

ference, which is to be attended by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. They expressed their sincere hopes for a successful outcome of that conference as a further step in the relaxation of international tension. They discussed, in particular, the problem of disarmament; and they welcomed the progress made at the Geneva conference on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons tests. They hoped that, on the basis of the preliminary work already done, the summit conference would be able to make some significant progress toward an eventual settlement, under international control, of the problem of disarmament. An advance toward a solution of that problem, linked with a progressive lessening of political tensions, would afford a firm basis for strengthening confidence between nations and promoting world security.

6. The Commonwealth Ministers also discussed the problems of Africa, the Middle East, the Far East and Southeast Asia. They recognized that economic and social progress are essential for political stability. They welcomed the continuing contribution which mutual assistance under the Colombo Plan affords throughout Southeast Asia to these aims; and they agreed that there and elsewhere throughout the less-developed areas of the world the best hope of peace, stability and political freedom lies in practical international co-operation of this kind.

7. The Ministers reviewed the world economic situation. They noted that, while in general the outlook was favourable, the economic expansion which had taken place since their last meeting had been greater in the industrialized countries of the Commonwealth than in the primary producing countries. They agreed that an important condition of the prosperity of these countries was their ability to develop their export trade. They also recognized the urgent need to maintain and, where possible, increase the flow of economic assistance to the less-developed countries. They welcomed the decision to establish an international development association.

8. The Ministers discussed European trade problems. They expressed concern at the prospect of any economic division in Europe and its possible political implications. The countries of Europe form an important market for Commonwealth exports. The Ministers expressed their hope that these countries would follow trade policies in accordance with the principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and thus avoid damage to the economies of the primary producing countries and those that are also developing exports of manufactured goods. In addition, European countries have an important contribution to make in assisting the economic development of the less-advanced countries. The Ministers hoped that these problems could be speedily and satisfactorily resolved, with due regard to the interests of countries outside Europe.

9. The Commonwealth Ministers reviewed the economic development of Commonwealth countries in Africa which have recently attained or are approaching independence. They agreed that consideration should be given to the possibility of co-operative action among members of the Commonwealth in assisting the economic development of these countries. This possibility will be studied in