It is for me a pleasant task to represent the Luxemburg Government at this meeting coinciding with the twentieth anniversary of the General Agreement and to associate my Government with the well deserved congratulations extended to our organization and with the remarks made concerning future action in the context of the General Agreement for eliminating as far as possible all remaining obstacles to the full expansion of international trade. Our Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Pierre Grégoire, would have preferred to express in person the Luxemburg Government's appreciation of the valiant efforts made in GATT and to reaffirm the confidence of our authorities in the organization's future; to his regret, other commitments have prevented him from being here himself.

As most of the distinguished speakers who have preceded me have done, I should like first to speak of the importance of the work accomplished by the CONTRACTING PARTIES so far. GATT seems to me to be one of the few international institutions that is not judged with particular severity in international public opinion but on the contrary is a cynosure for all who are striving to raise standards of living throughout the world by means of a comprehensive international programme of trade liberalization.

The General Agreement was originally conceived with no great ambitions but rather as an interim device pending the establishment of an organization that was planned but never came into existence; yet, to the surprise of everyone from its very first achievements it showed itself to be no mere device for attaining part-way objectives, but a useful and effective instrument that could draw unsuspected strength from the wise disposition of its rules and the flexibility of its implementing procedures, making it possible to advance step by step towards the progressive liberalization of international trade.

On closer examination, the factors that have enabled the General Agreement to prove its worth, particularly during the second stage of its existence, can be grouped in three categories: first, among these, elements in the nature of incentives and signposts that were independent of the Agreement and derived from the changes that had occurred in the international situation since the end of the 1950's, and more particularly since 1962. The change in the international
situation altered the political and economic background before which was to take place the more substantial dismantlement of tariff obstacles that some parties had originally envisaged, and thereby changed the perspective in which it had been the intention to eliminate to a substantial extent, by means of a linear approach, the tariff obstacles existing between a certain number of countries representing a wide geographical area and an important proportion of international trade. That concept was fortunately superseded by the broader idea that the final objective, should be to open up markets.

The second category of factors to which one should attribute the results achieved comprises those inherent in the Agreement and which contributed substantially to ensuring success; it seems to me that if the Agreement was particularly productive during the Kennedy Round, that was due first of all to the fact that the acceptance by an ever-increasing number of countries of the great general principles underlying the General Agreement has made it possible to create an outward-looking and constructive spirit among all member countries in regard to the efforts made in furtherance of the various objectives of the Agreement. In addition, the successful outcome can also be attributed in great part to the fact that the provisions governing the various components of trade liberalization policy are carefully balanced and that the procedures applicable for the preparation and attainment of concrete and non-discriminatory results are sufficiently flexible to permit each party to observe the spirit and, as a general rule, the letter of the Agreement, without being obliged to go beyond what seems reasonably possible if serious disruptions are to be avoided.

Now turning to the third cause to which can be attributed the successes achieved in GATT, I would have to reproach myself if I did not underline, in the name of my Government, that the principal merit rests with the Director-General, Mr. Wyndham White, who throughout his many years at the head of the secretariat has given of his best in order to induce the CONTRACTING PARTIES to carry out major programmes designed to promote the expansion of international trade. And once again, on the morrow of the Kennedy Round Mr. Wyndham White has proposed that we should maintain the élan of recent successes and pave the way for new achievements within the context of the Agreement. We must be grateful to him for having done so.

And it is in this context that I should like to acknowledge another fact: Without wishing to quote the figures which are an eloquent illustration of the scope of the concessions granted by contracting parties that took part in the Kennedy Round, and without wishing to examine in detail the initial assessment of results in the various fields covered by the negotiations, I note that it is unanimously recognised that: (1) the industrial countries are the immediate beneficiaries of the negotiations; (2) the results achieved in the agricultural sector are fairly modest in comparison with the benefits accruing to the industrial sector, and (3) in the field of non-tariff barriers the Kennedy Round yielded only few effects. Because of these facts alone, we should show
understanding when the Director-General continues to be concerned over the future of the organization and when he loses no time in presenting to us new proposals for future programmes in the context of GATT. We cannot deny that the fear of seeing our organization lapse into a period of lull is not unjustified, particularly since, so soon after the agreements of 30 June, the government of one of the great countries involved in the negotiations is already under strong pressures from highly influential circles which consider that the concessions granted in the Kennedy Round by the government authorities were too great and, in order to counteract the generosity shown by the government, they are once again playing the well-worn but still well-beloved record of protectionism.

It has to be acknowledged therefore, that some parties consider that many things still remain to be done, despite the fine results achieved, while others are of the opinion that they have already yielded too much. That is why my Government, in concurrence with the statement made yesterday by the Ministerial Spokesman for the European Economic Community, Mr. Lahr, believes that the élan and vitality of our organization must be maintained. For this, it seems to us that the first step must be to ensure that the Kennedy Round concessions are made effective and that the endeavours that culminated in the results of those great negotiations are consolidated - in short, all that it was possible to attain through arduous and lengthy negotiations must be safeguarded on a lasting basis. If we want to progress in the future, we must not lose sight of the fact that the first prerequisite for success is to ensure here and now that the results already achieved are not nullified or impaired by other new restrictions on trade. Then, having regard to the complex nature of the problems that will have to be solved in the future, and before embarking on any new programme of action, we should turn our attention to the various fields in which serious difficulties still exist; there, comprehensive examinations, detailed inventories and thorough studies can yield the background information necessary for consideration of any new work programmes. The more complex and inter-dependent the problems under consideration - as in agriculture for example - the more detailed and more thorough the studies that will have to be carried out in an overall perspective. We should not forget that our ultimate objective is to raise standards of living while maintaining economic and social equilibrium wherever it has already been established, and to promote progressive expansion at world level.

Although it is true to say that for the moment the developing countries derive only little benefit from the Kennedy Round, it is none the less a fact that potentially the results of the negotiations offer wide opportunities to them. In order to utilize those opportunities, they will more than ever in the future need concerted action by UNCTAD and other specialized agencies on the one
hand and by our organization on the other, because only through joint efforts can one ensure the maximum effectiveness of whatever measures are taken subsequently by each of these organizations in its own field of action.

The least that can be said of the Kennedy Round is that it should serve as an incentive for the drawing up and implementation of new economic programmes in the developing countries. Having said this, we welcome the proposed plan for establishing a joint GATT/UNCTAD International Trade Centre and we fully support the idea expressed by Mr. Lahr, namely that in the studies envisaged on a wider plane by all contracting parties, special attention should be given to specific problems indicated by developing countries.

In conclusion, I should like to state in the name of my Government that Luxembourg, which is essentially an exporting country and accordingly is disposed to take part in any endeavour designed to facilitate and promote international trade, hereby undertakes, in constant and close collaboration with its Benelux and EEC partners, to participate actively and whole-heartedly in the future work of our organization.