

Mr. Chairman,

May I begin by expressing Canada's pleasure at your selection to preside over this Ministerial Session -- the most important in the history of the GATT. Through you, we convey our appreciation to your President and people, who have welcomed us so warmly, and arranged so effectively to help us carry out our work.

The contracting parties do not meet often at ministerial level. This is the first such meeting in a developing country. The new trade round will move us forward into the 1990's and the new century -- and it is fitting that, as we write the rules for the growth we all need, and the social justice which growth can bring, we begin here. I welcome and endorse the suggestion of Minister Kuranari of Japan that we name this the Uruguay Round.

Mr. Chairman,

We have important work to do, and little time this week to do it. Before we leave, we must achieve a clean launch of a new round of multilateral trade negotiations that is both comprehensive and ambitious.

We should learn from history. The four decades before the GATT was born were marked by turmoil -- we built barriers: sank into the great depression, and ended in war. Both necessity and vision then combined so the world could grow together. We were all enriched by the creation of the United Nations, Bretton Woods Institutions, and the GATT. One result was a dramatic increase in world trade, and therefore in human opportunity.

In the 40 years since that creative burst of confidence, we have put those achievements at risk by taking them for granted. Countries which, 40 years ago, put the world ahead of narrow interests, now regularly apply protective trade measure outside GATT disciplines. The rules point one way, and the governments go another. And that is true of all of us. The challenge here is not to assign blame, but to accept responsibility. Because the chaos that came before GATT could come again -- and that would threaten every country, every family, every future. This is the week for decision. This is the place and we are the people who have the opportunity, and the duty, to rebuild a trading system which we have let erode.