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SPEECH OF THE CUBAN MINISTER OF STATE
DR. RAFAEL P. GONZALEZ MUNOZ

It is a great honour for me, in my capacity as Minister of State, to address this august Assembly on behalf of the Cuban Government on the occasion of this memorable closing session which marks the end of the labours of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment.

Gentlemen, in expressing your views on the results achieved by the Conference and the contrast between your hopes and the actual measure of success attained, you have been most flattering in your praise of my country, the Cuban Government, its officials and agencies which played a part in the organization of this Conference, now come to so brilliant and happy a conclusion.

We have been moved by the ring of sincerity in all your thanks. You have not merely used the words that are commonly used on such occasions for reasons of courtesy. You spoke with a warm and generous accent from the heart rather than the head.

In the graceful speech the representative of the Netherlands has just made on behalf of the Conference he said so many generous and friendly things about my country and the President of the Republic, Dr. Grau San Martín, that I must thank him from the bottom of my heart.

The progress of this Conference has been a matter of deep concern to the Head of the State and the Cuban Government and people. It has always been our wish that it should enjoy the conditions most favourable to the development of its work. The kind words that have been said here answer our hopes that perhaps we have been able to achieve what we desired. I could not fail to take advantage of this opportunity to pay again the tribute of my deepest gratitude to the Conference for the honour it has done me in making me its only Honorary President, a post which I valued as a demonstration of its courtesy and esteem for the Republic of Cuba.

For more than four months you have been meeting in Havana with the high purpose of creating one of the most important organizations to which the international community has aspired for many years. It has been an aspiration of every country and has carried with it the most constructive and ambitious hopes of all who work for a better world - for that world so greatly desired by all men of goodwill, and which in different languages, in different latitudes and under distant skies, has been promised to mankind by the priests of every religion, by thinkers and by philosophers. Gentlemen, I refer to that peaceful world, where calm and tranquillity will prevail, where all may enjoy a life of dignity, of industry and goodwill.

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Although your duty is done, you will be asking yourselves and you will all be asked by your compatriots all over the world whether your task has ended after the hours, days and months of discussion to which you have contributed your knowledge; they will ask you I repeat, whether you have reached the culmination of your work with the signature of this great document in which the miracle of the written word has crystallized the results of your labours. In these lines of print, on these pages, your ideals are impressed, all inspired by a high and noble purpose. And in answer to this interrogation, Gentlemen, we shall make so bold as to reply, we shall venture to affirm that you may feel yourselves legitimately satisfied in placing your signatures at the foot of the document which during these four long months you have so untiringly been drawing up.

Some of you are not wholly satisfied with it. That is the best proof of the loftiness of your sentiments and your patriotism, the praise-worthy loyalty which you have shown to your respective countries, and of the justice of this magnificent document which will go down to history as one of the noblest efforts ever made by man to perfect his communal life.

The greatest hopes and the noblest aspirations of your peoples for their progress and prosperity have been embodied in this document. All of you, like all of us, cherished ambitious plans which perhaps went beyond the limit of what was humanly possible.

And if you are not fully satisfied by this Charter, it is because of the nobility, the elevation, the lofty aspirations which you have so generously brought to the service of your countries' interests.

Your skill, your intelligence have made the Charter of Havana, Gentlemen, an altruistic and generous document. You may well be proud of having drafted it and of its signature in this solemn ceremony. Your aspirations have not been less than your generosity and they and the wise spirit of understanding you have shown have made possible the sacrifice of individual and personal points of view and opinions on the altar of a common cause, in the common good and for the protection of us all.

And if we are able to feel proud of and satisfied by the Havana Trade Charter, the greater will be our faith, our hope and legitimate confidence in the ultimate perfection and the perdurability of the Organization whose foundations have been laid here, in the capital of Cuba. On those solid and stable foundations, at once compact and strong, the imposing structure of the future International Trade Organization will rest secure. The work you have achieved is not so much good or satisfactory in itself, in its present state, in what has actually been achieved, as in the promise it holds out for the future of mankind.

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Ladies and gentlemen, recall the history of trade and you will see that it has been a long and bitter struggle of human selfishness. You will see that trade has always been at the service of the private interests of each man or group of men. Compare what has happened in the past with the promise of what will be performed by this world organization whose constitution is the Havana Charter. You will then be able to admire the way it has been possible to conceive this Organization for the service and for the good of all, inspired by the high ideal of the common good and the purpose of inspiring faith and confidence in the prosperity, the well-being and the progress of all.

I do not think that it is excess of goodwill which leads me to affirm that the step taken today in solemnly inaugurating the International Trade Organization by the signing of the Havana Charter will be of far-reaching importance for the future of humanity and of lasting significance in the world's economic history.

I venture to believe that the International Trade Organization is the most solid advance the world has made towards peace. In his inaugural speech to the Conference, the President, Dr. Grau San Martín, expressed his hope that you would reach agreement on a system of international trade which by its justice and strength would be capable of banishing the spectre of war.

If you have not completely succeeded in elaborating such a system, you may be satisfied at having laid down its basic principles, at having shown men the way to peace, at having worked skillfully, resolutely and intelligently, to realize mankind's sublime ideal of a community of nations and of peoples confident of their future and contented with their present lot. All the work which you have had the privilege of carrying out has been guided and inspired by the generous ideals of industry and peace. You have done your utmost to reduce the obstacles and barriers which separated one people from another. You have made an effective contribution to removing disputes and differences between the nations. You have worked in order to curb ambition and to order individual interests according to a just code. In four months of intelligent and enthusiastic work you have done magnificent work in co-ordinating conflicting material interests. You have brought the ideal to earth and given it tangible form in a work at once real and just. You have succeeded in creating a harmonious equilibrium between ambition and honour. You have elaborated a code of moral standards and rules limiting the selfish activities of men. You have achieved a miracle which almost makes Utopia reality and your aspirations are so great, your ideals are so lofty that you still regard your work as defective and seek to make it more perfect.

We can do no less than congratulate you wholeheartedly on the magnificent work you have accomplished and express our hope, our confidence, our faith in

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