Since it so happens, that this session of the GATT coincides with the twentieth anniversary of its establishment I should like to convey to you the best wishes for all contracting parties of further fruitful co-operation within the terms of this multilateral trade agreement which the General Agreement constitutes.

The GATT has many indisputable achievements in those last twenty years. To a large extent this came about as the result of the effective and creative efforts of the GATT secretariat headed by Mr. Wyndham White, its Director-General. I believe that both the GATT secretariat and its Director-General deserve the highest appreciation and recognition of the CONTRACTING PARTIES.

It also happens, that the twentieth anniversary of the GATT coincides with the tenth anniversary of the first steps taken by the Government of my country in the direction of co-operating with the GATT.

For Poland the last decade was a period of further dynamic growth of industrial production, and an expansion of its economic potential.

This process of rapid economic growth has been accompanied by dynamic increases in Poland's foreign trade, including that with the GATT Contracting Parties.

While in 1957 the volume of Poland's trade with Contracting Parties of the GATT amounted to $1,004 million, by 1966 in only ten years, this trade increased in value to $2,187 million. The fastest increase was noted in trade
with the developing countries - parties to the GATT. This results from the policy of the Polish Government to increase the share of the developing countries in international exchange, since we believe that through trade these countries will be able to achieve economic development of all sectors, harmonized with the international division of labour.

While these few facts which I quoted above serve to illustrate the positive results of the development of commerce between Poland and the GATT Member countries, then I should also like to point out, that from the institutional side also our relations with the GATT changed in the last ten years.

After the initial period of searching for ways, there came the period of our association with the GATT. This lasted a number of years, and in that time on the one hand we became acquainted with the mechanics of the General Agreement, and on the other, the annual reviews of Poland's relations with the GATT countries made it possible for the latter to get acquainted with problems of the Polish economy, with all its main characteristic features.

We believe that the fact, that Poland, is since a few weeks a full Member of the GATT will be a positive factor in further development of our relations with the contracting parties. I believe that it is significant to point out here, that in the last decade basic changes occurred in the functioning of foreign trade of Poland, which should further facilitate the development of our commerce, with the GATT countries as well. I have no intention of pursuing this subject further at the moment. I would however, like to point out, that during our negotiations for accession, we have particularly stressed certain differences between our economic system and the economic systems of most Member countries of the GATT. We are convinced, and we still hold the belief, that in spite of these differences - on the basis of mutual goodwill - and within the terms laid down by the legal instrument known as Poland's Protocol of Accession, including the annexed Report of the Working Group, we could arrive at a mutually obligatory "code of good conduct".

Returning to the question of our accession, I should like to once more express the satisfaction of the Polish Government in the successful completion of negotiations and express the hope that the process of liberalizing trade with Poland will be accelerated.

The application of quantitative restrictions to trade with Poland practically limits our trade to a level lower than that possible, and hinders the improvement of the trade structure contrary to objective tendencies of development.

It is certain that full and accelerated elimination of quantitative restrictions, in accordance with Article I Point 3 of the Protocol of Accession, will undoubtedly contribute to a significant increase in Poland's turnover with the GATT countries.
I have to stress, that achievements of the GATT are connected with the programme of trade development adopted at the Ministerial Conference in 1958. In the field of tariffs, the crowning achievement of these actions was the Kennedy Round, which, in our opinion, will have the principal impact in slowing down protectionist tendencies and creation of favourable conditions for further liberalization of the world trade. It appears, that at the present time our first task should be the reinforcement of those achievements and their defence against the new wave of protectionism which is sweeping over various parts of the world. It would certainly be unfortunate, if so shortly after the completion of such difficult negotiations, their results were wiped out through the prevailance of protectionist ideas, which a relatively short time ago, only thirty years before, proved both harmful and rather ineffective.

It appears that we all agree, that although the Kennedy Round made considerable progress in eliminating the barriers to the development of world trade in industrial goods, its progress was insufficient in the field of agricultural commodities. It was correctly pointed out that trade in agricultural commodities became a subject of large-scale multilateral negotiations for the first time in the Kennedy Round, and that the experience and methods worked out during it should not be lost. In other words, efforts should be made to find ways and means for the removal of obstacles on the road to increased international exchange of agricultural commodities. Poland is a large exporter of certain foodstuffs and other farm products. The question of improving the access to agricultural markets is of vital interest to us. We view with misapprehension the actions of certain countries, particularly West European ones, which through their agricultural policies can cause grave difficulties for themselves through the surpluses produced at high support costs, as well as for others through destruction of traditional patterns of trade between the countries of Eastern Europe on the one hand, and Western Europe on the other. We are, therefore, very much interested in starting consultations within the GATT on trade in agricultural commodities.

We are also interested in the problem of non-tariff obstacles. While we find that in recent years the barriers to international trade erected on the borders of importing countries have been significantly lowered or eased, we also find that there is often even great ingenuity in the field of retaining obstacles of extremely varied types, all coming under the heading of non-tariff barriers within an area. I believe that much remains to be done in that field.

In his Action Programme delineated in recent speeches Mr. Wyndham White advanced the idea of attaining free trade in a limited range of commodities. We know too few details to take a definite stand on this idea. Yet, the thought behind the proposal of taking this idea to the Ministers for discussion appears to be a right one. The crucial point here is which products will be the subject of consultations.
Free trade in the field of technologically advanced products could again only affect a limited amount of countries. There are, on the other hand, broader problems, concerning both the highly developed and the semi-industrialized States as well as those which are only now entering on the road of economic development.

The present session of GATT is being held just before an important international event, namely the Second United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in New Delhi, which will be concerned with discussions of all problems pertaining to the developing countries.

I should here like to express our satisfaction with these parts of a statement made by the GATT Director-General in Toronto, in which he spoke of co-operation between the GATT and UNCTAD, and with the fact that the agenda of the present GATT session includes an item which results from the harmonious relations between both bodies in the field of Trade Development Centre operations. With this in mind, I should once more like to emphasize the sympathy with which we view the efforts of the developing countries to fulfil their justified demands; a sympathy which in our situation of a country which has already attained a considerable level of industrialization, but is still not a rich country, we try to translate in accordance with our ability, into the concrete language of actions.

I should not want to, as I have already stated, comment in detail on any item of this session’s agenda. I hope, that just as it had place in previous sessions of the GATT, some concrete and positive decisions will be taken, connected with the nearest future.

In addition to problems of the nearest future and the dangers which face it through neo-protectionist tendencies, it appears that ground should be cleared for actions in further perspective.

I should particularly like to stress one aspect here - that in the last decade brought about increased tendencies in certain integrationist groupings of the developed countries which take discriminative forms against third countries.

I believe that the role of GATT as an organization of a very broad scope, could be among others the clearing of the ground first for studies, and later for eventual practical action in the field of stressing certain dangerous and pointless departures from the international division of labour. I wonder if this question could already be placed on the agenda in some more complete form, and I raise this problem rather in the form of a suggestion to be considered in further work of the GATT secretariat.

I should also like to express my belief here, that this body, whose activities were useful in the last twenty years, will still be able to operate successfully in the future.