The Japanese delegation has had occasion to address itself in the past meetings of this Group to the question of special and differentiated treatment for the developing countries. Like the other delegations who have spoken before us, we welcome this opportunity to recapitulate and also to expand on what we have stated on this issue in the past. If I may begin, by stating the obvious, in considering this question we stand by firmly with the Tokyo Declaration and its relevant provisions. If I do not make specific reference to all the relevant provisions contained in that Declaration in the course of my very brief remarks, I wish to emphasize that we remain firmly committed to that Declaration.

Secondly, we have already expressed our support to the view that the examination of special measures should proceed in parallel with the elaboration of the general tariff-cutting formula, rules and procedures. We do have some way to go in defining the general tariff-cutting formula in all its details but I am struck by the fact that this morning the discussion has amply demonstrated that we could have a useful and constructive general exchange on the question of special measures and procedures for the developing countries. If in the course of the present meeting we could not arrive at a final understanding on this important issue, we would have made some considerable progress in clarifying some of these issues.

To recapitulate somewhat our general view relating to developing countries, let me first take up the question of the application of the general tariff-cutting formula. We have already stated and stressed our view that all developed countries should apply the agreed tariff-cutting formula. As far as the developing countries are concerned, we do not expect them to fully associate themselves to the general tariff-cutting formula. The developing countries would thus be in a position to enjoy fully the benefits accruing to them by the MFN tariff reductions on the part of the developed countries, which would be implemented in accordance with the agreed tariff-cutting formula.
Secondly, in respect to the question of reciprocity, we have stated in the past that we do not expect full reciprocity from developing countries. We look forward, however, to meaningful contributions from these countries, especially from those who are in a position to do so in the field of tariffs, but contributions that are not inconsistent with their individual development, financial and trade needs. In this connexion, this delegation would like to recall that the Tokyo Declaration enjoins us jointly to endeavour in the negotiations to achieve by appropriate methods an overall balance of advantage at the highest possible level. I think it is important for all of us to reaffirm that we should proceed to pursue that basic objective.

Coming to the question of special measures for developing countries, we have indicated in the last meeting of this Group that some of the procedures or measures suggested in the previous meetings of the Group, appeared useful to this delegation, but in some others we did see problems. At the same time, I did say in the last meeting that we had the question of special measures under serious examination in Tokyo. While we have not as yet completed this examination, I would like today to share with you some of our tentative views on this question by way of indicating the general thrust of our approach to this question. I am bound to say, however, that the question of special measures are closely related to the general tariff-cutting formula and the general procedures to be agreed upon and, also that in the final analysis, special measures can only be examined in its specific details on a product-by-product basis. We, therefore, hold the view that notification by developing countries at the earliest possible stage on products of their export interest is not only desirable but also essential. What I am about to say would need to be understood against this background and that they are offered without prejudice to our future negotiating position nor with any commitment that we would implement special measures without looking at the products involved.

Having said that, we are of the view that special measures could be considered, where appropriate and feasible, by varying the depth of tariff cuts. While this would depend on the general formula that is agreed and the products involved, we would be prepared to examine the possibility of deeper than formula cuts. We would also be prepared to look at the possibility of less than formula cuts, in certain cases so as to secure the interests of developing countries, but always keeping in mind the general objective of the tariff-cutting exercise which is to seek a general overall reduction in tariff levels.

In respect of the staging of the MFN tariff reductions, the possibility of advance implementation for products of interest to developing countries could be examined. Delayed implementation of tariff reductions on certain products, for example, under GSP could also be looked at, where appropriate, as a possibility but always in the light of cases that might be involved.
With respect to the GSP, we note that many and frequent references have been made on this question in past meetings of this Group, particularly in respect of the maintenance, security, improvement and prolongation of the GSP.

In Japan's case, since the introduction of Japan's GSP scheme in 1971, we have continuously endeavoured to improve that scheme. It is our view that our GSP scheme has been so far applied in a stable manner and all changes in general have been in the interests of the beneficiary developing countries.

It would be the continued intention of the Japanese Government to make further efforts in maintaining the stable application of the system and of improving it. Since the adoption of the Tokyo Declaration by Ministers in Tokyo, we have already improved our GSP scheme. We have further improvements under active consideration and we hope to be in a position to shortly announce, on a firm and definitive basis, some further improvements. These improvements would be effected as our contribution to the general objectives of the Tokyo Declaration.

In respect to the prolongation of the GSP scheme, the Japanese Government has supported the resolution adopted at the Seventh Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly that the GSP should not terminate at the end of the ten-year period originally envisaged. The Japanese Government, in line with this resolution, subject to parliamentary approval, intends to make efforts to maintain its GSP for a certain period after 1980.

With regard to the increased security of the GSP, I have already said that the Japanese scheme has been administered with a high degree of security as was demonstrated in the light of its past performance. I would also like to point out that it is because of the unilateral, non-contractual nature of the GSP that it has been more easily maintained and improved in favour of beneficiary developing countries. We firmly believe that such basic character of the GSP should be maintained. We would be of the view that bindings of GSP rates or margins would undermine this basic feature of the GSP scheme.

In concluding my remarks, I would like to stress once again the view of the Japanese Government that it is essential for developing countries to notify the products of their export interest so that developed countries could be in a position to examine concretely whether some special measures would be feasible and appropriate on specific product-by-product cases.