

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT
Department of Public Information
Havana, Cuba

ADVANCE TEXT
HOLD FOR RELEASE
CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Press Release ITO/200
22 March 1948

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF ECUADOR,
MR. FRNESTO CHIRIBOCA, BEFORE THE PLENARY SESSION HELD ON 23 MARCH 1948

Mr. President:

I would be glad to be able to say that all the misgivings with which my delegation came to this Conference had vanished. On the 21st of November we had before us the Geneva Charter with all its limitations, its lacunae and its obstacles. They caused us grave anxiety, but since we had the hope that the Charter we were to draft would satisfy both the great industrial powers and the under-developed countries, we came confident of being able to lay the foundation of greater prosperity for our peoples.

To-day, Mr. President, we have before us the result of four months' incessant discussion and struggles, sometimes hidden, to impose a principle. The spirit of compromise also appears in the new text. But can we say that this spirit has fully shown the wide understanding deserved by the needs of those countries which are only on the threshold of their economic development?

Desirous of making the Charter of the World Trade Organization a fit instrument for putting into effect the purpose which it laid down, my delegation presented several amendments. They met with varying success. We fully understand that it was not possible for all the proposals submitted to this Assembly to be accepted; but we must admit that one of them, one which was not merely the initiative of Ecuador, but a principle of the supreme Organization to which this one is subordinate, was rejected in circumstances which left my delegation with a feeling of scepticism.

Since we cannot lose faith in the principles of equality, justice and freedom which the Western World is defending with such fervour to-day, we know that the day must come when the ITO will fully recognize the aspirations of countries like mine, when they will receive a recognition which will mean justice for their hopes of progress, equality for the efforts of their peoples and freedom for their economic existence.

Mr. President, an outstanding feature of this Conference has been the goodwill which has reigned among its Members. This is primarily the result of the wisdom with which you have directed us. May I offer you the tribute of my most sincere admiration.

I have great satisfaction in expressing my gratitude to the Government of Cuba and to this city which has welcomed us so warmly. The graciousness of Havana has always brought us encouragement in hours of disappointment and joy in moments of success. The sunny gaiety of this land will always remain in our hearts as the happiest among all the happy memories we retain of our stay in Cuba.
