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## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### I. INTRODUCTION

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. It is with a sense of privilege and honour that I welcome you to Nairobi, our host city, for the eighth annual session of the Governing Council of UNEP. I am confident that when you, Mr. President, bring down the gavel at the conclusion of this session, we will have experienced a renewal in our purpose and in our commitment to the sustainable development of the resources of our only one Earth, the only means of preserving our environment and ensuring better quality of life for present and future generations.

2. My warmest congratulations go to you, Mr. President, and to the other members of the Bureau, on your election to your important offices. As you perform your tasks, I can assure you that you will be able to rely upon my best endeavours, and those of the UNEP secretariat, to assist you. Let me also express my sincere thanks to our past President, Professor Ernest Boateng, and the members of the Bureau of the last Governing Council for their excellent performance.

3. I wish also to welcome the newly elected and re-elected members of the Council and to extend our congratulations to them on their election. To the former members of the Governing Council I express our deep appreciation for their co-operation and assistance.

Mr. President,

4. The present session of the Governing Council has a special significance. It is the first session to be held in the new decade of the 1980s, with its promises and problems. It is also the session which precedes the special session of the General Assembly called upon to adopt a new international development strategy. For me, personally, this session has also a

particular significance. At this session I come close to the end of my present term as Executive Director. Let me therefore take this opportunity to review the difficulties faced and the accomplishments realized by UNEP during my period of office, with a look ahead at the major issues likely to confront us in the coming decade. I would like, however, to begin by dwelling briefly on the significant developments since your last session, as a backdrop to the agenda before you.

## II. MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE COUNCIL'S SEVENTH SESSION

5. Among the most significant developments on the international scene were the fifth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the third General Conference of UNIDO, and the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology. I am sure you are all aware of the results of these meetings and their impact on the international climate. Preparations for the United Nations Conference on Renewable Energy Sources are accelerating, and UNEP is actively participating in them. The Preparatory Committee for the New International Development Strategy has held several meetings, and last June I had the honour of addressing the Committee and conveying your views to it. Negotiations on the preamble and the goals and objectives of the new strategy are far advanced. The Committee will reconvene tomorrow, and is expected to start negotiations on policy measures. Positions are being established and discussions are actively pursued regarding the new round of global negotiations.

6. Within our own programme in UNEP, two joint statements were issued on 5 June 1979, one by the Administrator of UNDP and myself on environment and development, and the other with the President of the Scientific Committee for the Protection of the Environment (SCOPE) of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) on global life support systems.

7. On 5 March 1980 the World Conservation Strategy was launched in over thirty capitals, with the participation of Heads of State and Government, Crown Princes, Vice-Presidents and dignitaries, as well as a large number of world-famous environmentalists and scientists. The Strategy is certainly a remarkable result of five years of international team work co-ordinated by UNEP, together with IUCN and WWF, with the assistance of FAO and UNESCO as well as of the scientific community in more than 100 developed and developing countries on all continents.

8. The regional seminars on alternative patterns of development and lifestyles have all been held. The inter-regional seminar, convened in Nairobi four weeks ago, was attended by the executive secretaries of the regional commissions for Europe, Latin America and West Asia and by the Executive Director of Habitat. Eight eminent economists and ecologists from various regions of the world were also present. The meeting approved by consensus an agreed input to the new international development strategy. The executive secretaries of the regional commissions for Africa and for Asia and the Pacific concurred with the results of the meeting, which have been communicated to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and the Director General for Development and International Economic Co-operation.

9. UNEP's reports on the environmental impacts of nuclear energy and fossil fuels are out. The third report, on renewable energy sources is due soon, and preparations for the comparative study are progressing well.

10. During the past two months, UNEP has convened four important meetings requested by the Governing Council at its seventh session: on tropical forests, carbon dioxide, climate impact studies and soils policy. The second meeting of the Consultative Group for Desertification Control and the fifth session of the Working Group of Experts on Environmental Law were also held during the same period. Reports on these meetings are presented to you in various documents. The documents presented to or prepared by the various meetings can be made available to members of the Council. I am expecting your guidance on several of these subjects.

11. It was my privilege last November to address the High-level Meeting on the Protection of the Environment which was held in Geneva under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Europe. UNEP co-operated with ECE in the preparations for the meeting, which adopted a Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution and a Declaration on Low and Non-Waste Technology. The participants in the High-level Meeting expressed the wish to see ECE and UNEP co-operating in the implementation of the meeting's decisions. I would appreciate any guidance the Council may wish to give me in this respect.

12. In the period since the seventh session I had the honour of paying official visits to, or holding official consultations on occasions of attending specific functions in 16 countries: Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Senegal, China, United States of America, Mexico, Colombia, Federal Republic of Germany, Kuwait, Sudan, Somalia, India, Australia, New Zealand and the United Republic of Cameroon. Again and again in discussions with Heads of States or Governments, Cabinet Ministers and senior officials concerned with environmental problems in those countries, it was clearly demonstrated that the concern over environment is high, that actions are being taken; but, more often than not, still much remains to be done.

### III. MAJOR ITEMS BEFORE THE COUNCIL AT ITS EIGHTH SESSION

Mr. President,

13. Let me now bring to your attention some overall policy items before the present session of the Council. First the subject of interrelationships between resources, environment, population and development. Work in this field is accelerating in the United Nations system pursuant to decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and following the results of a United Nations Symposium held at Stockholm last year, which I attended. I see a major role for UNEP in influencing thinking in this area within the United Nations system. My proposals for the role UNEP should play in this field are presented in my introductory report (UNEP/GC.8/2). I hope the Governing Council will express its views regarding these proposals.

14. You also have before you at this session samples of the programme perspective document and the System-wide Medium-term Environment Programme (SWMTEP) document, as well as the traditional programme document, which has been drafted this time to report essentially on performance in implementing the programme since you last met.

15. I hope you will give this subject of programme documentation your careful consideration in the relevant Committee and advise me on how you want to see the documents presented to you at your next and subsequent sessions. It may be worthwhile at this juncture to recapitulate the linkages between the three documents.

16. The perspective document is directed at the world community as a whole. It will be the vehicle for UNEP's perception of the changing nature of environmental problems. These perceptions will increasingly reflect the results of Earthwatch, and of conceptual progress in such matters as alternative lifestyles and patterns of development, the nature of environmental management, the roles of governments and peoples in regard to environmental concerns and so on. The perspective document will, at some level of generality, appeal to the world to follow certain paths which are environmentally sound and sustainable, and will also present goals which the world should try to reach. It is those aspirational goals and the ways in which the world seeks to achieve them that set the context for what the United Nations system should try to achieve in supporting the world community which it serves.

17. Within this context, the System-wide Medium-term Environment Programme will set specific objectives for the six year medium-term period for UNEP and its partners in the United Nations system. Actions required to achieve these objectives are described, as are the actors, and the resources needed both from UNEP and from its partners. Achievement indicators are set out to serve as a check on performance.

18. The programme performance document will then report periodically on how the objectives are being met, in both substantive and resource terms.

19. To reflect the concepts of medium-term planning and programming as approved by the General Assembly, and the concepts of SWMTEP, I am proposing some revisions to the procedures for the Fund of UNEP. These revisions would not in any way alter the balance of authority between the Governing Council and the Executive Director. The proposed revised procedures would simplify work within UNEP and reduce the effort required by UNEP's partners in co-operative activities.

Mr. President,

20. Another subject on which I expect the guidance of the Council is the commemoration of the Stockholm Conference at the time of the tenth session of the Governing Council. My position on this subject is clear.

The regular session of the Governing Council in 1982 must have the sole responsibility for taking decisions on UNEP's activities and allocation of resources. The special session, to come in the middle of the regular session, should address the major trends in environmental concerns over the decade following 1982.

21. A major topic before the present session of the Governing Council is the operations and state of the Environment Fund. 1979 was the first year in which total expenditures exceeded total new resources received by the Fund. It also witnessed a particularly serious problem for the Fund, which has caused me concern throughout 1979 and even now as I speak. Although the financial rules allow us to enter into commitments on behalf of the Fund on the basis of the estimated resources and within the appropriations approved by the Governing Council, I have undertaken to maintain the liquidity of the Fund at all times. I can only maintain liquidity while entering into new commitments if pledged contributions are paid early in the year to which they relate. I brought the problem of late payments to the attention of the Council at its last session as a looming problem for 1979. The Council called for early payments of pledges. The response has been weak. Contributions to the Fund for 1979, although pledged at a higher rate than ever before, were paid later in the year as compared to 1978. By the end of June 1979, only 43 per cent of convertible currency contributions for the year had been paid, compared with 75 per cent at the same time the year before. In fact, up to today \$1.1 million of contributions pledged for 1979 are still not paid. In consequence, I had no choice but to hold back new project commitments until near the end of the year, by which time it was in a number of cases too late to start activities in 1979.

22. The position with regard to the payment of 1980 contributions seems to have deteriorated even further. I did not receive a single payment throughout the month of January. Up to the end of March, contributions of only some \$3.9 million in convertible currency had been paid, compared to close to \$5 million for the same period in 1979.

23. The Governing Council at its seventh session made UNEP responsible for the administration of three Trust Funds: for the Mediterranean, for the Kuwait Action Plan and for the Endangered Species Convention. Contributions to the Kuwait Trust Fund have exceeded the minimum requirements for project commitments, and there has been no serious difficulty in administering this fund, even though several Governments of the region have paid their pledges only in part or not at all. I am sure this situation will soon be corrected.

24. The situation with the Mediterranean Trust Fund has been more difficult. Contributions have been received much more slowly than could allow the efficient implementation of the Action Plan. I am hopeful that the difficulties we are facing now will soon be resolved and the Mediterranean Action Plan will be enabled to move ahead with vigour and determination.

25. Contributions to the Trust Fund for the Endangered Species Convention have also been received much more slowly than expected. The Environment Fund had to commit financial support for the Convention Secretariat at a higher level than previously agreed. These commitments will have to be adjusted to the agreed level as soon as adequate contributions flow into the Trust Fund.

26. Delegates will be aware that in addition to the three Trust Funds, a Special Account was established more than a year ago for the purpose of implementing the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. I am sorry to have to report that no contributions to the Special Account have been received so far.

27. In addition to UNEP's present responsibility for the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification we now have the World Conservation Strategy. We have the Action Plan for the Ozone Layer. We are moving quickly towards the development of regional and global plans of action to meet a number of environmental issues: at the regional level for the Caribbean, the Gulf of Guinea and the three Asian Seas, and at the global level for climate impact studies, tropical forests, carbon dioxide and a global soils policy. These plans of action are not an end in themselves. They have to be implemented. Implementation means more resources - human and financial. This is the major issue which the Governing Council should address squarely, and give me guidance as to where UNEP should go from here. There is no point in developing more plans for action, however excellent they may be, unless we are confident that there will be viable mechanisms for mobilizing sufficient resources to put them into effect.

#### IV. RETROSPECT AND PROSPECTS

Mr. President,

28. I have had the unique privilege of serving UNEP as its Executive Director for almost five years in addition to my two and half years of serving as Deputy. As I approach the end of my present term of office, I would like to share with you some of my thoughts on the difficulties and accomplishments of this formative period in UNEP's development.

29. One of the most pressing problems that UNEP has had to face in recent years relates to the establishment of a balanced programme reflecting the needs of both developed and developing countries. Although there is a global convergence of long-term interests and objectives, the short-term and medium-term preoccupations of the two groups of countries and their perception of immediate needs and constraints do not often coincide. A divergence of interests was foreseen at Stockholm, and the Plan of Action of the Conference, as well as the programme decision of the first session of the Governing Council in 1973, gave an orientation which sought to make UNEP's programme of activities equally relevant to both worlds. The prescription has not worked entirely satisfactorily.

30. From the outset, perceptions of various Governments regarding the question of concentration of UNEP activities varied widely. You know, the agencies know, we all know that to tackle too much at the same time is not conducive to efficient utilization of our scarce resources. While trying to work on a wide array of issues which rightly preoccupy the world community, it was necessary to concentrate. Some years back we proposed the formula of "concentration areas". I have proposed the 21 goals for 1982. All this, with one objective: to be efficient in those areas of key importance which require priority attention.

31. Yet, you will recall that at session after session of this Governing Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly I have had to try to reconcile the need for concentration with insistent demands for many diverse activities to which one or more Governments wanted UNEP to devote its time and attention and its increasingly scarce financial and human resources.

32. Besides those specific requests which reflect the particular priorities individual Governments attach to certain subjects - a fact which I fully understand and appreciate - there have been other factors which have made it difficult to concentrate time, effort and money on a few areas in which visible and impressive results could be accomplished. I refer now to the proliferation in recent years of concerns and alarms on many subjects related to the environment which have at times created grave concern for the future of our planet. UNEP, because of its very mandate, is itself continuously on the lookout for such concerns which should preoccupy us all. But UNEP must also follow all such developments closely to see whether they are given sufficient attention by Governments, specialized agencies or the international scientific community. If they are not, it is UNEP's task to bring this to your attention.

33. All this has not made our task of attempting to fashion a viable global programme easy. I have tried to maintain not so much a delicate balance of interests, but, rather, a balanced global programme from which the whole of mankind could benefit. I hope you will agree that, difficult as it may have been, through the collective wisdom of this Council the balanced programme you wanted has been preserved.

34. Mr. President, I am sure the Council appreciates the complexity not only of the problems to which UNEP is addressing itself, but also of the mechanisms through which UNEP operates. We are not a funding agency supporting activities implemented by others, nor are we an executing agency implementing programmes and projects in a clearly defined sector.

35. UNEP has the difficult task of attempting to develop a programme meant for implementation not by itself alone, but also by others - Governments, United Nations agencies and bodies and supporting organizations. Such an effort requires time, careful negotiations and the willing co-operation of partners. Views and information need to be sought, and consensus positions reached. It is equally necessary to avoid duplication of effort, create an atmosphere of harmony and dynamic conditions for working together.

36. There are two essential preconditions for such an exercise. The first is the development of an intellectual input which the other parties involved will consider authoritative enough and persuasive enough to act upon. This is not easy to develop. UNEP, with its small staff, does not have a wide range of specialists at its disposal. Nevertheless, for the period ahead we must of necessity concentrate on strengthening our intellectual leverage in a number of ways.

37. The second requirement relates to financial resources which would help provide our partners with necessary incentives to undertake tasks of primary interest to us. The resources currently available to the Environment Fund, affected as they are both by inflation and by stagnation, are not of such importance as to offer any but the most minimal inducement to our partners. It has thus become a matter of some urgency to have enough voluntary contributions for the effective implementation of priority activities approved by this Council.

38. One difficulty faced by UNEP stems from the rapid turnover of staff, particularly in areas of administration, including finance, budget and personnel. As you know the efficiency of substantive staff is a direct function of effective support. But it has proved extremely difficult to attract experienced administrative personnel to work with us. They are in short supply system-wide, and we don't have too much by way of incentives to offer in our small secretariat.

39. The recruitment of substantive staff has also proved to be problematical over the years. While many international organizations have a clear and well defined area of activity, UNEP's responsibilities cover a wide spectrum of specialization. It therefore does not have a clearly defined and well established professional community from which to recruit its substantive staff.

40. Member Governments have been active, sometimes over-active, in assisting UNEP in its recruitment efforts. Because of its small size and core character, the quality of every single staff member in UNEP is of crucial importance to its effective functioning. Yet not always the highest calibre of manpower has been offered by Governments as staff or consultants. In several instances, the staff seconded by Governments have been poor and most disappointing. I know that the type of talent we are looking for is not abundant. This is particularly true in developing countries, because of the general scarcity of highly trained expertise. Nevertheless, we can only serve you better if your response to our staff needs is better oriented.

41. A major problem for the organization in the last two years has been the shortfall in resources compared to the target approved by the Governing Council. Let me put the record straight. I must start by expressing deep gratitude to a number of countries which have come forward with substantially increased contributions for our planning period 1978-1981. Unfortunately they are few, and their example has not been widely followed. A large number of Governments have yet to contribute to the Fund. Even on the basis of pledged contributions regarding which there are major uncertainties, we are still more than \$24 million short of the target for the four-year period. Thus, year after year, we have had to exercise the most painful prudence in committing funds for new and important activities which the Council has earlier approved



but for which sufficient resources have not been made available. Year after year, our hands have been tied, despite an apparent comfortable "cash carry-over" which has sometimes been used as a justification for not increasing contributions. If approved programmes have not been implemented as effectively as they should have been, it has been due, in large part, to the uncertainty regarding the volume and timing of expected contributions and, more importantly, the substantial shortage of resources available to implement these programmes.

42. Another problem which has been confronting us for the past three years is the issue of efficient communication and data processing. One way of dealing with this issue has been the establishment by UNEP of a sending/receiving station through the Symphonie Satellite. Our negotiations are very far advanced with the United Nations in New York and Geneva, as well as with the Governments concerned: France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Switzerland. In fact, France and the Federal Republic of Germany have made a very generous offer in this respect. The matter is now in the hands of our host Government, Kenya, and I hope it will respond without further delay to our request to start the operation soon in compliance with the Headquarters Agreement for ensuring the efficient functioning of UNEP.

43. Mr. President, if I have drawn attention to the problems and difficulties that UNEP has faced during the period of my office, it is not to inject a sense of pessimism in our deliberations. Not all the signs are negative. There certainly have been major achievements. Let me give a few examples:

(a) The relationship established with our partners, the members of the United Nations system. After a period of ups and downs, these relationships are now stabilizing on an open, frank and most constructive basis, as you will see from the report of ACC to the Governing Council. We have learned from experience which aspects of our methods of work have irritated our partners. They in turn have learned to accept the legitimacy of our concerns. We look to our partners as repositories of experience and vehicles for action by which the United Nations system can help the world community to meet environmental concerns;

(b) Our methods of programme development, first the three-level programmatic process, then the move to joint programming, and now thematic joint programming and the methodology of SIMTEP, are major accomplishments. When occasionally I become impatient with the development of our programming, I reflect on the progress made over-all in the United Nations system, where some of the concepts of our programmatic process remain an objective towards which the system hopes shortly to move, and I feel that UNEP has indeed contributed and is contributing meaningfully to over-all system-wide co-operation concepts;

(c) Let me also list for your, without amplification, some of the specific areas where UNEP's efforts have borne fruit:

(i) The successful regional seas programme;

(ii) The reflection in drafts of the new international development strategy of UNEP's views and approaches on the reconciliation of economic and environmental concerns;

- (iii) The programme on cost/benefit analysis of environmental protection measures;
- (iv) The declaration of principles by multilateral development financing agencies on the incorporation of environmental considerations into their development policies, programmes and projects;
- (v) The results of the seminars on alternative patterns of development and lifestyles held in co-operation with the regional economic commissions;
- (vi) UNEP's positive role in work on interrelationships between resources, environment, population and development;
- (vii) The industry seminars and the resulting guidelines;
- (viii) The development of environmental impact assessment guidelines;
- (ix) The effective INFOTERRA network of focal points and a number of sectoral information systems such as the industry and environment information and data system;
- (x) The important work of the Co-ordinating Committee on the Ozone Layer;
- (xi) Our assistance to Governments in establishing priorities among their environmental problems and developing national environmental legislation and environmental legislation and environmental machinery;
- (xii) The Plan of Action to Combat Desertification;
- (xiii) The development of a global plan for the wise utilization of tropical forests;
- (xiv) UNEP's assumption of responsibility for the Climate Impact Studies Programme;
- (xv) The state of the environment reports, which are receiving wide publicity and are triggering serious consideration of emerging issues: carbon dioxide, firewood, toxic chemicals, environmental diseases, resistance to pesticides and so on;
- (xvi) The Tbilisi Plan of Action and our work on environmental education;
- (xvii) Our reports on the environmental impacts of production and use of various sources of energy.

Mr. President,

44. UNEP is only just over seven years old. To have achieved all that we have done has meant a tremendous effort on the part of its very small staff: as I have said on several occasions, only as big as a division in a major organization of the United Nations system. Our "small core" character has been seriously tested. The achievements realized are the work of the staff of UNEP, those present and those who have left us. They are also the work of a whole host of senior advisers, who accepted me as one of them, and were extremely kind to come and give me advice, sometimes at very short notice and in the midst of their very crowded programmes. To all these I pay tribute. And above all, my tribute and profound gratitude goes to you, to your Governments, who have always encouraged and guided us to what we consider our successes.

#### V. CONCLUSION: MAJOR ISSUES FOR THE DECADE AHEAD

Mr. President,

45. As I have noted earlier, we are entering this year the new decade of the 1980s. Despite all our efforts to protect and improve the environment, we are entering the new decade with a long list of dangerous situations. Let me give a few examples:

(a) Nearly half of the world's rain forests have been destroyed. At the current rate, between five and ten million hectares are lost every year;

(b) Only about 11 per cent of the world's land area offers no serious limitations to agriculture;

(c) Each year we are losing some six million hectares of arable land to the processes of desertification. Almost 12 million hectares of agricultural lands were converted to non-agricultural uses in the United States of America alone in the past ten years. Between 1960 and 1970, Japan lost 7.3 per cent of its agricultural land to buildings and roads;

(d) In India, some 6,000 million tons of soil are lost every year from an area less than one-fourth of the size of the country. We can realize the magnitude of such a loss when we recall that nature takes from 100 to 400 years or more to generate only 1 cm of topsoil;

(e) Coastal lands and breeding grounds for over two thirds of the world's fisheries are being degraded or destroyed;

(f) Over 1,000 animal and some 25,000 plant species are today threatened with extinction;

(g) Large segments of our atmosphere, our soils, our rivers and our seas are polluted in one way or the other. Agricultural runoffs, dumping of hazardous wastes, acid rain, toxic chemicals, carbon dioxide build up in the atmosphere and ozone depletion are all with us.

46. We are also witnessing the emergence of new sets of environmental problems. One set is brought about by the energy problems facing the world. Essentially, it relates to the new developments which are taking place in coal liquefaction and the use of crops for alcohol production to replace oil. The former may lead to a serious build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, while the latter implies, among other things, serious competition for land between food and fuel production. A second set is what I called at the ECE high level meeting "another form of transboundary pollution". I meant by that the environmental problems induced by transfer of hazardous goods and technologies, as well as toxic wastes, from developed to developing countries. Governmental and non-governmental quarters in some western countries are protesting against the use of third world countries as dumping grounds for hazardous wastes. Developing countries are calling for assistance in identifying hazards in products which they import. Yet export of banned chemicals by producing countries continues, as does the transfer of hazardous technologies from developed to developing countries under the pretext that the environmental carrying capacity of the latter is still high. The third set of emerging problems relates to the potential hazards of overfishing and of oil exploration in Antarctica and the Southern Ocean. Overfishing of krill, a tiny shrimp-like creature, can endanger several species of very important marine living resources. In conditions like those of Antarctica, oil operating hazards are very high and thus oil exploration there should be approached with the utmost caution.

Mr. President,

47. These issues may be seen as serious problems. But we should also look at them as opportunities for real, genuine, candid international co-operation. We all know that while the resource base for development is eroding, the resulting environmental hazards are increasing and taking more complex and wide-ranging forms, attacking the symptoms of environmental degradation can only buy a limited pause. The problems must be attacked at the root. While we fight the symptoms of environmental degradation, therefore, and we must expand our knowledge of the basic causal processes simultaneously seek and implement solutions which are mutually reinforcing. These solutions must have a positive impact on the whole interrelated system of resources, people, environment and development. Such a holistic approach offers both challenges and opportunities.

48. An approach of this kind requires new concepts and techniques of management, in which costs of required actions may need to be borne by groups - be they departments of government or sectors of society - other than those who reap the benefit. Situations may also arise where costs are borne by some nations, but benefits accrue not only to them

but also to others. The true justification for such endeavours where costs accrue in a different pattern from benefits is the over-all pattern of benefit for our generation and generations yet to be born.

49. There are various ways of developing multifaceted solutions which take account of this complex system of interrelationships. Let me mention two possible points of entry. The first relates to spatial planning, where the rational management of land influences the environment, the use of resources, and the distribution of the population. Such spatial planning techniques can increase the carrying capacity of our planet. The second relates to energy, where the pace of change is so dynamic that it affords the leverage needed to affect positively a whole host of problems ranging from the use of materials and the production of hazardous waste, through agricultural practices and transportation structures, to human settlements and societal patterns.

Mr. President,

50. Our problems and our opportunities are different aspects of the same reality. Possibly the central issue is our inability to look to man's long-term welfare, to muster the courage to accept and use change in beneficial ways, instead of being the victims of some juggernaut. We see examples of this inability in industrialized countries, where economic problems have led in certain cases not to forward-looking solutions but to attempts to seek palliatives, and to a move away from concern for the environment. We also see examples in developing countries, where such problems as the advance of deserts and the disappearance of forests are not accorded by the countries concerned the same significance as problems perceived as more immediate. The resources the world expends on the arms race are another symptom of our inability to take hard decisions today to safeguard our tomorrow. The real issue is the lack of commitment to the long term. The leadership of the nations of the world and of the institutions which serve it must show the moral courage badly needed to effect the basic changes required to meet the critical problems of the years ahead.

Thank you, Mr.

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