said that since a decision was at present reached by consensus to appoint Mr. Renato Ruggiero as Director-General of GATT/WTO, he was confident that Mr. Ruggiero would be able to address the challenges of the post-Uruguay Round era. The contracting parties stood ready to provide him with their full cooperation. He extended to him, on behalf of all contracting parties, sincere congratulations and best wishes of success in discharging his responsibilities.

The CHAIRMAN also said that during the consultations held, an understanding had been reached on the creation of one more Deputy Director-General, in addition to the three existing Deputy Director-General posts. It was therefore recommended that the necessary measures to create such a position and to make the appointment be taken up immediately by the GATT 1947 Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration and the new Director-General, respectively. In this respect, the interests and concerns of some regions, particularly the African region, should be taken into account in future appointments.

The CONTRACTING PARTIES took note of this understanding and invited the GATT 1947 Committee on Budget, Finance and Administration to take up the question of the establishment of a fourth post of Deputy Director-General and report to the GATT 1947 Council on this matter.

The CHAIRMAN expressed gratitude for the spirit of cooperation and understanding which had prevailed during the long consultations which had preceded the decisions taken this present day in which all contracting parties had been involved. He had had the privilege to cooperate with Ambassador Kesavapany, Chairman of the WTO General Council and Ambassador Szepesi, his predecessor as Chairman of the GATT CONTRACTING PARTIES, in accomplishing this important task and expressed his gratitude to both of them for their patience, perseverance and objectivity.
also thanked all delegations for the cooperation extended to Ambassador Kesavapany, Ambassador Szepesi -- who would at present assume the Chairmanship of the Textiles Monitoring Body -- and himself. Finally, he expressed appreciation and gratitude to Mr. Peter Sutherland for the efficient manner in which he had managed the GATT Secretariat and had fulfilled the responsibilities of Chairman of the TNC during the last part of the Uruguay Round Negotiations and of Director-General of the World Trade Organization since its entry into force on 1 January 1995.

The Seventh Special Session of the CONTRACTING PARTIES to the GATT 1947 closed at 10.45 a.m.