

“The Importance of Improving Business Contacts and Facilities.”

October 24, 1977.

My delegation today wishes to discuss the question of business contacts and facilities which is, as we all know, the subject of the second section of the chapter on commercial exchanges. As I begin, Mr Chairman, I shall not surprise anyone if I point out the importance my delegation attaches to this question. There are two distinct types of reason for this. First of all, there are commercial reasons, and I do not need to repeat the extremely clear and convincing points my British and American colleagues have made. There is as well the more general and perfectly obvious fact that, after all, business contacts are only one of many kinds of contact, and as such they fit into one of this conference's major themes — the conditions under which individuals have access to each other, and how they can meet and communicate directly. I do not intend to heat up the debate, but it will be understood that this section is of particular interest to my delegation because of this fact.

Mr Chairman, my delegation has naturally studied the reports from our various missions concerning our commercial relations, particularly with the Eastern countries. The fact is that, in relation to these countries, the most difficult, most regrettable and most constantly-recurring subjects are those relating to this section on business contacts and facilities.

Let us consider these contacts. Remember that the participating states agreed to work to improve conditions, especially with respect to opportunities for contacts between sellers and users — with a view to studying the commercial opportunities and signing contracts, as well as to supervising their execution and ensuring after-sales service. In reality, this is a question of ease of access for businessmen and other interested parties, both at the initial-contact stages and later. In this respect, we must be fair. The fact is that the same situation does not prevail in all countries. In Poland, for example, we see that contacts with interested organizations are relatively easy. In Hungary, as well, though to a somewhat lesser degree and though the initial contact is made through foreign-trade organizations, the user organizations are accessible and relations can be established without the introduction of over-complicated