

Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

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Volume III

*Statements Made by Heads of State or
Government at the Summit Segment
of the Conference*



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Statement by H.E. Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao,
Prime Minister of the Republic of India

We would like to thank you, Mr. President, for hosting our Conference in this serene, and yet vivacious city, which reflects at once nature's benediction and man's urge to enhance its splendour. We cherish the warmth of the welcome that we have received from the people and the Government of Brazil. It has made easier our long march to Rio.

We inhabit a single planet but several worlds. There is a world of abundance where plenty brings pollution. There is a world of want where deprivation degrades life. Such a fragmented planet cannot survive in harmony with nature and the environment or indeed, with itself. It can assure neither sustained peace nor sustainable development. We must, therefore, ensure that the affluence of some is not derived from the poverty of the many. As Mahatma Gandhi put it with characteristic simplicity, our world has enough for each person's need, but not for his greed.

At this Conference, we must seek and define the golden mean between drawing from nature what we need to sustain ourselves and leaving to it what it requires to sustain itself for the future. Indira Gandhi had perceived at the Stockholm Conference in 1972 that as long as several worlds share our single planet, very little can be done about sustaining life on it. Today it is clear, we cannot have conservation of the environment without the promise of development, even as we cannot have sustained development without the preservation of the environment. The recognition of this symbiosis is the only enduring basis on which this Conference can attain its purposes.

There is, to my mind, need for a large-scale awareness programme in all countries, developed and developing. Again, this realization should come across the board, without becoming an electoral issue, over-championed by some political parties and, for the same reason, cold-shouldered by others. It should become a common national and international norm. Only on this basis can a political consensus be built, in the interest of future generations.

Now, for some practical measures to tackle this common challenge: the late Shri Rajiv Gandhi as India's young and far-sighted Prime Minister had thought of the subject of environment most earnestly and minutely. His proposal at the Belgrade Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement for a Planet Protection Fund was designed to make all countries, save the least developed, bear an equitable financial burden for accessing environment-friendly technologies. The basic approach of this proposal is impeccable. My appeal to the world leaders is that in some form or another, we must consider it seriously.

A whole new range of such technologies will need to be developed and existing ones either effectively adapted or discarded. In this sense all countries are in relatively uncharted waters. It is not a simple question of transfer of technology as is commonly understood. Indeed, the process has to start with stopping the transfer of destructive technologies, which alone will give incentive to the development of environment-friendly technologies. Thereafter will come the stage of transferring those new technologies everywhere. For this, we will need to pool the experience and draw upon the collective and accumulated knowledge and skills of humankind as a whole.

Countries which are not at a high level of industrial development also have much to offer to this collective endeavour. Their peoples retain a close affinity and kinship with nature and have learnt to make the best use of its resources in areas like traditional and herbal medicine, water-harvesting and management. At the very least, they have not yet become experts in creating pollution. Their life has a larger element of contentment, which prevents over-exploitation of resources. What they really need is a decent normal life.

We in India have embarked on a massive programme to develop non-conventional sources of energy, particularly solar and wind energy. The technology is known, but is said to be uneconomic at the moment. I have no doubt that an earnest R&D effort, as well as a determined bid to achieve economies of scale, will make it economically attractive and acceptable. I would appeal to all developed countries, with their vast R&D potential, to play a prominent part in this venture. They would be helping a vast number of developing countries in one of the best ways imaginable.

As part of cooperation among developing countries, the Group of 15 countries have adopted solar energy applications as a key project for joint research and development. They have also recognized the great importance of preserving biodiversity even while developing beneficial biotechnology products. This is the basis for another G-15 project - the creation of a Gene Bank. For both these projects, India is the coordinator. Both of these contribute to the purposes of this Conference.

I would like to pledge our readiness to share the fruits of our R&D efforts in these areas with all the countries of the world, with all those that are interested in the cause of a cleaner Earth.

The reversal of our planet's degradation would be that much easier and speedier if we were to join hands together in such endeavours. I suggest the setting up of joint ventures or joint R&D projects between developed and developing countries to tackle environmental issues together. We need to tackle these practical questions through international cooperation. There are many successful examples of such cooperation. A world-wide effort in the 1970s succeeded in eradicating smallpox. Improved varieties of seeds developed by an American scientist working on Mexican strains of wheat, triggered off our own Green Revolution in India. If this Summit succeeds in mobilizing a similar world-wide effort in the cause of environment and development, success would not be beyond us.

We know that the resolution of these issues will take time. We should not expect instant results on everything at this first Conference. To my mind, therefore, this Conference marks the commencement of a process and must become part of a continuing review and action. We would be happy to work together with other nations for evolving an appropriate mechanism for this purpose. This should not become a matter of contention, but a dialogue among nations infused with the spirit of far-reaching global responsibility and commitment.

I wish to emphasize that success in what we have started today will only be possible if we avoid the temptation of treating the issues before us as subjects for political posturing and bargaining. Collective action is not possible if one group of nations claims innocence on one item while another

avoids any responsibility or commitment on some other item. All the issues before us today are integral links in a single chain, a single package to save the Earth. The urgency of the task also needs to be highlighted by suggesting at least approximate time-frames. All countries must make credible commitments. India is certainly prepared to do so.

Several hundred years ago, poets in India had paid their tributes to the Earth they cherished. They sang:

"The ocean is your girdle,
Your Bosom the mountains,
Goddess Earth, my obeisance to you,
Forgive me for daring to touch you
With my feet."

That remarkable reverence for the Earth is what all of us need to imbibe here in Rio. That will impart real meaning to this Earth Summit.

Statement by H.E. Prof. Anibal Cavaco Silva, Prime Minister
of the Portuguese Republic and current President of the
European Council

I should like first of all, on my own behalf and on behalf of the States members of the European Community, to thank Brazil and, in particular, its President Fernando Collor, for the hospitality and welcome which the Government and generous people of Brazil have given to this Conference. I congratulate the Brazilian authorities for the outstanding organizational skills which they have shown and I also salute the United Nations on this historic initiative.

Gathered here today in this city of Rio de Janeiro are heads of State or Government from the countries of five continents. Together we shall be considering vital questions concerning the environment and development which will have a decisive influence on the future of mankind in the coming decades.

The European Community and its member States have taken an active part in this Conference, as they did in the preparations for the Conference. I am especially pleased that the Community's constructive role has been recognized by other partners of the international community and that the positions we have taken are viewed with appreciation, particularly by the developing countries. The European Community wants the Conference to be a success.

It should be remembered that the Conference is taking place at a time of profound historical and political significance. We are witnessing a process of acceleration of history which began in Europe in the late 1980s, but whose impact was soon felt by the entire international community. Europe, and the European Community in particular, has a fundamental role to play in the profound changes occurring in the world arena. We wish to make our contribution so that, together, we may find the most appropriate and correct responses to the issues discussed at this Conference, among which the search for forms of sustainable development has assumed particular importance.

The European Community has devoted substantial effort to the search for solutions to the major questions under discussion and can put forward ideas and proposals which constitute a positive contribution for the future of all of us. The basic approach which we advocate entails cooperation among all countries on the basis of updated, more appropriate models, and is reflected in a genuine partnership that is world wide in scope.

The importance which the European Community and its member States attach to the environment has already prompted the inclusion of environmental concerns in the common policies of the Twelve. At the meeting of the European Council held at Maastricht in December, we redoubled our efforts to create the global conditions conducive to economic development that is sustainable and compatible with protection of the environment. We once again emphasized, in particular, the importance of community policies in the area of development cooperation and assistance. We have sought in this way to demonstrate our determination to be in the vanguard of the global effort to promote development and defend the environment, and thereby to emphasize that these two policies can no longer be thought of without recognizing the intimate linkage that exists between them.

We have gathered here to reaffirm, by means of a solemn political commitment, our determination to give effect not only to the conclusions of this Conference but also to the two Conventions which I will be signing on behalf of the European Communities and on behalf of my own country. Allow me, therefore, once again to call upon the remaining developed countries to join the Community in this step.

As far as the outcome of this Conference is concerned, I would single out, first and foremost, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which has updated and, at the same time, strengthened the 1972 Stockholm Declaration. It is a document whose political significance I should like to underscore. The States members of the European Community, in endorsing this declaration of faith in the future of mankind, are assuming a solemn commitment to their peoples and to the world. The Rio Declaration must serve as a basis for the establishment of new relationships between all interested parties, both public and private, which must, in a responsible manner, respond appropriately to the challenge which we are facing.

Another important result of this Conference will be the adoption of Agenda 21, a coherent collection of provisions embodying a programme of future action to promote sustainable development.

For the first time, in an unambiguous way, Agenda 21 indicates that preservation of the environment cannot be divorced from the elimination of poverty and hunger, the reduction of population growth and the improvement of public health services.

The European Community and its member States have decided to make available to the developing countries, in the context of improved cooperation, new and additional funding to help them implement the decisions and recommendations contained in Agenda 21 and fulfil the obligations stemming from the Conventions signed at this Conference.

As you know, the European Community and its member States rank first in the world in the provision of development assistance, with contributions totalling some \$26 billion annually.

The European Community, recognizing the extraordinary importance of this Conference, wanted at this juncture to pledge its commitment to carrying out the decisions taken at this Conference. It is therefore with great satisfaction that I announce, on behalf of the European Community and its member States, their immediate commitment to step up assistance to the developing countries in the area of sustainable development and to increase financing for Agenda 21.

Our aim is to allocate as quickly as possible around \$4 billion, including new and additional resources for specific projects and essential programmes under Agenda 21 as an initial contribution towards its speedy implementation.

Under each of these headings, the highest priority will be given to the alleviation of poverty, the transfer of technology and the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the developing countries.

Activities undertaken as part of this initiative will, where appropriate, take advantage of the experience and know-how of non-governmental organizations.

The right which every State has to utilize its natural resources cannot be divorced from the duty to guarantee that the economic activities which they carry out under the protection of their own jurisdiction should not adversely affect the environment in other countries or regions. This principle is already contained in the Stockholm Declaration. It is our understanding in Europe that the right to development carries with it the necessity of a new attitude towards the utilization of natural resources and greater solidarity among all States. Consequently, protection of the environment, which is the common heritage of mankind, can be effectively achieved only in the context of close international cooperation.

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is, in terms of the principles it contains, an example of the apportionment of responsibilities between developed countries, developing countries and countries whose economies are in transition.

I should like, in my capacity as current President of the European Council, to make a solemn appeal from this podium for as many States as possible to sign and ratify this Convention, whose early entry into force will make it possible to cope with the many problems threatening our biosphere. I pledge anew the commitment of the European Community to promote the convening of preparatory meetings on the additional protocols as soon as possible.

Although the Convention on Biological Diversity falls short of our original expectations, it does contain a set of measures that provide a solid basis for future progress in this sphere.

Apart from its fundamental role in preserving biological diversity, a very positive feature of this Convention is that it recognizes the principles

of safeguarding legitimate national interests and shared common responsibility, which must prevail in relations between States with respect to matters that have a bearing on the very survival of the planet.

The European Community and its member States hope that it will be possible to reach a consensus on the statement of forest principles, as forests are of the utmost importance to the economies and the social and cultural life of most countries.

I wish to refer again to the threat of desertification, a phenomenon which today affects one quarter of the Earth's surface and one sixth of the world's population, hitting Africa with particular severity, and which calls for a comprehensive, common and internationally coordinated response. The convention to be adopted will constitute the cornerstone of this response.

I am therefore hopeful that it will be possible speedily to pave the way for negotiation and the adoption of legally binding instruments so that the measures which the urgency and seriousness of the situation require may be taken without delay.

Allow me to conclude my remarks speaking as Prime Minister of Portugal.

At the end of this century, we shall be celebrating the quinentenary of the arrival of Portuguese navigators in Brazil. It is with added satisfaction that we note the holding here in Rio de Janeiro of an international event on such a scale as the one in which we are participating here today.

When this historic Conference is over, Rio de Janeiro will be remembered as the starting-point of a more fruitful cooperation among States in the quest for sustainable development and preservation of the environment.

My country, which has a centuries-old tradition of dialogue and cooperation between countries and continents, feels quite comfortable in making an appeal from this podium for cooperation among all nations in the vital areas of environment and development.

Policies for environmental protection and support for development have as their basis and their end the human person. This is the raison d'être of our efforts.

The degradation of the environment which is occurring in many parts of the world is, unfortunately, accompanied by the gross degradation of the living conditions and the dignity of the human person. The war on poverty must continue to be the top priority, for man will never be able to enjoy the blessings of nature unless he also enjoys the minimum conditions of a decent life.

Only by affirming the dignity of the human person and hence the inalienable right of human beings to freedom will mankind be able to establish a harmonious relationship with planet Earth.

I am convinced that, together, we will be able to find new horizons and conquer the great challenge which lies before us.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Blaise Compaore, President and Head
of Government of Burkina Faso and current Chairman of the
Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the
Sahel

My distinguished colleagues and peers, the Heads of State of the countries members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), which consists of the Gambia, Cape Verde, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal, on appointing me Chairman of the Committee, entrusted me with the task of addressing this august assembly on behalf of all the Sahelian peoples with a view to describing our problems and sharing our concerns with you.

This historic Summit comes at a time when the whole world is experiencing serious ecological and environmental disruptions which gravely endanger the entire human race and therefore oblige us all, in North and South alike, to fight shoulder to shoulder to eliminate these scourges and save our planet.

This meeting comes at a particularly opportune moment for the CILSS countries, which are currently facing a concomitant and closely interrelated economic and environmental crisis.

The Sahelian economic situation is characterized by a deficit in both the balance of payments and public finances, by sluggish macroeconomic indicators, by a deterioration in overall agricultural output and the terms of trade, and by an intolerable indebtedness which vitiates any prospect of funding productive investments.

At the environmental level, desertification and deforestation remain a genuine scourge affecting 2.5 million hectares of land and causing annual losses estimated at more than 26 billion dollars.

The consequences for social sectors such as education and training, health, housing and nutrition are particularly negative and they affect the most vulnerable groups in our societies.

This crisis is further aggravated by uncontrolled population growth and rapid urbanization.

In order to correct these imbalances, our countries have introduced policies aimed at sustained and sustainable development:

Firstly, by undertaking an internal restructuring of production systems through the implementation of structural adjustment programmes which impose austerity and very heavy sacrifices in order to relaunch productive investment;

Secondly, by defining programmes which perfectly integrate the environmental dimension and allow a rational and efficient exploitation of our natural heritage;

Thirdly, and mainly within the CILSS framework, by reinforcing and consolidating regional and subregional cooperation around the dual objective of restoring the ecological balances in the Sahel and achieving food self-sufficiency.

This is the place to restate my sincere gratitude to our various partners and donors who, for two decades, have been extending constant support and active solidarity to our institution, CILSS. I should like to mention specifically the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, the United Nations Environment Programme, the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the various non-governmental organizations which devote themselves untiringly to the Sahelian cause.

Having followed the organization of this Conference closely and with interest, as well as having taken an active part in the preparatory work, the CILSS countries desire the realization of the hopes which have been legitimately aroused.

We fully endorse the common African position adopted at Abidjan during the African regional preparatory meeting for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

At that meeting, our States reasserted the need for an international convention on desertification control and for it to be adopted as a matter of urgency. With this in mind, we cherish the firm hope that the Conference will take a decision to this effect and that an appropriate framework will be established.

We express the fervent wish that this historic Rio Conference will lead to the establishment of a new environmental order.

Indeed, it is high time that humankind shouldered its collective responsibilities.

Obviously, the priorities of the industrialized countries regarding environment and development do not always coincide with those of the developing countries. The same is true of their respective responsibilities.

But, given the threat hanging over our common planet, the best approach is to keep quiet about what can divide us in order the better to unite our efforts in an enormous undertaking to safeguard our Earth and make the environment a component of economic and social development.

We must therefore agree on a joint definition of the objectives and terms of international cooperation with regard to environment and development, for these two key ideas are closely linked.

We hope that our Conference will address all aspects of environment and development and it should adopt in a spirit of consensus an Earth Charter and sign the climate change and biodiversity conventions.

In this connection, the recent developments concerning the principle of drafting an international convention on desertification control are encouraging.

The countries of our planet affected by the scourge of desertification, especially the CILSS countries, do indeed have great hopes for the adoption of such a measure, for it will help to eradicate mass poverty in the regions severely affected by almost permanent climatic instability.

Furthermore, the Sahel's debt service is becoming insupportable despite the various reschedulings which have benefited many of our countries. The international community should therefore take more effective action to find a definitive solution to the debt problem by, inter alia, granting debt cancellation or moratoria and redefining international trade on fairer and more equitable bases.

As a means of stimulating economic recovery it is essential to adopt Agenda 21, a programme of action on environment and development to be implemented during the twenty-first century. But in addition to adopting this Agenda, it is imperative for us to undertake to ensure that the resources for its implementation are made available.

While reiterating to the Conference the wishes for full success expressed by the countries members of CILSS, I must also single out and salute on their behalf the effective action taken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, in his personal contribution to the holding of this Conference.

I should also like to pay a deserved tribute to Mr. Maurice Strong, the Secretary-General of the Conference, for the tireless work he has done to ensure the smooth conduct and success of this historic Rio Conference.

I remain deeply convinced that our Conference will realize its objectives if we, peoples of North and South, join together in an appropriate and comprehensive way to shoulder our common responsibility to restore our environment and combat poverty throughout the world. By so doing we shall guarantee to future generations a planet simply fit to live in.

The Sahel is confident that this Earth Summit will be crowned with success.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom,
President of the Republic of Maldives

I stand before you as a representative of an endangered people. We are told that as a result of global warming and sealevel rise, my country, the Maldives, may, some time during the next century, disappear from the face of the earth. This concern may be shared by other small States represented here. I fear that this Conference might be the last opportunity at this level to initiate global action that would save the Maldives and other low-lying island States from becoming environmental victims of the rising oceans.

Before proceeding further, may I extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your unanimous election as President of this historic Earth Summit being held in this beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro. The preparations made for the Conference are, indeed, impressive. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to you and the Government of Brazil for the excellent arrangements made for our comfort. Indeed, Brazil affords a most fitting venue for our Summit. Its extensive coastline, including some of the world's most magnificent beaches, and the exotic Amazon forest, sheltering an infinite assortment of plant and animal life, make Brazil an environmentalist's paradise. Set against this background and with you at its helm, I share your hope, Mr. President, that our meeting will be successful.

Let me also pay tribute to the Conference Secretary-General, Mr. Maurice Strong, a pioneer of great distinction in environmental affairs, and to the members of the Conference secretariat for their dedicated work in the enormous task of preparing for this meeting. I also commend the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change for the central role they have played in the often difficult negotiations and complex technical discussions leading up to the Summit.

Two decades ago, at the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, the world was concerned with the implications of environmental degradation on human health. Pollution of the global commons such as the air, water, seas and lakes dominated the discussions. There was understandably little attention paid then to a change in the concept of economic development. However, the present environmental crisis can only be said to be the product of short-sighted economic and social policies. The progressive exploitation of the Earth's resources at such an accelerating tempo and the rapid growth in the world population have not only aggravated environmental problems, but also those of poverty, disease and economic disparity.

Even at this very moment, as we meet, extensive forest areas are cleared, numerous animal species lost, the ozone layer depleted, the air, water and the sea gradually poisoned. Freshwater is becoming scarce, land for cultivation and settlement is decreasing, and desertification is taking place at a rapid pace. The social, economic and human costs of these are horrendous. We are gathered here to try and reverse these alarming trends, and to agree on how to save the Earth, the one and only planet that we have, for future generations of mankind.

In addressing this august and distinguished assembly, I should like to reflect a little on the nature of island societies, their problems and their special qualities. As long as man has faced the sea, he has wondered and dreamt of what may lie beyond the waters. The record of his achievement in crossing such barriers is found in the archaeological remains on many islands and isolated continents. Fifty thousand years ago, man successfully crossed the sea from South-East Asia to New Guinea and 25,000 years ago to Australia; by about the same time, he had established populations in Melanesia. The Indian Ocean people founded communities on the Maldive Islands probably some 3,500 years before the present, while the colonization of the far-flung islands of the central Pacific followed later, around 2,000 years ago. When

Columbus crossed the Atlantic, a mere 500 years ago, he found the islands of the Caribbean already occupied by prosperous and healthy people.

Such long periods of occupation of our island homes have meant the development of an enormous cultural and linguistic diversity. Each island society has endowed the global community with a rich heritage of languages, religions, cultures and different ways of organizing societies in harmony with nature. Despite this vivid and varied social pattern, island societies have much in common: an abundant traditional knowledge of the sea; of stars and navigation; of fish and fisheries; of winds, tides and currents; and of boat-building and sail- and rope-making.

A common basis for island societies, both then and now, is their dependence on the sea and on the rich diversity of marine resources available to support them. This reliance on the ocean reflects the limited land areas characteristic of many island groups and countries. The dynamic nature of many islands is evident in the changes which we see between the seasons when sand is moved from one side of an island to the other; or, more dramatically, when storms form new islands and destroy others. Island societies have learnt to cope with such changes: to adapt, to move and change their behaviour to suit the changing environment. Unfortunately, the balance which existed between people and their island environments has now been irrevocably changed by the over-exploitation of natural resources and the unprecedented population growth.

Health care, introduced to many islands in the last few decades, has reduced mortality, particularly among infants, and has led to rapid population growth. Aggregation of populations around centres of employment and services, such as education and health, has led to high densities, often beyond the carrying capacity of the island concerned. Malé, the capital city of the Maldives, for example, has a population of 58,000 on an island 1,800 metres long and 1,200 metres wide. High population densities have, of course, given rise to severe local environmental problems involving solid waste disposal, marine pollution from human effluents, coastal zone management difficulties, shortfall in supplies of construction materials, food and drinking water, and local depletion of marine resources. Technical and scientific solutions to environmental problems which have been devised for large countries and huge cities do not work in small islands. Problems of scale, of small and fragile economies, and the limited indigenous scientific and technical expertise, all render such solutions difficult, if not impossible to apply.

Despite the difficulties, and in keeping with the adaptable and resilient nature of island communities, the Maldives has not sat still and waited for solutions to its environmental and developmental problems to be handed to it from some external source. In addressing our own problems, in our own way, we have already taken a number of practical measures. Some years ago, we enacted legislation on the conservation of hawksbill and green turtles; and recently, submitted to Parliament a draft law on environment protection and conservation on a wider scope; enforced sewage and garbage disposal standards; conducted afforestation programmes; and strengthened the institutional capacity for environmental conservation. Because of coastal erosion, we have transferred people from four islands to better protected ones. We have banned coral mining from house reefs and reduced tariffs on building materials to preserve our coral reefs and marine ecosystem. We established a national commission

for the protection of the environment in 1984; developed a national environment action plan in 1989; commenced environmental research and monitoring programmes, and combined environment and planning together in a single Ministry.

In the regional context, the Maldives has participated in the wide-ranging discussion and research of environmental problems in the forums of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and has been instrumental in designating 1992 as the SAARC Year of the Environment. The SAARC study on the greenhouse effect was carried out at our initiative. On the recommendation of my Government to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Vancouver in 1987, a comprehensive study on climate change was carried out by a group of Commonwealth experts. To enhance further our commitment to international cooperation in the field of environmental protection, we have signed the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal.

Thus, the Maldives has responded to the challenge of protecting the environment in so far as it can, but international assistance in the process is greatly needed, particularly in the face of new challenges posed by global warming and sealevel rise. A 20-centimetre rise in sealevel by the year 2030 may not sound much, but to an island nation with 80 per cent of its land less than two metres above sealevel, this is substantial. Up to 80 per cent of the area of the smaller islands could be lost, and even the larger islands could lose 20 per cent of their land area. The increase in the intensity and frequency of storms that may occur with climate change will add further to the instability of our fragile islands. The unusually high waves and swells which struck several of our islands in 1987 and the severe storms that swept across the country in 1990 were experiences quite unprecedented in our modern history. We are convinced that all our islands, including those where we have heavily invested in infrastructure, such as tourist resorts, airports, fish canneries, hospitals and schools, or where our population is centred, would be extremely vulnerable to the consequences of sealevel rise. Indeed, if the worst case prediction of a 1-metre rise in sealevel were to occur by the end of the next century, then the very survival of our islands will be threatened. We might even cease to exist as a nation.

Understandably, the people of the Maldives are deeply distressed over this alarming prospect. A petition signed by over 112,000 people, which constitutes 74 per cent of our population over 10 years of age, calling for international action to save the Maldives is to be presented here in Rio. We are happy that one of the developed European nations, Switzerland, has decided to join us in our endeavour to establish an international organization, the Green Crescent/Green Cross, to carry out emergency relief work in disaster situations caused by environmental degradation.

In responding to global issues of environment and development, we need to share experiences of past successes and failures among island nations and, indeed, we are pleased to note the inclusion of an islands programme in the oceans chapter of Agenda 21. This recognition of the special status of small islands by the international community is particularly gratifying. To be effective, this islands programme will need a focus within the international

system to assist in mobilizing the financial and technical resources needed to tackle immediate problems of sustainable development, and to help in developing the endogenous capacity for managing our present environment and planning future developments. A small but competent scientific and technical secretariat is needed within the United Nations to provide this focus.

Agenda 21 is an ambitious document, a credit to the hard work of both the secretariat and the government delegates who have worked on its development over the last two years. To fully implement all of the proposed programmes and activities, an estimated \$600 billion will be needed annually. Such a sum may appear enormous, but to put this in the context of my own country, providing sea defences for only 50 of the 200 inhabited islands will cost an estimated \$1.5 billion. In contrast, global defence spending is estimated at about \$1 trillion annually. If the world community can mobilize such extensive resources constantly for such destructive purposes, which set back development and destroy the global environment, then surely it must be possible to mobilize resources for more constructive purposes: to build rather than to destroy; to manage rather than to lay waste; and to unify the world community rather than to divide it.

The war for human survival, which mankind has now to wage against a common foe, is accurately described by Shridath Ramphal, when he says: "It is not a war of man against man, nation against nation, but rather a war of humanity against unsustainable living. It is the only war we can afford. Only through enlightened change can humanity hope to triumph."

This very special Summit attended by over 100 leaders from over 180 countries provides us with an ideal opportunity to rise to the challenge that faces us. If we allow this opportunity to slip by, it is unlikely that we will have another chance, so truly global in nature, to agree on a unified response to the overwhelming crisis of environment and development. The North and the South must work out now an effective timetable for stabilizing and reducing atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations and conserving global biological diversity - goals that are vital for the ultimate good of all human beings and life on Earth. For these goals to be realized, the conventions on climate change and biodiversity must be signed by all countries. This is not to say that all the actions we need to undertake for the benefit of mankind end with the closing of this Summit. It is, in fact, merely the beginning of the UNCED process to meet the social and development needs of humankind and to protect the world's ecosystems from further fragmentation.

The unequal contribution to the development of the present ecological crisis by the rich and the poor countries, along with the fundamental differences in their respective economic capacities, has led both sides to view the problem differently. It is regretted that some nations seem to be reluctant still to go along all the way with the rest of the world to rescue the Earth and its inhabitants. I know that we have not come here to condemn one another or to blame one another for our environmental sins. But, if we really want to save the world, the rich North must assist the developing South with the necessary funds and technology that would help them to protect their countries and their peoples from the looming environmental catastrophe.

The Maldives is a very small nation and, because of that, our voice may not carry a great weight. But our voice is that of a distressed and endangered nation, as is that of Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands. Thus, as we debate here about conserving animal and plant species, we believe that protecting whole nations and their rich and varied heritage and culture is far more important.

Let this not be a time in the history of mankind when those who can really help decline to do so, while the very survival of the peoples of low-lying, small island nations is at stake. As I speak here today, there are 225,000 people in my country, and many tens of thousands more in other small island States, expecting strong and immediate international action to save our countries.

Do not let our voice go unheard. For, if you do, it might be forever.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Edward Fenech Adami,
Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta

To Brazil, its Government and people, has fallen the privilege and responsibility to host this major United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. You have risen grandly to the occasion, Mr. President. We owe you, your Government and people, especially the citizens of Rio, a sincere expression of thanks and congratulations for the most impressive and highly successful organization, combined with warm and generous hospitality.

We all bring to this Conference a different mix of national concerns and aspirations. For many, the major preoccupations relate to the basic issues of development - poverty, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy - issues of human suffering and degradation at their most fundamental, immediate and urgent levels - especially as they affect the most vulnerable members of society, including women and children. For others, the predominant concern is to safeguard a hard-won level of development which, in its present form, makes disproportionate demands on global resources and well-being.

Malta has played its own part in the process leading to Rio. At the forty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly, its initiative resulted in the definition of climate change as a common concern of mankind. This has led to the adoption of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, which so many of us are signing here at Rio.

Small States, particularly small island States, are in a position to uniquely experience the intimate relationship between a healthy environment and sustained development. The message that humanity inhabits the same, destructible, global village is therefore one which they can very credibly bring to the attention of the international community as a whole.

The decisions being taken by the Conference have their clear limitations. Nevertheless, they will provide the first comprehensive programme for effective action at the global, regional and national levels. The Rio Declaration creates the right perspective, by affirming at the very outset that "Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development".

The Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity, are confirmation of our collective determination to take urgent and effective action. Encouraging understanding has also been reached on the further work required in relation to the oceans, to desertification and to forests.

Malta welcomes the positive role which is being played by the European Community. At the Conference, the Community is a participant in its own right and we attach particular significance to the reaffirmation of its commitments on greenhouse gas emissions, commitments which go beyond those enshrined in the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Malta has already applied to become a member of the European Community, and it is our expectation that our membership will become a reality within the next few years. In an important sense, therefore, we consider that the commitments undertaken by the Community are also our commitments.

The agreements being reached as part of Agenda 21 relating to new and additional financial resources, as well as to concessionary and preferential transfer of technology, are of special importance. There may be, broadly speaking, a certain restraint in the way in which some of the commitments of Agenda 21 are formulated. This should be seen as a reflection of the complexity and range of the diverse issues involved, rather than as a sign of lack of fundamental commitment.

Agenda 21 provides the inspiration for the further action which needs to be taken, especially at the national and regional levels.

At the national level, Malta has already taken concrete steps to integrate environmental and developmental concerns in its national development process. At the institutional level, we have placed our environment ministry at the centre of national planning. Our recently enacted Environment and Planning Acts provide the comprehensive framework for this purpose. Parliament is currently considering a detailed Structure Plan, which lays down the development policies for all parts of the Maltese islands. Ongoing projects provide for half of our solid domestic waste and 10 per cent of our sewerage to be recycled by 1993. In compliance with our commitments under the Montreal Protocol we have already reduced our CFC consumption to 26 per cent of 1989 levels.

At the European level, Malta is actively supporting the proposal to draw up a European Charter and Convention on the Environment and Sustainable Development.

In the Mediterranean, the Action Plan arising from the 1976 Barcelona Convention has long been regarded as a successful model for tackling the interrelationship of environmental and developmental concerns at the regional level.

Among the important decisions reached in Rio is that of establishing a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development, which is to play a vital role in pursuing the work launched by the Conference.

What we still lack is an institution which could be entrusted with our collective concern for our common heritage, planet Earth. An organ with the potential to become this institution may already exist within the United Nations system. This is the Trusteeship Council, whose task as a trustee of erstwhile subject people is now almost completely accomplished. By just adding to its institutional mandate we could give this Council a new lease on life - a role as trustee of our most precious common heritage.

The essential task of the Conference has been one of reconciliation - a reconciliation of different perspectives not only among nations but also among generations, a reconciliation of competing demands on limited resources, a reconciliation of high idealism with enforced pragmatism. It is up to future generations to take the full measure of the process started in Rio, but it is for each one of us to prove by our actions that we want the process to work.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Süleyman Demirel, Prime Minister
of the Republic of Turkey

On this historic occasion, I feel privileged to share with you my views on the environment and the future of our planet. But let me first express my heartfelt thanks to you, Mr. President, and to the people and Government of Brazil for the warm hospitality accorded to us and the excellent preparation of this landmark Conference. Furthermore, I would like to pay tribute to Mr. Strong and his able staff for their key contributions to the success of this Conference.

In our rapidly changing world, we are faced with contradictory trends, developments and demands. In response, we think there is a search to combine and harmonize modernism and tradition, nationalism and globalism, independence and interdependence and, of course, nature and society. This Conference itself is, in my judgement, part of this very effort to reconcile the need for development and its impact on the environment. In our times, the awareness of the need to protect our environment is spreading. This is positive and it must be encouraged by all means at our disposal.

The Turkish Government is pleased that in the wake of momentous changes in international relations, the world community has now chosen to focus on global environmental issues. Our gathering here attests to the fact that these are issues of truly great importance which call not only for the formulation of effective national, regional and international programmes of action, but also for sustained and close multilateral cooperation. I hope this will be one of the results of this Conference.

The indivisibility of development and environment necessitates the tackling of these issues together. Environmental concerns need to be handled at the political decision-making level and to be pursued in good faith.

For sustainable development, we must enhance the economic means of environmental management; this means establishing norms for the protection of environmental quality and further developing research and technical capabilities. Indeed, sustainable development lies at the very heart of this Conference. Agenda 21 places before us a set of comprehensive initiatives to be taken between now and the year 2000.

I need not stress all the important aspects of this document. However, I wish to underline the critical importance of both new and additional financial resources and technology transfer.

Furthermore, no real progress is possible until and unless we are able to solve the strains placed on natural resources by rapid population growth. The rate of increase in population has reached alarming levels. The addition of a quarter of a million new souls each day to our planet hinders efforts to eliminate poverty and maintain a decent level of economic development. On the other hand, the careless, irrational utilization of the Earth's limited resources needs to be avoided.

All these further require public awareness at the grass roots, which would also help strengthen the democratic process and lead us towards a spirit of international solidarity and global partnership. In this respect, education and active public participation at all levels of decision-making play a key role. Our family structure places on the female members duties related to their immediate environment. Tackling our environmental issues at community, national and international levels also requires efforts by our women in teaching their children about a liveable Earth.

Turkey celebrates 23 April every year as Children's Day. As is the tradition, when a child of primary school age symbolically took my chair for a while, the first thing she did was to give instructions for the improvement of the environment. This is only one indication of the increasing public awareness and interest in these issues.

Turkey, with its continental features, is home to more than 9,000 different plants, of which 3,000 are endemic. In addition, it is also home for almost 400 bird species, compared with a total of 500 for the entire continent of Europe. Turkey is keen on preserving and protecting this rich diversity of its flora and fauna. Therefore we attach great importance to the Biodiversity Convention, which we signed yesterday.

In this connection, I wish to emphasize the importance of wetlands as they have significant capacity to hold carbon dioxide and to maintain plant and animal life. In order to resolve the threat to our planet represented by global warming, we must also pay attention to preserving wetlands. In this respect, we would like to propose the convening of a conference in the fall of 1993 on the special ecological protection of wetlands and we would like to host it in Turkey, in Cappadocia.

Finally, I wish to stress some specific areas for Turkish environmental concerns. Surrounded by the Mediterranean, the Aegean and the Black Sea, we have a natural interest in issues of marine environment. We attribute particular importance to the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea against Pollution. On the same understanding, we have recently signed with the coastal States the Convention for the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, which constitutes a legal framework for action.

In conclusion, this Summit presents all of us with new opportunities for understanding the dual role of integrating nations, both within their regions and within the global family of nations, in the cause of preserving our planet as a pleasant and healthy place for future generations.

We call upon all countries and peoples of the world to commit themselves to global partnership on the basis of sustainable development and urge all Governments to inspire by their actions the present generation with an ethic of caring for the planet which will allow future generations to inherit the gift of life and to sustain it and pass it on to their successors.

Statement by H.E. Mr. El Hadj Omar Bongo, President of the
Gabonese Republic

Twenty years ago, in June 1972, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was held at Stockholm to draw the attention of the international community to environmental problems.

Eleven years later, in 1983, the United Nations established the World Commission on Environment and Development, thereby linking the two problems which loom over our future. Since then, we have undoubtedly made significant progress in several areas.

Nevertheless, we must face the fact that our environment continues to deteriorate, in many cases at an alarming rate. This Conference provides us with an opportunity to take stock and to redefine the content and modalities of sustainable development.

The end of the cold war brought to a close an era during which the East-West confrontation determined the course of world affairs. Diverse forces based on partisan interests prevented nations from looking at humankind's common problems together, in an atmosphere of trust. A step has been taken in terms of the willingness of peoples to coordinate their efforts in working for common goals.

The future of what many call preventive diplomacy may depend on the results of this Summit, which, in my view, could bring us closer to the solutions we have been seeking to the problems of our times.

On the threshold of the third millennium, our planet faces exceptionally serious challenges. Aside from poverty, they are:

Air and water pollution;

Destruction of sites and soils;

Urban blight;

Depletion of the ozone layer;

The greenhouse effect.

In the developing countries, particularly in Africa, awareness of our lagging development, lack of capital, the desire to develop at all costs and, let it be said, strong incentives to do so rapidly, have caused us to acquiesce and even to participate in the establishment of a far from rational system of exploiting our riches. We are only beginning to grasp the magnitude and consequences of this situation.

This system of exploitation has resulted in the destruction of millions of hectares of forests each year, the loss of several plant varieties and, consequently, the disappearance of entire animal species and desertification.

I should like to recall that African forests, which make up a significant portion of the world's tropical forests, are the last defence on the African continent against the advance of the Sahara Desert from the north and the Kalahari Desert from the south.

For this reason, we are aware that any reduction in this resource will lead to a disastrous situation with repercussions for the entire planet, and the difficulties already observed in the Sudano-Sahelian region demand that we manage this resource with the utmost care.

In Gabon, forestry activity is an essential sector of the economy. Eighty per cent of our territory is covered by forests, which are home to 63 per cent of the population and employ 28 per cent of the workforce. In rural areas, forestry and fishing resources are the only resources directly accessible to the population, who rely on them for food, energy and shelter.

Of course, it is often easy to identify the activities that lead to a reduction in forest area. On the other hand, it is extremely difficult and costly to implement appropriate strategies or programmes for rational forest development and management.

Despite the importance of forests for our country, the Government has voluntarily limited the annual rate of forest clearance to 1 per cent and has pursued a policy of conservation, reforestation and forestry training and research. The Rio Conference reassures us in the course we have taken.

Gabon is also an oil-producing country and currently derives most of its financial resources from petroleum exports. Although it is a fact that certain forms of energy contribute to pollution, we must not lose sight of their major role in human progress.

The relationship between energy and development must be analysed in depth before embarking on hasty and possibly inappropriate solutions.

Research on climate change should be pursued, in order to gain a better understanding of the cause-and-effect relationship between this phenomenon, gaseous emissions and the greenhouse effect, and countries already possessing appropriate technologies should facilitate their transfer in order to reduce gaseous emissions substantially without affecting overall consumption.

Clearly, all these activities to promote sustainable development require time and major investments. The cost and the volume of resources allocated to environmental funding will be determining factors for the implementation of

sustainable development. Having been in a situation of acute crisis for several years now, many developing countries will be forced to come down on the side of development unless the resources allocated to environmental funding are attractive and substantial.

Middle-income countries, in addition to being subject to this arbitrary classification, face a two-fold constraint: their crushing debt burden, which considerably limits their financial capacities, and their inability to gain access to sources of funding on favourable terms.

For these reasons, it is essential that access to resources allocated for environmental funding be non-discriminatory and that the international community continue to examine other debt-relief measures, particularly for middle-income countries.

The extra cost to all of us of using new, environmentally friendly technologies could be shared, in the context of a new, mutually beneficial partnership based on the pooling of all technological, financial and natural resources.

It is my hope that the spirit of Rio will not become just another topic of conversation for the international community, but rather a reference point for future plans of action for sustainable development, and that the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance will be reached by the year 2000.

We are well aware that the fate of humankind hangs in the balance here at Rio. All sides must therefore rise above self-interest and curb their appetites, so that this Summit can lay the foundations for civilization in the third millennium.

I will conclude by expressing my thanks to the people and Government of Brazil, and also to the President, His Excellency Mr. Fernando Collor, for the generosity and sense of responsibility they showed in agreeing to host this Conference and for the efficiency they have demonstrated as its work has proceeded.

I should also like to congratulate the United Nations, all the international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, and the individuals who participated at all levels in the preparation and holding of this Conference.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Sam Nujoma, President of the
Republic of Namibia

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, and the people of Brazil for providing us with such a magnificent setting here in Rio de Janeiro for this United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Your hospitality has been overwhelming.

Mr. President, we remember your visit to Namibia last year and our people send to you their warm greetings and best wishes.

We congratulate you for so successfully hosting this largest gathering ever of heads of State and Government, bringing together the nations of the world.

Namibia achieved independence on 21 March 1990, bringing into effect our new democratic Constitution. The elected Constituent Assembly recognized the dangers of environmental degradation in our development process and decided to include in our Constitution special provisions on environmental protection.

Thus the Namibian Constitution specifically provides for "the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity of Namibia and the utilization of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians, both present and future".

The Constitution also charges the Ombudsman to investigate the destruction of ecosystems and the overutilization of natural resources, thus ensuring environmental accountability.

These constitutional provisions serve to focus my Government's attention on the importance of adopting development programmes which do not undermine the rich, but fragile, ecological base with which we must live in harmony. It must serve as a guide when addressing both socio-economic problems at home and the wide-ranging policy debates which will increasingly dominate the global agenda of this new era which we are now entering.

In Namibia, all sectors of society have been participating in, and supporting activities relating to the Earth Summit. Children from all corners of the country have drawn green leaves, and on 23 May 1992 I witnessed children painting a large mural in Windhoek, our capital, on environmental themes in support of the objectives of this Summit.

Humanity stands on the brink of its destiny. Scientists repeatedly tell us that, if we continue to live the way we do, potential global catastrophe awaits us. But the scientists also emphasize that it is within our collective capacity to solve the developmental and environmental problems we face. Our survival is in our hands.

We all need to look carefully at the long-term consequences of our lifestyles, our consumption patterns and production methods. Priorities in the South include sustainable economic growth and the eradication of poverty. In partnership with the North, we can achieve these goals without destroying the environment. In Namibia, we are determined to ensure that the development path we are moulding will be sustainable and will rebuild, rather than diminish further, valuable renewable resources such as our fisheries, which have in the past been abused by foreign fishing interests.

Shortly before Namibia's independence, I visited the northern part of my country for the first time in nearly three decades. It was a joyous occasion when I returned after many difficult years in exile. But my joy was tainted by the shock I felt at seeing what had previously been a well-wooded savannah now deforested.

The environment had clearly suffered degradation as a result of the long years of colonial war and poverty in the country. Our people have had no alternative but to use wood for fuel and housing. I have found this to be the same in other parts of the country.

Colonial exploitation, war and the resulting poverty have left terrible scars on both society and the environment. Therefore, unless we are able to address the problem of poverty successfully, we will not succeed in addressing the problems of the environment.

This morning I signed the Convention on Biological Diversity and later today I will be signing the Framework Convention on Climate Change. We see these Conventions as being linked; without a stabilized climate our biological diversity is in jeopardy, in both marine and terrestrial systems, undermining our renewable resource base, which is so essential for sustainable development. These Conventions, together with the eagerly awaited convention on desertification and drought, are tangible first steps in our quest to save our global environment from destruction.

To achieve our common goal we must accept that the basis of the relationship between the North and the South needs to change significantly.

In partnership we can ensure greater cooperation and equity in the emerging world order. The foundation of this new relationship must include the acceptance of the need for the South to develop and the North to reduce its patterns of consumption.

To a very large extent we in the developing world are the custodians of a significant proportion of the world's remaining biodiversity and natural ecosystems. We must all accept that we share a common responsibility for ensuring the maintenance of ecological systems and processes, the sustainable utilization of resources, and the use of environmentally sound technology. This will only be possible if new and additional financial resources become available to enable the implementation of Agenda 21.

In conclusion, I am optimistic that the Conventions to be signed here in Rio and the implementation of Agenda 21 will be the basis for a new beginning, giving effect to the objectives that brought us to your beautiful city. And that could not be interpreted other than as a major step in the direction of wise resource management and sustainable development for both the present and future. No nation can achieve these objectives in isolation. Together, in global partnership, we can secure a safe and healthy environment and a prosperous economy for all.

Finally, I have the honour and pleasure, on behalf of the Government and people of Namibia, and indeed on my own behalf, to present this Namibian blue agate gemstone, which symbolizes our fragile earth, to this historic United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the
Republic of Uganda

First of all, I do not like the bipolarization of this debate between North and South. The reason I do not like the bipolarization of this debate between North and South is because the atmosphere is one. The atmosphere is not in two compartments. If the atmosphere were in two compartments, then I would accept the bipolarization. But since the atmosphere is one, I think the bipolarization is not correct.

If you examine it carefully, you will find that two groups are destroying the environment. The first group is those who are ignorant, who do not know that they are destroying the environment. Then, together with those people, there are others who know that they are destroying the environment but who do not have the means to stop destroying the environment; they do not have the means to develop alternative sources of energy. That is one group: those who destroy the environment either because of ignorance or because of necessity.

Then there is a second group of people who destroy the environment. These are the profit-seekers. They seek maximum profits; they do not want to use environmentally clean methods of making money. They want to make easy money, so they use technologies which are dirty. These people should be able to reduce their greed and make less money, but use environmentally sound technology.

The first group - those who destroy the environment either because they are ignorant or because they are not able to stop destroying the environment - are in the South. The other group - who destroy the environment because they are looking for profits - are mainly in the North.

However, a large portion of the population of the North is not part of this destruction of the environment in the search for maximum profits. That is why I do not like to bipolarize the discussion. Not all the people in the North own factories. Many of the people in the North do not own factories; they are just ordinary people. They are as much at risk because of this pollution as all the rest of us. So therefore, I do not, again, support the bipolarization of this debate.

Therefore, let the environmentally conscious elements of the North and the South unite and, first, discipline the profit-seekers and, secondly, sensitize and enable those in the South who are ignorant and unable to do so to develop alternative technologies.

In Uganda, we utilize 30.5 million cubic metres of fuelwood every year. This represents deforestation of 50,000 hectares of forest every year. However, Uganda has the potential to generate 2,000 megawatts of hydropower, and also 450 megawatts of geothermal power. Regrettably, Uganda is currently generating only 150 megawatts. In the next four years we shall be able to generate about 400 megawatts.

Meanwhile, we have evolved an environmental action plan. This environmental action plan would be backed by an environmental protection law. You cannot simply have a plan which is not backed by law. This plan is as follows: one, all farms must have hedges of trees; two, there must be shade

trees on all farms; three, we must leave forest belts along all the rivers and around all the lakes, and these forest belts must be at least 50 metres wide; four, all the hills which are not used for animals - for cattle and goats - or are not used for cultivation must be planted with trees, with forests; five, the forest reserves and the forested places in the catchment areas must also be protected.

What is crucial is that we give these jobs to three groups of people: the trees on the farms are looked after by the farmer himself. The farmer is mandated to ensure that there are trees on his farm, as we have described. As for the forests on the hillsides, these are looked after by the nearby community. As for the national forests and national reserves, these are looked after by the central state authorities.

Finally, each farm must have 10 per cent of the farm area planted with trees. These trees can be fuelwood trees or they can be fruit trees.

That is our plan, and we are going to make it law to ensure that everybody is forced to follow it.

I do not think it is correct to say that if the North does not give us money we will cut our forests. I do not agree with that statement. We need the forests for our own sake - I am now speaking as someone from the South. We need to stop soil erosion; we need to maintain the moisture which helps in rain formation; we need to prevent landslides; we need to prevent the silting of rivers and lakes; we need to prevent the lowering of the water table; and we need to prevent the disappearance of medicinal plants.

So, it is in the interest of the South, even if the North is irresponsible, to protect our own forests. I do not like the linkage of saying, "If you do not give us money, we are going to cut our forests". Whom are you hurting? Are you hurting the North or are you hurting yourselves also?

However, the power centres in the North, which are in charge of the rich countries, must stop polluting our globe with carbon dioxide and other gases and must contribute to the struggle to protect the environment in the South, because, as many of them were former colonial Powers, they are responsible for many of the distortions in the South, such as economic backwardness and even these environmental problems we are talking about. Because people in the North were responsible for the problems in the South, they have a moral obligation to assist the South in its battle against environmental degradation.

If the people in charge of the North continue to ignore this responsibility, I favour the populations both of the North and of the South censuring them, either separately or collectively.

I am pleased that a compromise has emerged on the biological diversity issue. I had a major problem, because I heard that some people were trying to say that the forests in Uganda belong to the whole world; I was not going to accept that. But, fortunately, I have heard that an agreement has been reached that the forests in Uganda belong to Uganda and that if someone wants to come and use those forests he must get a licence from us and we will share the profits. That is a great relief to me, because I was going to oppose this - there was no doubt.

Finally, I would like to say that I have read the World Bank report. This report says many things. It says that the sun gives the surface of the Earth each year energy which is equivalent to 10 times the energy of all the stored fossil fuel and uranium reserves. It says that each year the surface of the Earth receives from the sun, free of charge, without any payment, energy which is equivalent to 10 times all the fossil fuels and all the uranium reserves in the world.

If the world is looking for clean and sustainable energy, we have it there. Why do we not pool our resources and carry out research into this solar energy and use it instead of using methods which are destroying our globe? According to that report, this solar energy is equivalent to 15,000 times the primary energy we need in the world.

Statement by H.E. Mr. John Major, Prime Minister of the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

This meeting is unlike any other. We are all used to summits on this or that crucial issue, where each of us fights hard for our national interest.

Today we are here not to argue for a national cause but for the future of our planet.

It was Ruskin, a century ago, who said that God had lent us the earth for our lifetime. We are here as leaseholders. Leaseholders with a huge responsibility. On our efforts are pinned the hopes of billions of people. It falls to us to try to reconcile their diverse and sometimes divergent needs. It falls to us to reconcile the needs of the living with our obligations to future generations.

The contrasts are striking. In today's world more people are healthier and live longer than ever before. And yet more people than ever before, 1 billion of them, live in abject poverty.

The pressures to industrialize are greater than ever. Today, most people still live in rural areas. In another 40 years, the opposite will be true. Twice as many of us will be urban dwellers as country dwellers. By the end of the century there will be 21 cities in the world with populations of more than 10 million people; 17 of these will be in developing countries.

We have to find a balance between the needs of people and the environment in which they live. We have to find a balance between the exploitation of that environment, which is vital to people's survival, and the conservation of that environment, which is vital to its survival. We have to find a balance between the needs of the living and our obligations to future generations.

There will be people who decry the achievements of this Conference. But this Conference is proof of a dramatic shift over the last decade: the environment is no longer the specialist concern of a few - it has become the vital interest of us all.

What we have gained over the last decade or so is, above all, knowledge.

Much of the damage that we have done to our environment has been inflicted not out of greed or malice, but out of ignorance. What every child knows today few scientists knew the day before yesterday. I suspect that for many of us it was not until we saw the pictures of Earth taken from outer space that we realized just how small, fragile and precious our globe is.

Those of us who have come to this meeting cannot any longer plead ignorance. Even where we cannot be certain, the evidence requires us to be cautious. That does not make our choices easy ones. We know the effects of acid rain. We know the importance of the rain forests for climate, for animals and for plants. We know the dangers of degradation as land is over-exploited. It is tempting to propose the most radical solution for the sake of future generations. But it is not easy to say to the miner in Europe that his job must be forfeit; or to a developing country that it should no longer market its principal resource; or to an expanding population that they should not cultivate the land they so vitally need.

That is why there has been negotiation and compromise. The results may not go as far as some would like. We, for example, wanted this Conference to agree binding commitments on the management of forests. We may have to content ourselves with a statement of principle. But that statement must be more than just words. And it must involve effective follow-up. I welcome President Bush's forestry initiative. My country already sponsors more than 200 forestry projects overseas at a value of £160 million.

That example alone illustrates the extent of international cooperation. We have now gone further.

We have recognized that the Earth is our common inheritance and we are setting about the task of managing it for the common good. The climate convention and biodiversity convention are not the end of the road. They are crucial milestones. They commit us to binding obligations to manage our national affairs to our common benefit. They launch the process. They demand effective follow up.

I would like today to announce further commitments by my country.

It was Charles Darwin who first identified the full significance of man's relationship to other species. I am launching today a Darwin initiative for the survival of the species.

Our initiative will build on Britain's recognized scientific and commercial strengths in places like the Botanical Gardens at Kew and Edinburgh. It will involve international studies of natural resources; help set goals for research; and build up an inventory of the most important species and habitats. It will help us to exchange skills and information.

On climate change, I am today announcing an initiative to ensure that developing countries can share the benefits of technology through partnership with British companies. We shall hold a Global Technology Partnership Conference in Britain early next year to set this on its way.

Money is the root of all progress. All of us will have to meet the cost of commitments undertaken to tackle our common global problems. The developing countries will need our help. The British Government is ready to commit new and additional resources through the Global Environment Facility. The British Government believes this Facility should be replenished at a level of \$2-3 billion.

More effective than concessionary aid will be the expansion of trade and private capital investment and the reduction of debt. We need a swift and successful conclusion to the GATT Round. It is within our grasp. We need further early and significant reductions in the burden of debt. Britain has taken a lead. I will continue to press my fellow leaders hard for further action in those fields. I hope the developing countries will help by following policies which encourage inward investment, including all the principles of good government to which members of the Commonwealth are already committed.

Even with better trade and reduced debt the poorest countries will need concessional finance. Britain will therefore mobilize its aid programme in support of the goals of Agenda 21. We are planning to make available substantial extra resources to assist forestry conservation, biodiversity, energy efficiency, population planning and sustainable agriculture over the next two years. Britain also supports a substantial tenth replenishment of the International Development Association, during which we must consider a special Earth Increment.

Agenda 21 is the most far-reaching process we have launched here in Rio. It is a framework for action on sustainable development. Its most important provision is to call on Governments and United Nations bodies to report periodically and publicly on implementation. One custodian of this process will be the new Commission on Sustainable Development which we have agreed to establish.

This Commission can only do its work if it has the right information from national Governments and international bodies. Public confidence is built on transparency and information. That confidence cannot be built without non-governmental organizations.

We have already adopted an open approach in the United Kingdom. I have been a keen supporter of participation by non-governmental organizations in the preparations for this Conference. I am therefore pleased to announce today that the United Kingdom will convene, next June, a major global forum of the community of non-governmental organizations to examine and clarify its role in the practical implementation of Agenda 21.

If the emerging generation of young people is to have a chance in life at least as good as my generation, then the Rio process must succeed. But it has no chance of success if we do not do much better in our efforts to slow the growth of population. Britain has long supported action which enables all women to have children by choice. We shall continue to help improve access to family planning. We must improve education more generally.

For nearly two generations we lived with the threat of a nuclear confrontation which could destroy the world. That risk is now vastly diminished. But we have awakened to a new threat. The threat that by our own actions we could, insidiously, but just as certainly, achieve the same result: the destruction of the globe. We are alive to the danger. We know the remedy.

I said at the beginning of my speech that we were leaseholders in the planet. We are partners too. Whatever the differences strongly expressed here and which remain, it must be as partners that we go from this meeting.

Voltaire's luckless hero, Candide, decided to turn his back on the world and to stay at home "to cultivate his garden".

We do not have that choice. The world is our garden and, together, we must cultivate it.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Helmut Kohl, Federal Chancellor
of the Federal Republic of Germany

From this Conference in Rio de Janeiro must emanate a message - a message of solidarity showing all nations working together as equal partners and sharing responsibility for the one world. We live in times of dramatic changes. We in Germany have experienced in a very special way what kind of great opportunities and challenges have developed.

Taking up these challenges also means securing global environmental protection and sustainable development through joint action by both industrial and developing countries.

The industrial countries must be conscious of their particular responsibility in this regard. We are therefore called upon to handle natural resources much more carefully than we have done to date. We must make better use of existing technology and develop new, environment-friendly technology.

We would like to employ the know-how that we have gained in the process to assist the developing countries in their development. They need our support in this.

What is decisive is the creation of national and international conditions which safeguard ecologically acceptable development. For this reason I will do my utmost to bring the GATT negotiations to a successful conclusion.

This Conference has brought about good progress. We have launched a new process of world-wide partnership. Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and the declaration on the protection of forests constitute a solid foundation for further concrete measures.

The Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Climate Change will contribute to a more effective global protection of the environment. I will therefore sign both Conventions here in Rio.

In the years to come, further steps to reduce greenhouse gases must follow. Germany was the first large industrial country to target a 25-30 per cent reduction in CO₂ emissions by the year 2005.

We see this as a signal for a common approach by all industrial countries. I invite participating States to come to Germany for the first follow-up conference on climate change.

For a long time, the global protection of forests has been especially important to me personally. I welcome therefore the initiative of President George Bush. I hope that in spite of all difficulties we will be able to adopt a forest protection convention. Together with the convention on desertification that we intend to decide upon, this will contribute to preserving the foundations of our existence.

Following the reunification of our country, we Germans are facing major challenges.

First, we have an obligation towards our 17 million fellow countrymen who have made their decision for freedom and for the unity of our country. Now, they rightly demand to be given the same opportunities we had for their own future. Great efforts on our part are needed to achieve this.

Second, Germany feels a special kind of responsibility towards its neighbours in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. We support, therefore, the process of rebuilding democracy and the economy in these countries with an ambitious assistance programme.

Third, in spite of these great efforts, we are firmly determined to live up to our responsibility towards the developing countries. We are aware that this is also a contribution to securing our own future.

We commit ourselves, therefore, to an increase in official development aid and expressly confirm the 0.7 per cent target. As soon as possible, we want to see 0.7 per cent of GNP earmarked for official development aid. I should point out in this respect that Germany's assistance to its neighbours in the East should be given appropriate consideration.

For global environmental measures, Germany supports an increase in the volume of the Global Environment Facility by three billion special drawing rights. We are ready to assume our share and we ask other industrial countries to do the same. We want the developing countries to be given an appropriate influence in allocating these funds.

In the past, Germany has already granted substantial debt remission. We have to date written off approximately nine billion marks. Together with others, we are prepared to cancel further debts for the benefit of poorer countries in exchange for appropriate environmental protection measures.

In this way, the developing countries shall be given additional possibilities to promote their economic and social development in harmony with nature.

Positive developments are only possible if we remove not only the factors that divide nations but also those that bring man into conflict with nature. A peaceful future for mankind is only assured if we also make our peace with nature.

This Earth Summit also shows how right I was in suggesting, in 1988, at the Economic Summit in Toronto that global environmental protection be added to the permanent agenda of the Group of Seven.

Coming generations will judge our actions primarily by whether we meet our obligation to preserve Creation and to combat poverty. We must think of their well-being when we henceforth make this vital task the focal point of international politics.

This Conference in Rio has enabled us to make progress in this endeavour. We have initiated a dynamic process which will enable us to solve better the pressing problems of mankind's future in world-wide partnership. The Federal Republic of Germany declares itself committed to shouldering this responsibility.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Carlos Saúl Menem, President of
the Argentine Republic

First of all, I should like to congratulate Mr. Fernando Collor, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, for his cordial and skilful leadership of this Conference.

It has been stressed with eloquence and clarity at this meeting that humankind absolutely must preserve its natural resources in order to ensure that the needs of present generations are met without jeopardizing the sustainability of the resources which will be needed by future generations.

Indeed, our purpose is to do away once and for all with the mistaken idea that we must choose between development and environment, for only a proper balance between the two can offer stable prospects for the future.

In an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, the consumer model can take hold among even the least privileged communities.

Both poverty, with its pressing needs, and wealth, with its compulsive habits, lead to unsustainable practices and lifestyles which deplete natural resources to the detriment of the rights of future generations.

Only when certain thresholds of satisfaction of basic needs are reached can efforts be made to conserve natural resources.

However, those thresholds have themselves certain environmental components without which public health cannot be guaranteed.

Moreover, in some situations of abundance, the pressures of consumption can have the effect of depleting resources, as is happening even now.

On the one hand, natural forests are being cleared to make way for subsistence farming and urban populations are swelling with the influx of people looking for work but unable to find decent housing.

On the other hand, intensive chemical use is depleting the ozone layer, especially over our region, and polluting both land and water resources, while excessive energy use is dangerously aggravating the greenhouse effect.

Both phenomena must be corrected through international cooperation, for we only have one small Earth and anything that affects its ecosystems also affects us.

One way or another, distant events ultimately affect us too.

That is why we said at the Canela Meeting, and we repeat it now, that in order to fully achieve their objectives, multinational environmental programmes must properly define responsibilities, respect national sovereignty within the framework of international law and bring into being a form of interdependence that guarantees a fair distribution of benefits to all concerned.

In addition to reflecting an ethical standpoint, however, this effort must be aimed at one specific recipient: humankind.

I want to be very clear on this.

Humankind, the human species, is at the centre of our philosophical conception of the universe.

We are committed to protecting the environment in order to ensure that humankind will have an environment in which to develop. We are aware of population growth trends, but we also know from our own national experience that population growth rates stabilize once certain levels of well-being, education and health are reached.

Once again, the answer is sustainable development, in other words, economic and social growth combined with conservation of natural resources.

For many reasons, this fundamental message is directed at young people.

They make up the biggest percentage of the populations with the highest growth rates.

It is they who must be given training and employment opportunities.

Their education and the families they establish will determine population trends in the first decade of the next century.

Our commitment to the environment is unconditional and is based on deep-seated ethical convictions.

We are prepared to honour our commitment at more than just the institutional level.

One of the goals of our efforts to transform our economy is to equip ourselves for environmentally sound production patterns.

We believe that the market economy has mechanisms which, if used efficiently, can encourage rational environmental behaviour and discourage those behaviours which scientific research has shown to be harmful.

Nevertheless, market forces alone are not enough to establish sustainable development.

Commercial transactions must factor in the environmental costs of the different stages of production, without passing them on to future generations.

We reiterate our opposition to the continued application of subsidy systems which not only distort production and the market but also tend to validate practices which deplete natural resources.

On the eve of a new century, we have the opportunity to lay a different foundation for the growth of humankind.

The signs of confrontation which so painfully marked the twentieth century have dissipated, but it is imperative that the United Nations take up energetically the task of preserving the peace, a peace that even now is tragically threatened, and finally eliminating armed conflict, with its toll of human suffering and terrible environmental destruction.

The recognition of human rights and individual freedoms has been ushered in by democracy, which is advancing with a force undreamt of a decade ago.

History is beginning.

We are beginning the history of a human race that works in unison for the common good.

It is precisely in the interest of that common good that Argentina has come to offer, in this august forum, part of its land and its natural resources to serve the cause of all humankind.

In Ushuaia, at the southernmost tip of the American continent, we are offering a doorway to Antarctica, a continent which we want to preserve. There, in Argentine territory, the international community could establish a research and conservation centre for the environment, particularly for the ozone layer, providing monitoring and protection to prevent destruction and depletion.

We are likewise intensifying efforts to protect our forests, which have great biological diversity and help regenerate the atmosphere, through an ambitious project for establishing a large nature preserve in the province of Misiones that will protect most of the surviving subtropical rain forest in my country.

We have just set aside 30,000 hectares for this project and we hope to add 200,000 more.

God willing, our deliberations in the famous city of Rio de Janeiro will make a contribution to the new peace and to the future well-being of all.

Statement by H.E. Mrs. Vigdís Finnbogadóttir, President of
the Republic of Iceland

Let me first of all express my thanks and appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, and the Government of Brazil for hosting the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the largest summit conference ever.

What is it that distinguishes man from other animals? His gift of words, and also the scale of his actions which can now transform nature instead of merely complementing it. The reason we are here is really that man has taken himself out of nature, has attempted to manipulate it and make it his slave instead of his partner.

Our hope, of course, rests with man's gift for words and action, too. We are beginning to state the problem and organize ourselves to act. It is worth remembering, too, that the questions we have not answered here remain on the world's agenda, simply because they have been raised, and will not disappear until they have been resolved.

On the other hand, if we fail to turn our words into concerted and fruitful global action, we risk losing the confidence of the world in our integrity and ability to tackle the problem. It is our duty not just to plan, but to inspire faith and to set an example.

Pollution is a global problem, everybody's problem. John Donne said that no man is an island, and environmentally speaking no island is an island either. As you all know, the Icelanders live almost entirely by harvesting the sea. Internationally we have been spokesmen for measures to protect the marine environment on a global scale. We therefore welcome the signs that more concerted action will be taken to deal with the most serious threats to the seas, which include persistent organic substances and radioactive waste.

We also welcome the commitment made here to the conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources, and the recognition that coastal States should benefit from sustainable harvesting of them.

No matter what resolutions are made or not made at a forum such as this, no genuine and lasting environmental improvement can take place without grass-roots involvement on a global scale. In the Nordic countries we had an Environmental Year last year. One of the most remarkable activities then was to set up so-called "green families" in many Nordic cities, who tried to find out just how environment-friendly a life they could lead, and formed a human chain linked by the awareness of a positive lifestyle. These green families - adults and children alike - compared their results afterwards and have become members of a close growing circle of friends.

Mass action and constructive campaigns have already produced small but encouraging results. In Iceland, which is home to 0.005 per cent of the world's population, 4 million trees are being planted each year, equivalent to

16 for every man, woman and child. Imagine this being done the world over - 80 billion new trees a year. It would not take our asphyxiated planet long to start breathing healthily again, if world action could be taken on such a scale. We are changing the eroded soil of a subarctic desert into a green land once again.

"Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do little," said Edmund Burke so strikingly. But we must beware of self-congratulation, since we are not acting to win praise, but rather to avoid the condemnation of our children and grandchildren, who will inherit the Earth from us.

The World Summit for Children held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in 1990 adopted a Declaration for the Survival, Protection and Development of Children. The children of the world have now sent us messages, symbolically carried by the Viking ship *Gaia*, reminding us to keep the promise. These messages have been printed in a book which all of us will be receiving. Here I should only like to recall one of them, from a young girl. She said: "Of course I am interested in the future. It is the rest of my life."

A thousand years ago, our ancestors in the Nordic countries believed the world would be destroyed by the forces of evil. In Iceland we remember the closing words of one of our own greatest literary treasures, the medieval cosmological poem *Völuspá*, "The Sybil's Prophecy":

She sees arise
A second time
Earth from the sea,
Green with growth.
Falls cascade,
The eagle flies high,
The one from the mountains,
Who stoops for fish ...

Never before has this inspired vision from the past been such an inspiration for the future.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Li Peng, Prime Minister of the
People's Republic of China

The convocation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is a major event which has attracted world-wide attention. It is the first time since the founding of the United Nations for so many State leaders to meet here to discuss ways to deal with problems of global environment and development. I would like to extend, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, our warm congratulations to the Conference, our heartfelt thanks to the Brazilian Government and the Preparatory Committee for the efforts they have made for the smooth convocation of the Conference, and to pay a high tribute to the Ministerial Meeting for its fruitful work. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey the cordial greetings of the Chinese people to the people of our host country, Brazil.

Environment and development are two major concerns of the international community. Through its arduous efforts of many years, especially those made since the Industrial Revolution, mankind has made brilliant achievements in transforming nature and developing the economy. Yet neglect of environment in the course of industrialization, particularly the irrational exploitation and utilization of natural resources, has caused global environmental pollution and ecological degradation, posing a real threat to the survival and development of mankind. It is therefore an urgent and formidable task for all countries around the world to protect the ecological environment and maintain sustainable development. The convocation of this Conference conforms to the call of the times and the aspirations of the peoples of the world. It will once again sound a warning of an environmental crisis to the international community, and provide a forum for exploring ways to solve environmental and development problems. It will turn a new page in the world history of environmental protection and development.

In recent years, dramatic changes have taken place in the international situation, and the world is in a historic period of transition from the old world pattern to a new one. This presents the international community with difficulties and challenges, as well as hopes and opportunities. The cold war is over and the confrontation between the two military blocs of the East and the West has dissipated. But the equilibrium in the world has been disrupted; conflicts and destabilizing factors have increased; and hegemonism and power politics still exist. On the one hand, developed countries are getting richer; on the other hand, many developing countries are getting poorer. All this shows that the two lasting major issues of peace and development facing the people of the world have not yet been resolved. The Chinese Government maintains that a just and rational new international political and economic order should be established according to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly to the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit and peaceful coexistence. This would be a guarantee for world peace and development and a vital prerequisite for resolving environmental and development problems.

Environmental protection and economic development bear on the future of mankind, and affect each country, each nation and indeed each individual. Therefore, solution of these two global issues calls for extensive and effective international cooperation. The current Conference, the two important instruments to be adopted - the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 - and the two conventions to be signed - the Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity - will lay a good foundation for enhanced international cooperation in this area. With a view to achieving in all its aspects the goal of strengthening international cooperation as set forth at this Conference, the Chinese Government would like to put forward the following propositions for discussion with other participants:

Economic development should be pursued in parallel with environmental protection. Economic development is essential for the very survival and progress of mankind. Furthermore, it provides a material guarantee for the protection and improvement of the global environment. For many developing countries, their primary task is to develop the economy and eliminate poverty. Their reasonable and urgent needs should be taken

into full consideration when we try to tackle the question of the global environment. The international community should take practical steps to improve the position of developing countries with regard to debt, trade, finance, etc. and help them with their economic development. On the other hand, no country can afford to develop its economy in disregard of its pressure on the environment. It is therefore imperative to work out a development strategy that will ensure a virtuous cycle of the ecosystem so as to attain a balance between economic growth and environmental protection.

To protect the environment is a common task of mankind as a whole. However, economically developed countries bear a greater responsibility. As mankind shares one Earth, and environmental problems sometimes transcend national and regional boundaries, a global approach is in the common interest of all countries and regions. Historically, environmental problems stemmed mainly from the excessive consumption of natural resources and massive discharge of pollutants by developed countries in the course of industrialization. Even today, their consumption of natural resources and discharge of pollutants, whether in terms of total volume or per capita share, far exceed developing countries. Therefore, they should assume major responsibility for the deterioration of the global environment. Furthermore they have greater economic strength and more sophisticated technologies for environmental protection. It is only natural for them to undertake a greater obligation for protection of the environment. They should provide developing countries with new and additional funds and transfer technologies of environmental protection under concessional terms to help the latter improve their own environment and participate in the protection of the global environment. This is only wise for developed countries to do, for it serves their own interests as well as those of developing countries.

International cooperation should be based on respect for State sovereignty. All countries, large and small, rich and poor, strong and weak, are entitled to participate in international activities relating to environment and development on an equal footing. Issues concerning global environment and development should be solved in such a manner as not to prejudice a State's independence and sovereignty. Each country enjoys sovereign rights over its natural resources and biological species. It has the right to draw up its own strategies for environment protection and development in the light of its national conditions and adopt corresponding policies and measures. At the same time, no country should tap and exploit its natural resources to the detriment of the environment of other countries.

Environmental protection and economic development would be impossible without world peace and stability. Wars and turbulence will not only inflict heavy losses on lives and property, but also cause serious degradation to the eco-environment. While promoting world environment protection and development, all countries should endeavour to maintain stability at home, safeguard world and regional peace, settle all disputes through peaceful negotiation instead of resort to force or threat of force.

In tackling environmental problems, consideration should be given to both the immediate interests of various countries and the long-term interests of the whole world. At present, while paying attention to such global environmental questions as climate change and biodiversity, one should give priority to addressing the problems of environmental pollution and ecological degradation in developing countries like soil erosion, desertification, diminished vegetation, droughts and floods. Solution of these problems will not only remove a serious threat to the environment and development of developing countries, but also contribute significantly to the protection of the global environment and economic growth. The international community should understand and support the reasonable demands of developing countries in this regard.

China has been pursuing economic development as its central task and adhering to the policy of reform and opening-up in its socialist modernization drive. It now enjoys sustained economic growth, political stability and national harmony and unity. The living standards of the people keep improving. We in China pay much attention to environmental protection in the course of economic development. We have made environmental protection one of our basic State policies and made unremitting efforts towards this end. In the light of the country's actual conditions, we have devised a strategy of synchronized planning, implementation and development in terms of economic development, urban and rural construction and environmental protection, a strategy that would bring harmony of economic, social and environmental returns. We have adopted three major principles, i.e., to put prevention first, to hold those who cause pollution responsible for cleaning up and to strengthen environmental control and management. We have improved the legal system in respect of environmental protection and set up relevant organs at various levels and an interministerial coordination agency at the national level. We have pooled the efforts of various quarters to clean up the urban environment and to prevent and control industrial pollution. We have conducted extensive education in environmental protection to awaken the whole nation to its importance. We have vigorously promoted scientific and technological research on the environment. Meanwhile, we have launched a large-scale soil improvement campaign, which includes building shelter belts along river banks, coastal areas and in areas prone to sandstorms. The northern shelter belt, which is as long as 4,480 kilometres, has become a green Great Wall against sandstorms. More than 600 nature preserves have been set up in China, covering an area of 400,000 square kilometres and providing effective protection to a large number of rare wild animals and plants. In addition, China's family planning helps ease the tremendous pressure of population growth on the environment. In the past decade or more since the introduction of the reform and opening-up programme, China's gross national product has more than doubled. Yet the quality of China's environment has remained basically stable, or even improved in some areas. Our environment and development strategy suited to China's conditions has proved to be successful. However, China is a developing country and its economic strength is limited. Like many other developing countries, China regards it a long-term arduous task to address issues concerning economic development and environmental protection.

China's environmental problems are part and parcel of the global problems. China is keenly aware of its responsibility and role in the protection of the Earth's ecosystem. So it has attached importance to and

taken an active part in the United Nations-sponsored discussions concerning environment and development. It has signed a number of relevant international conventions or agreements. Last year, China hosted the Ministerial Conference of Developing Countries on Environment and Development, at which the Beijing Declaration was adopted. This is a positive contribution China and other developing countries have made to the promotion of world environmental protection and development. We have also established the China Environment and Development International Cooperation Committee, composed of well-known Chinese and foreign figures who offer advice in these two areas. This gives expression to China's sincerity and resolution in tackling environment and development issues. We will further implement the policy of reform and opening-up, assimilate and draw on all achievements of human civilization, accelerate the pace of economic growth, and at the same time do a good job in our environmental protection. We stand ready to undertake international responsibilities and obligations compatible with our development level and expand international cooperation in world environmental protection and development.

There is a lot to be done and many difficulties to be surmounted in environmental protection and development. But I am convinced that, as long as all countries help each other like passengers in the same boat, conduct fruitful cooperation and work hard, it is possible to protect the global environment and expand the economy at the same time so that the Earth will become a beautiful homeland where people can live and work happily together.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the
Council of State and the Council of Ministers of the
Republic of Cuba

An important biological species is facing the risk of disappearing as a result of the rapid and progressive extinction of its natural living conditions: man.

We have become aware of this problem now, when it is almost too late to prevent it. It is necessary to point out that consumer societies are mostly responsible for the destruction of the environment. They emerged from the old colonial metropolises and imperial policies, which in turn gave rise to the backwardness and poverty which afflict the overwhelming majority of mankind.

They account for only 20 per cent of the population of the world but consume two thirds of the metal production and three fourths of the energy generated world wide.

They have poisoned the seas and rivers, they have contaminated the air, they have weakened and perforated the ozone layer, they have saturated the atmosphere with gases causing variations in climate whose catastrophic consequences are already being felt.

Forests disappear, deserts spread, thousands of millions of tons of arable land go into the sea every year; numerous species disappear; popular pressure and poverty lead to desperate efforts to survive, even at the expense of nature.

It is impossible to blame the third world countries, which were colonies in the past and are currently being exploited and plundered by an unjust international economic order. The solution cannot be that which bans the development of those who need it the most; the fact is that everything that contributes to underdevelopment and poverty is an open violation of ecology. Tens of millions of men, women and children die every year because of this, which is more than in either of the two world wars. Unequal exchange, protectionism and the external debt go against ecology and pave the way for the destruction of the environment.

If we are to save humankind from this self-destruction, we must make a better distribution of the available resources and technologies on Earth. That is, less luxury, less waste in a few countries in order to have less poverty and less hunger in most of the planet.

No more transfer of lifestyles and consumption habits which ruin the environment of the third world. Let human life be more rational.

Let a just international economic order be implemented. Let all science necessary for non-polluting and sustained development be used. Let the ecological debt, and not the external debt, be paid.

Let starvation, not man, disappear.

At a time when the alleged threats of communism have disappeared and there are no pretexts left for cold wars, arms races and military expenditures, what is to prevent these resources from being devoted, without further delay, to promoting development in the third world and to fighting the threat of ecological destruction of the planet?

Let selfishness cease. Let hegemonism cease. Let insensitivity, irresponsibility and deceit cease. Tomorrow will be too late to do what we should have done a long time ago.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Kennedy A. Simmonds, Prime Minister of
Saint Kitts and Nevis

Allow me first of all, Your Excellency President Collor, to congratulate you, your Government and people for the excellent and impeccable arrangements for this Conference. I wish also to express thanks and appreciation for the kindness and courtesies extended to me and my delegation.

My thanks and congratulations are extended also to the Secretary-General of the Conference and his staff for the efficient and superb organization of the Conference. The tremendous work of the Preparatory Committee is also greatly applauded.

Let me hasten at this juncture to acknowledge the presence of His Excellency Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the United Nations, and Mrs. Boutros-Ghali.

The convening of this Conference in beautiful Rio provides the appropriate environment for rational, practical decisions and actions that would fulfil the hopes and meet the aspirations of all peoples, especially those in the developing world.

This Conference presents us with a rare and unique opportunity for concrete global cooperation and partnership. It is an opportunity to clearly chart the course for the improvement of the quality of life for all the peoples in our time, and of future generations, through an integrated, caring and people-orientated approach to sustainable development.

Saint Kitts and Nevis, like other developing Caribbean nations, shares the growing consciousness and understanding of the link between environment and development. We endorse the view that there is no trade-off between economic development and sound environmental management. Environment and development are interdependent and must be addressed in tandem. The protection and preservation of a healthy environment are critical to the economic growth and development of our Caribbean countries. The protection of the environment is the protection of life itself.

It is this environment, this natural habitat, that must continue to provide the people of developing countries with the opportunity to earn a living with dignity, rather than consign them to gather the crumbs of welfare from the table of the wealthy.

Environmental protection, therefore, must complement a country's strategy for socio-economic and cultural advancement.

It is my earnest wish that all of us should leave this historic Rio Conference with a clear commitment to balance the urgency of environmental preservation with the imperatives of human development.

Consequently, I call upon the developed countries and the multilateral funding agencies to desist from using the environment as an excuse to further stultify the aspirations of developing countries. Instead, I urge them to commit additional funds to help developing countries meet environmental objectives.

In fact, now is the time for donor countries to meet the agreed United Nations target for official development assistance of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product.

As a clear indication of our commitment to the principle of sound environmental development, Saint Kitts and Nevis shall today sign the Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change.

It is our strong belief that the Convention on Biological Diversity embodies appropriate guidelines for the rational management and use of our resources for our present and future generations. It provides a sound framework for achievement of improved living standards, without degrading our natural resource base. The Convention requires, also, that the benefits associated with the use of their resources will accrue to the population of developing countries.

The Convention on Climate Change is of equally critical importance to Saint Kitts and Nevis and, for that matter, the whole Caribbean region - a region susceptible to the ravages and fury of hurricanes. As island States, we too are vulnerable to the effects of global warming and sea-level rise.

The signing of these Conventions, though indicative of our firm commitment, must go beyond the fanfare of mere ceremony.

The execution of these Conventions will have special meaning to our women and children. The importance of the role of women in the management of the environment should be accorded full recognition.

Saint Kitts and Nevis fully acknowledges the importance and contribution of our women to sustainable development. Women in my country are fully involved as equal partners in the decision-making and development processes. The rights of women and the entitlement to such rights have been integrated into my country's development policies and programmes, which are implemented by a specific Ministry of Women's Affairs.

We in Saint Kitts and Nevis recognize the strong correlation between environmentally sound development and population growth. We provide family planning programmes, involving education, information and accessible services. These programmes have contributed to zero population growth in Saint Kitts and Nevis over the last 10 years.

We are convinced that, fully implemented, Agenda 21 will produce greater benefits for women and, indeed, for all people in developing countries. Agenda 21 addresses the major issues related to sustainable development. It reflects the will and charts the way to improved living standards in developing countries.

We must ensure, however, that Agenda 21 does not remain a mere artistic or architectural blueprint starved and devoid of adequate financial and technological resources for its implementation. Adequate financial resources for translating Agenda 21 into tangible actions are imperative. Developed and developing countries must show courage and decisiveness in making commitments of financial resources commensurate with their means. From those who have more, more is expected.

Failure to meet the financial requirements of Agenda 21 could lead only to further degradation and unsustainable development.

I would urge that access to such resources must not be tied to conditions that would impose further burdens on the people of developing countries. Such resources should be made available on preferential terms, with special concessions for small island developing countries.

The successful accomplishment of the objectives of Agenda 21 will require a new ethos in the international cooperation and partnership between developed and developing countries. This will call for sacrifice, as well as changes in production and consumption patterns.

Saint Kitts and Nevis will continue to play its part by implementing national policies and programmes based on domestic social and economic realities, including solid waste management, water quality control, soil and coastal erosion control, forestry management, and agricultural and fisheries development.

Our Caribbean partners have also formulated and are executing relevant programmes for the achievement of a better environment. In this regard, I express full support for the Commonwealth Iwokrama Rain Forest Programme in Guyana, a clear example of international cooperation for sustainable development.

International cooperation and partnership will, in the final analysis, determine the outcome of this Rio Conference.

Let us avoid confrontation and embrace cooperation based on equity and justice.

We cannot aspire to save the planet for future generations while consigning the poor, the underprivileged, the underdeveloped of this generation to a life of persistent misery and deprivation.

Rio must be just the beginning of a new, ongoing commitment by all of us to take action to manage our combined heritage, thus guaranteeing a better quality of life for all people, everywhere.

Statement by H.E. Alhaji Sir Dawda K. Jawara, President
of the Republic of the Gambia

Let me first of all express, on behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf, our very deep appreciation to the Government and people of Brazil for the very warm welcome extended to us. We have fully enjoyed our stay in this beautiful and enchanting city, despite our very busy work schedule. The rich cultural variety and the strong historical links we all have with this country help to make us feel at home, in spite of the geographical distance that separates Brazil from Africa.

I would also like to congratulate Your Excellency, President Fernando Collor, on your unanimous election to preside over our Conference.

This Summit offers a historic opportunity to deal in a comprehensive manner with the two interrelated issues of environment and development. In the past we have committed the error of treating them separately, failing to recognize their interdependence, especially on the promotion of sustainable development in its diverse forms. The consequence of this neglect is now clear to us all and while it may not be too late to change the trend, this will require enormous effort, commitment and tenacity. Whether we come from the North or the South, we share this Earth and we need to use its resources judiciously now and tomorrow in order not to compromise the future and to be able to render back what we hold in trust.

Twenty years ago, the first World Environment Conference, which helped to place the issue of environment firmly on the world agenda, took place in Stockholm. The instruments that were put in place after the Conference, such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Global Environmental Monitoring System have provided useful coordination mechanisms for world-wide environmental issues as well as providing guidance and support for actions that may be required at both national and global levels. Despite good intentions and laudable efforts at both national and international levels, the problems of environmental degradation have increased in complexity and seriousness. Land degradation, ozone depletion, desertification, global warming and other environmental problems are all important indicators of the growing threat to life on this planet. In the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, chaired by the distinguished Gro Harlem Brundtland, the limits of the current approach to these issues were clearly highlighted. The report has successfully brought out the inextricable linkage between environment and development, which provides a useful point of departure for our current reflections.

Fifteen years ago, when we re-examined our situation in the Gambia, we were forced to recognize that serious damage was being done to our environment, particularly to wildlife and the natural habitat, by a combination of natural and human acts. There was an urgent need to address the situation. In recognition of this, the Government made a pledge, known as the Banjul Declaration, in which it undertook to conserve for now and posterity as wide a spectrum as possible of our remaining fauna and flora. This commitment is a reflection of the general concern we have always felt about environmental protection. Since the Declaration, we have initiated a number of conservation strategies, including, *inter alia*, the establishment of national parks and protected areas, and a plan of action to combat desertification, including programmes of afforestation and reafforestation. But in general these initiatives have had limited success because of the limitations of national capacity to implement and sustain them and, to some extent, the lack of adequate international support.

In preparing for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development we have, in Africa as elsewhere, reflected on the major issues of concern to us and these are embodied in the "African Common Position". They are:

The non-achievement of food security, which is resulting in famine and malnutrition;

The lack of energy security;

Problems relating to non-achievement of sustainable economic growth and productive employment;

The instability of the flow of financial resources for development;

The improvement of the quality of life and habitat.

These issues give a fair indication of the effort that will be required to address the special situation of Africa. We reaffirm our commitment to environmental protection that would allow the sustainable use of our resources. We are prepared to play our role as partners in the global effort to address the major environmental issues that face this planet. But the world must also take full cognizance of the human resources limitations and financial constraints of developing countries and their desire to improve the living conditions of their nationals. Although all these constraints call for urgent solutions, a few deserve particular mention. One of them is poverty, which constitutes one of the greatest causes and consequences of environmental degradation. It was therefore encouraging to see that this issue has been taken up by the Conference. For the majority of Africans, the choice of alternative livelihood systems outside the agricultural and livestock sectors is almost non-existent. This situation has invariably led to the intensive exploitation of the natural resource base, leading to serious land degradation. The development of a special programme to alleviate, if not eradicate, poverty is therefore a major concern in any environmental management programme in Africa. My Government has just initiated the formulation of a comprehensive Poverty Alleviation Programme that will seek to address the interrelated issues that affect poverty as well as to devise concrete measures to alleviate it.

Another important constraint to our development is the continuing decline in commodity prices. Our countries are agricultural and the prices received for our agricultural production have continued to decline. Against the backdrop of heavy debt servicing it is not always possible for us to pursue policies which are compatible with sound environmental management or sustainable development. We are not unaware of the implications of this but our capacity to redress the situation is seriously limited by both national and international factors. This may not be the forum to discuss at length some of the issues concerned but we must, in the context of the newly found global partnership, endeavour to address them, thereby promoting the spirit of mutual support that has made the Earth Summit possible. The problems are interrelated and their solutions require concerted international effort. To ensure the success of the Summit we will need to make progress on other fronts as well. In that connection, we would like to recommend:

Cancellation of official bilateral debt;

Cancellation of semi-official/export credit debts;

Substantial reduction of debt owed to multilateral financial institutions, which now accounts for 40 per cent of sub-Saharan debt servicing.

Satisfying these demands, which is not impossible, will improve dramatically our resources in the effort to strike the right balance between development and environmental protection.

Climate change and loss of biodiversity are issues of global concern, which require a global solution. It is an encouraging sign that they have now become the object of global conventions that seek to address them in their complexity. This common resolve must be extended to other serious environment problems, which have a direct bearing on the conservation of biodiversity and

climate change. I would like to refer to the question of desertification, which has been considered in the context of managing fragile ecosystems. This is an issue of major concern, particularly to Africa, which has already been brought up during preparatory discussions.

For some countries, drought and desertification have been traumatic experiences because of their social and economic consequences. In my country, the Gambia, which is in the Sudano-Sahelian zone, rainfall has dropped from an average of 1,100 mm before the drought years of the 1970s and 1980s to 650 mm. This has been accompanied by a decrease in the number of rainy days and irregular spatial distribution. For the vegetative cover, the area of closed forest with over 50 per cent canopy cover has decreased by 80 per cent in 26 years through the combined effects of grazing, land clearing for cultivation, exploitation of forests for fuel and timber, and bush fires, which are now ubiquitous. Crop losses as a result of soil degradation and low rainfall have been dramatic, reaching, in some areas and for some crops, as much as 80 per cent. Similar problems have been faced in the wildlife sector. I do not intend to go through the whole catalogue of the consequences of long years of drought but I would like to give some idea of the tremendous difficulties we are going through. It is clear that our natural resource base has reached the limits of its regenerative capacity and unless something is done, and very quickly, the problems of food supply, urban migration and desertification will multiply. This will have severe socio-economic consequences for the Gambian people and lead to much frustration and despair.

A careful assessment of previous efforts in this field has been made. There is no question that drought and desertification are pervasive and represent a sufficient danger to the lives of our peoples for global attention to be focused on them. An international legal instrument would demonstrate the highest political commitment to finding a solution to a problem which we all recognize as having serious adverse effects on our lives.

Consequently, we strongly recommend a convention on desertification. In doing so, we are fully aware of the special nature of desertification which, unlike biodiversity or climate change, will require special arrangements. Such a convention could be in the form of a programme of internationally acceptable intervention strategies not only to monitor the phenomenon, but also to institute specific action programmes to improve the living conditions of victims living in affected areas. It will require a coordinated and sustained national and international effort in a well-defined frame of action that will accommodate short-term measures as well as long-term planning. We have had the experience of conventions of this nature and I am confident that we have the collective wisdom and ingenuity to devise an appropriate legal format for it. We fully appreciate the understanding and support our request has received in the world community and we thank you all.

Talk of drought and desertification gives water, particularly freshwater, a special resonance. Improved freshwater management is not just an environmental issue but also an economic and developmental one as it has the potential to improve human health and increase agricultural production. It was therefore encouraging to note that this subject was amply dealt with during the discussions.

In reviewing the implementation of the programme on Agenda 21, we will need to stress the involvement of women and local communities in the management of the environment and, more particularly, natural resources. We must, at national levels, encourage and support their active participation in all matters that affect them. Constituting a vulnerable segment of our society, women bear the full brunt of the social and economic difficulties in our countries. They therefore deserve special consideration in the formulation of programmes for sustainable development. The democratic process in the political sphere must be extended to the management of natural resources.

However, to ensure the full and effective involvement of all in the development process, we must promote national capacity-building at all levels, especially that of the community. The development of our human resources is a prerequisite for national and local action, which will very much determine the success or failure of the implementation of Agenda 21.

Another important element in the success of Agenda 21 will be international cooperation and support through the provision of financial resources, technical assistance and transfer of appropriate technology. Whilst we welcome the creation of the Global Environment Facility, we strongly feel (as do many previous speakers) that the Facility needs to be restructured and its financial base expanded to allow financing of more diverse projects. It is necessary to add that Africa's experience so far has not been encouraging. The Facility's area of coverage should be expanded to include other major environmental sectors, notably drought and desertification. Membership should also be open to less endowed countries. The \$4 million membership contribution fee seems designed to deny the rest of us any say in the governance of the fund. In addition to the Global Environment Facility, official development assistance will continue to be an important source of funding, particularly if all the industrialized countries agree to meet the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of their GNP to international development. For those countries that have not already reached the target, we strongly urge them to do so by the end of the year 2000.

Since the adoption of resolution 44/228, the Gambia has taken an active part in the preparatory process because we strongly believe that the Conference provides a unique opportunity to address the problems of our world. Agenda 21 programmes have the merit of having been very carefully negotiated. To this, we have all, in our modest ways, contributed. We should, however, strive to translate our pious hopes into action. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to lay the foundations for sustainable development. This is the only way to save this planet. We have, in keeping with our national commitment to environment and development, just completed our Environmental Action Plan, in which we sought to give concrete expression to the major environmental problems that we face today. We look forward to working with other countries in the implementation of this and other programmes.

Before concluding, I would like to convey to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Mr. Maurice Strong, and his staff my delegation's deep appreciation of the hard work they have put into the preparation of this Summit. We thank them most sincerely for their

effort. The success that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development promises to be is owed in large measure to their brilliant organization and unstinting commitment.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Abdulaziz Abdulghani, Vice-President
of the Republic of Yemen

It is my pleasure to offer heartfelt congratulations to you in your capacity as President of this important international Conference, which is meeting in the beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro. I also wish to express our thanks for the great efforts made by your Government, in cooperation with the United Nations, in making the arrangements for this Conference and for the generous welcome that has been accorded to us.

The relationship between the environment and development has been a subject of continuous discussion ever since the holding of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972. Two decades later, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is now meeting in Brazil to reaffirm the importance of international cooperation in dealing with problems of the environment and of sustainable and integrated development and to take important decisions to achieve the objectives and purposes of this historic Conference.

The industrial progress and urbanization taking place in many parts of the world, the intense competition and the unstructured production race, as well as the continuing manufacture of deadly nuclear, chemical and biological weapons by certain States, the continual testing of such weapons and the environmentally harmful wastes they produced, have caused environmental damage to the atmosphere, global warming and pollution of the soil and the water of rivers and seas. All this creates dangers which are difficult to overcome and threatens the life of human beings, of everything that lives and grows on Earth. Because of the continued backwardness of many developing countries, there are further forms of pollution, and scarce natural resources are wasted in many ways. Practical measures to base existing international cooperation on the sharing of technology and other resources with the developing countries are now urgently required so as to enable them to develop their own resources and to benefit from and exploit them in the most effective way without the risk of environmental pollution.

The unity of Yemen has been achieved peacefully and democratically; the Republic of Yemen is committed to freedom, democracy and human rights and adheres to constitutional legitimacy and the separation of powers. Its political system is based on the multi-party principle, freedom of the press, and the right to form trade unions and mass associations and organizations. Today, two years after the formation of the young Republic of Yemen, we are preparing for free and impartial elections, to be held later this year. The electoral law guarantees full equality of political rights for all citizens, both men and women, including the right to nominate and elect candidates.

Our foreign policy is based on respect for the sovereignty of other States, non-interference in their internal affairs and peaceful settlement of conflicts.

Our country wants peace and security in the Middle East and throughout the world and it sets great store by the attainment of a just settlement of the Palestinian problem; it is therefore doing everything in its power to ensure the implementation of United Nations resolutions concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict on the basis of the prohibition of the occupation of the land of others by force and the right of the Palestinian Arab people to self-determination. It is on those grounds that our country has participated in all the many committees for the discussion of peace in the Middle East set up under the auspices of the United States of America and the Russian Federation.

We also wish to appeal to the international community to cooperate in order to assist peoples and alleviate their sufferings and to ensure that no damage or distress is caused by international resolutions to any people, whatever the circumstances, since that is incompatible with the principles on which the United Nations is based. This includes the sufferings of the people of Iraq, particularly children, the sick, the disabled and the aged, caused by the international food blockade that has been imposed upon that country.

We affirm our country's desire and commitment to do everything within its power to protect the environment of Yemen on land, at sea and in the air. Our country has carried out major environmental counselling and guidance programmes and has incorporated certain environmental subjects in general education and university syllabuses. It has also promulgated a number of laws on environmental conservation and has signed and committed itself to the provisions of over 22 international conventions connected with environmental matters.

Furthermore, in the mid-1980s, the Council for the Protection of the Environment was established under the chairmanship of a cabinet minister. The purpose of the Council is to support the efforts made by the State, to assist in drawing up policies and programmes and to propose laws related to the environment.

Our country is working, in cooperation with the States of the region, to protect its shores on the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Arabian Sea from pollution. It has also drawn up a plan to combat desertification and devised a national population strategy. Preparations are under way for convening a conference on environmental strategy and a water strategy at the end of this year.

During the first two years of its existence, the Republic of Yemen has contended with economic obstacles, including natural disasters such as drought and earthquakes, the hardship caused by the return of about a million emigrants from the States of the Arabian Peninsula and the Arabian Gulf and the cessation of much financial and technical assistance as a result of the Gulf crisis. It was because the Republic of Yemen was one of the countries which suffered greatly as a result of that crisis that the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolutions 45/193 and 45/222, which called for assistance to the Government of Yemen and for support for its efforts to develop its economy and its infrastructure.

In order to expedite the development of our country and in the context of the adoption by the State of a policy of economic freedom, the work of establishing a free zone in the city of Aden is proceeding at a rapid pace.

The Government of the Republic of Yemen has also promulgated a new investment law designed to attract possible investments; it includes wide-ranging privileges for investors and abolishes the standard administrative restrictions that used to be imposed on investment in Yemen and, at the same time, incorporates provisions to limit adverse effects on the environment.

We believe that international cooperation will foster our national efforts to achieve a balance between sustainable economic development and environmental conservation and that we shall be able to organize our environmental management in such a way as to make the best use of natural resources and to build the national economy on sound and modern foundations.

The impact of our country's endeavours will remain limited because environmental conservation efforts in Yemen, and perhaps in many developing countries, are confronted and held back by a greater and more insistent force which exerts even more influence on both Governments and citizens alike, namely the vital and pressing need for industrial and social progress.

In the Republic of Yemen we are convinced that the States which have achieved the outstanding industrial and technical progress that has given rise to the awesome gap between the advanced and the developing countries must bear the main burden of the process of environmental regeneration at the national, regional and global levels.

As we are aware, the environment knows no boundaries between States, and the environment of Yemen is a part of the world environment.

On that basis we have already signed the Convention on Biological Diversity and we shall shortly sign the Framework Convention on Climate Change because we believe that the task of saving the Earth and everything on it must be a collective task; that within determined and defined limits, every party must bear its full responsibility; that the industrially advanced countries must provide the necessary additional funds and endeavour to alleviate the burden of debt borne by all the developing countries; and that what is agreed upon now must subsequently be put into effect.

We share with the countries of the world the hope that the question of disinterested international cooperation will gain the attention of all attending this Conference in order that mankind may be saved from present and future environmental dangers, while economic development is advanced on a sound basis that will enable mankind to build a better life and ensure the well-being, security and stability of the peoples of the world.

Statement by H.S.H Prince Rainier III of Monaco

I have two main reasons for addressing this assembly today: first of all, I should like to express my solidarity with the courageous initiative taken by the men and women of goodwill who have spared no effort in bringing this historic Summit to fruition. Following their example, let us refrain from facile phrases and statements of principle which lead nowhere. Let us find the political and moral strength to apply the necessary solutions in order to save what is essential. It is up to us Heads of State, acting together, to seize this opportunity - perhaps one of the last - to put our blue planet permanently back on course so that our children and future generations may grow up in a more equitable and healthy world; secondly, I want to provide you with a direct account and to share with you my concerns about the future of a region of the globe which is particularly threatened, one of the cradles of humanity - the Mediterranean.

It is, of course, always difficult to speak on behalf of a geographical entity which transcends national boundaries. I do so not without hesitation, but inspired to a large extent by the example of my ancestor, Prince Albert I, one of the founders of modern oceanography and one of the first to alert global public opinion to the vulnerability of our oceans. Under his leadership, at the end of the last century - in the days of sailing ships - our Principality was already keenly interested in the scientific study of marine processes. That tradition has continued and, today, our small country is host to a variety of well-known marine organizations, including the International Hydrographic Organization, the International Laboratory for Marine Radioactivity and the European Oceanographic Observatory.

Monaco has also been host since 1919 to a unique intergovernmental scientific organization, the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea, which I have had the privilege of chairing for more than 20 years and which encompasses several thousand scientists from both shores and 550 Mediterranean and Black Sea institutes. It is also on their behalf that I am speaking today, expressing their common concerns and my own about the rapid degradation of this heritage of mankind.

The Mediterranean is illustrative in more ways than one, representing as it does a veritable microcosm of the global problems under consideration here.

Semi-enclosed and thus particularly vulnerable, the Mediterranean Sea is geographically at the heart of North-South imbalances, at the confluence of three continents with different rates of economic development and population growth.

While representing only 1 per cent of the Earth's surface, the Mediterranean accounts for nearly half of the world's maritime traffic in petroleum and more than one third of its tourism. In addition, it is subject to intense demographic, industrial and agricultural pressures. Because its rainfall is low and its access to the waters of the world's oceans is limited to a single strait, the Mediterranean is an area of accumulation where the impact of pollution is rapidly magnified.

At present, nearly 80 per cent of the waste from coastal cities is dumped, untreated, directly into the Mediterranean. It is estimated that approximately 1 million tons of oil - nearly a quarter of the world total - are accidentally spilt or deliberately dumped each year into the Mediterranean, making its hydrocarbon concentrations 100 times higher on average than those of the North Sea! On top of that we have heavy metal wastes - mercury, zinc and cadmium - from the mainland.

These drastic changes brought about by human activity, in particular the organic pollution of coastal waters, the overexploitation of living resources, the insidious pollution of food chains by heavy metals and the rapid erosion and degradation of the coastline, have for years been classified by our scientific community as priority problems and yet, so far, we have been unable to halt them.

The impact of human activity is now being compounded by climate change. In this field, there is still a great deal of uncertainty - widely reflected at this Conference - about future regional changes (including rainfall levels, rising sealevels, drinking water resources) and the importance of the regulating role played by the interrelationship between ocean and climate. The result has been a critical absence of preventive measures, particularly for the southern shore of the Mediterranean where a sealevel rise, combined with increased drought, would have disastrous consequences for coastal areas and heavily populated deltas such as the Nile delta.

The Mediterranean is a machine which transforms its waters through processes which are highly dependent on meteorological conditions. The properties of its waters change rapidly depending on the climate. The Mediterranean is thus an ultra-sensitive barometer of the disturbances and changes taking place in the world's oceans. The response to climatic variations is easier to observe in the Mediterranean than elsewhere and should be a priority area for experimentation. For some years now, we have been seeing warning signs of a vast hydro-climatic change in the Mediterranean. A growing number of Atlantic species are being replaced by tropical species; moreover, recent studies indicate that, by the next century, the depths of the Mediterranean will be threatened with asphyxiation.

These problems are exacerbated by a difficult demographic situation: first, populations are concentrated along the coast and are increasing at six times the rate of inland populations; secondly, one of the most spectacular population explosions in the world is taking place on the southern shore, where the average population density on non-desert lands will have increased from 30 inhabitants per km² in 1900 to 250 by the year 2000 and will have reached at least 500 by the year 2050, close to the population density of urban areas, making it impossible to maintain any wooded areas.

In the absence of an immediate, concerted response and more effective North-South solidarity, the coming decades will inevitably see a vast increase in trans-Mediterranean migratory flows involving hundreds of thousands, or even millions, of "environmental refugees".

These problems obviously extend well beyond the strict confines of the marine environment and illustrate clearly how the future of the seas is being played out not on the sea itself but on the shore. The situation in the

Mediterranean is particularly critical and urgently calls for an immediate, massive and concerted effort by all the coastal countries, with the support of the scientific community and of the non-governmental organizations concerned. We must classify the Mediterranean and, by extension, the Black Sea, as a region for priority action.

More generally, at the international level, a certain laissez-faire attitude towards the oceans has tended to prevail. Never have so many conventions and treaties on the protection of marine areas been signed and yet, in the view of the scientific community, never have man's attacks on these ecosystems been so threatening.

It is the duty of those of us who govern to reflect on this state of affairs. The large number of conventions on the protection of the seas clearly perpetuates the idea that simply signing and ratifying these conventions will solve the problem of the oceans. Unfortunately, as we have seen repeatedly in recent years this is far from the case: those often excellent instruments are largely ignored by many signatories because there is no follow-up or, at times, because of a lack of technical capacities. There is an urgent need to condemn what constitutes negligence at best and hypocrisy at worst and to envisage and create mechanisms which will ensure respect for and strengthen those texts in practice.

In conclusion, I should like to recommend some specific mechanisms, designed a priori for the Mediterranean but no doubt adaptable to other regional seas.

First, the operational North-South transfer of appropriate methodologies and technologies, particularly in the areas of aquaculture, restoration of degraded coastal equilibria, rational management of protected coastal areas, pollution measurement and monitoring and basic knowledge of ecological mechanisms. In all these areas, the relationship between scientific networks, government authorities and international funding mechanisms must be widely encouraged.

Secondly, the establishment of a real-time marine pollution monitoring system, using the latest satellite remote sensing techniques. Such a system, which is being operated on a pilot basis by the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean Sea, would be linked to the immediate intervention capacities of specialized agencies, thereby providing us with powerful means of deterrence and intervention against polluters.

Thirdly, the drafting of a framework convention for the protection of vulnerable areas situated in international waters. Such areas would be identified on the basis of their ecological importance and their vulnerability to human activity. The objective would be not so much to impose strict protection regulations but to adopt a flexible, integrated management system, in which marine resources and economic activities (such as fishing, shipping, mining and tourism) could coexist over the long term as a result of close cooperation between the various users.

Fourthly, the opening of an independent liaison office responsible for coordinating and monitoring the implementation of the various conventions dealing wholly or in part with the protection of the natural heritage of the Mediterranean (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; the Bern, Algiers, Barcelona, Ramsar and Bonn Conventions; the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) and the World Heritage Convention). To be effective, such an office should at one and the same time be fully autonomous and work closely with the specialized agencies.

To that end, I am prepared to set up such an office in the Principality of Monaco, with the mandate to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the conventions regarding the Mediterranean and Black Seas.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Girija Prasad Koirala, Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of Nepal

First of all, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Government and people of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the warm reception and liberal hospitality they have so kindly extended to us. This friendliness as well as the common cause informing our Conference in which your country, Mr. Chairman, has taken such a leading role has bridged the distance that intervenes between the great Himalayas from where I come and this great variegated plentiful land of rain forest and savannah.

At the same time let me take this occasion to express my deep appreciation for the strong and imaginative leadership that the Secretary-General, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has provided in organizing this Conference. I want also to pay special tribute to Mr. Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the Conference, who has spared no efforts to make this greatest conference on environment and development so far a success.

Environment and development are interrelated and interdependent global concerns. That so many heads of State and Government have felt it necessary to meet here in Rio to discuss this problem and usher in a new environmental order through a declaration and a programme of action at the instance of the United Nations is a measure of its urgency and seriousness. The new international order itself is critically dependent on the success of our efforts. Pollution of air and water, industrial and nuclear waste, alarming emission of carbon dioxide, population pressure, deforestation, green-house effect, global warming and soil erosion have gone a long way to distort our climate and threaten to make our Earth unfit for life. Our world is currently gripped in two vicious circles. While developing countries have their cycle of poverty, underdevelopment, subsistence and environmental deterioration, developed countries have been caught in their own whirlpool of progress, industrial factories, consumption and environmental degradation. Straight and narrow seems to be the path between nuclear disaster and ozone depletion.

We share this common concern of humanity and are willing and ready to fulfil our due responsibility in this respect. We have deliberately moulded our policies and decisions towards that end and intend to pursue them further. Family planning measures have been intensified. But we realize that major factors that are at work in the rapid degradation of environment and the means to restore a meaningful balance in them are outside us and outside our

control. We are not the major polluters. Development and environmental problems of Nepal are associated with poverty and the country's rugged physical features. Poverty is multidimensional and its solution demands internally the collective effort of conscious people in a free and democratic society and externally adequate international understanding and cooperation. We are working on this belief and have laid some foundation. Our country's altitude varies south-north from 58 metres in the Terai to 8,848 metres at Mount Everest, within a distance of just 201 kilometres. We are interested in managing a fragile ecosystem which addresses sustainable mountain development and have lent support to a proposal on this subject. But within such adverse physical features our country offers opportunities. It contains several snow-fed rivers which are rich sources for both irrigation and clean energy. In this potential clean energy our concerns for development and environment can be harmonized in the spirit of the objectives of this Conference, adequately for Nepal and hopefully beyond its borders also.

Such consummation requires additional financial resources. We recognize the role of the Global Environment Facility as an instrument for assisting developing countries in resolving environmental problems as they arise in the course of development. But if development and environment are to be equitably addressed, it is important that environmental protection include positive involvement of the international community in clean development.

The Rio Declaration will be a significant milestone in our search for humane and balanced development. Holding man at the centre, it seeks to balance interests between environment and development and between sovereign States. It creates not only an atmosphere but also a background for further steps and further international cooperation. Though a compromise, it is an important document as a basis for international law on the subject. I assure you of Nepal's fullest cooperation.

The programme of action embodied in Agenda 21 carries forward the principles formulated in the Declaration. Our commitment to the objectives of this Conference has extended to practical areas. This is a matter of satisfaction and also of future hope. I am happy to say that Nepal supports the programme as a good beginning and a good basis for further progress.

We have reached a crucial stage in our relationship with Nature. Fifty years ago, man understood Nature through science and made some miracles of progress. She was stretched but not strained. She could recuperate on her own. Today man has advanced through science to a stage of apparent conquest of Nature. She can no longer recuperate on her own. Conquered, she seems to beckon to us with a vow of terrible vengeance. This prospect alone underlines the historic significance of the Stockholm and Rio Conferences.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Bailey Olter, President of the Federated States of Micronesia and Chairman of the South Pacific Forum

I am honoured to make these remarks as Chairman of the South Pacific Forum, on behalf of the 15 member countries in our Pacific region whose heads of Government comprise the organization. The Forum members are Australia, the Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Vanuatu and Western Samoa. The heads of Forum Governments meet once a year to discuss issues of common interest, to strengthen regional cooperation politically and economically, and on security and environmental matters. A permanent secretariat, based in Fiji, acts under the guidance of the member Governments to support, among other things, a wide variety of development and aid programmes.

As a region, the countries of the Forum are custodians of a large portion of the Earth's surface. Our combined exclusive economic zones occupy 30 million square kilometres, an area more than four times the size of the great country of Brazil. Yet, given our widely dispersed, relatively small islands, our limited human resources, and generally low state of economic development, our capacity to protect the fragile environment against damage from all sources is constrained.

Nevertheless, over many years the Forum and its member countries have shared the international community's growing concern with the environment of our planet. Communiqués of its annual meetings have indicated that concern in a wide variety of policy statements, which have been followed up by the members' active participation throughout the preparatory process for the Conference, as well as in the negotiations for the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Biodiversity Convention. In an ideal world, many of our Forum members would have preferred stronger Conventions, particularly on climate change, with clear commitments to reducing carbon dioxide emissions. Nevertheless, a number have signed or intend to sign on the basis that the Conventions enable at least a beginning of our collective efforts to achieve real improvements in the areas covered.

Many of us occupy some of the smallest habitable land areas on Earth and we are vulnerable to natural and human-induced disturbance of both the local and global environments. Our daily lives are heavily affected by the prevailing climate, physical characteristics of our islands and the resources of land and sea. When the intensity of tropical storms increases, as we have seen in recent years, we have nowhere to go. Destruction and death result. When months of complete drought come, as many of us are experiencing even now, the suffering that takes place would be hard to believe by those who hold fond notions of paradise in the Pacific.

Climate change and sealevel rise caused by global warming are the most serious environmental threats to the islands in the Pacific region. Our cultural, economic and even our physical survival are directly at risk. Yet we have not created the problem which threatens to destroy us, nor even materially contributed to it. Moreover, the solution to the problem is not within our capabilities, but lies instead with those who purchased their own development with polluted currency that the rest of us dare not use.

The Pacific region is one of the world's troves of biological diversity. The many thousands of islands are rich in terrestrial and marine ecosystems. The Forum has recognized the fundamental importance of these biological resources to the people of the Pacific region and of the world, and has endorsed the development of agricultural, forestry and fisheries practices which encourage the maintenance of biological diversity. It is the region's hope that the Biodiversity Convention will be of great significance in preserving vulnerable resources for future generations.

The countries of the South Pacific Forum strongly support Agenda 21 as a whole, the chapter on oceans in particular. We especially welcome the decisions to call a series of conferences, commencing in 1993, on sustainable development of small islands, and a conference to promote effective implementation of Law of the Sea Convention provisions on straddling fish stocks and highly migratory species. We also see great value in the adherence by all nations to the principles of the Rio Declaration.

We are hopeful that the world's emerging sense of environmental ethics as demonstrated by this Conference will enable our region at last to overcome a particular problem that for years has intensified the vulnerability of our island existence. I refer to the attitude of many developed countries that the Pacific island region is a great, unpopulated void which offers opportunities to the rest of the world for convenient disposal of toxic, radioactive or otherwise harmful wastes, and for the conduct of any dangerous or obnoxious activity that cannot for reasons of public safety be carried out on home territory.

These are very real and continuing threats to our region. Atomic and hydrogen bomb testing has been suspended now for many years in the Marshall Islands, but horrible disease and disfigurement are still suffered by many Marshallese. Moreover, instances continue to occur which show that our region is regarded as an attractive site for environmentally undesirable or dangerous activities.

A case in point is Johnston Island, where the United States is carrying out a programme to incinerate stockpiles of chemical weapons shipped from Germany and other points. In their 1990 communiqué, Forum countries declared that the Pacific Ocean and the islands in it should not continue to be used as a convenient area for the development, storage, dumping or disposal of hazardous materials, including chemical weapons, particularly from outside the region. Consequently, we are relying on assurances by the United States that the scope of the operations at Johnston Island will remain limited to the current programme and that the facility will be dismantled as soon as that programme has been completed.

Another matter of current interest is a planned long-term arrangement between several developed countries that seems likely to involve ocean shipments through the Pacific region of highly refined plutonium. The Forum is seeking detailed information on this project prior to discussing its implications at the upcoming annual meeting in the Solomon Islands.

Countries of the Pacific region have long opposed the use of islands within the region for the conduct of nuclear weapons testing. We do welcome the recent decision of France to suspend its testing in the Pacific and urge that, in the spirit of Rio, the suspension of testing be turned into a permanent ban.

We of the South Pacific Forum devoutly hope this historic Summit and its mechanisms will at last make the world realize the Pacific is both valuable to future generations for its vast resources and home to present generations of peoples who have never willingly accepted that their backyards be made dumping grounds or testing and disposal areas. Since our small size and wide dispersion has in the past denied us the political power to protect ourselves against these forces, we look forward henceforth to a world order in which new environmental imperatives will teach others the inequity of past attitudes and practices.

Finally, let me express the very sincere gratitude of all the Forum members for the world's strong attendance and participation in these meetings. It gives us hope. Special thanks go, of course, to those such as the Secretary-General of the Conference, without whose selfless dedication and determination we would not be here. Finally, the host country - the Government and the wonderful people of Brazil - have earned for themselves a special place in history by opening their warm hearts and their beautiful country for this occasion, one that will be remembered for all time.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Rahim Husseinov, Prime Minister of
the Azerbaijani Republic

On behalf of the Azerbaijani people I would like to convey to the Conference my greetings and best wishes for its successful and fruitful work in the interest of the peoples of the world.

The Azerbaijani Republic quite recently took the path of real democracy and independence. The presence of the Azerbaijani delegation at this Conference proves it.

This statement at the Summit Segment is based on reliable information from relevant republican bodies. It represents a synthesis of available data on environment in the Republic, focuses on the issues of protection, status and management of natural resources and analyses causes that are at the origin of the degradation of the environment.

The ecological situation in Azerbaijan has deteriorated considerably during the last few decades: the level of atmospheric pollution is many times higher than acceptable; the problem of Caspian Sea pollution - a sea of global importance - has been aggravated by a catastrophic rise in sealevel; the deficit of freshwater has become more pronounced, as has erosion and other processes. Everything indicates that the environment in the Republic is in a state of ecological stress. We, like the whole international community, are very concerned about the consequences of this situation, including degradation of soil, waters, atmosphere and forests, which endanger future economic development.

Over half of the national income of the Republic is accounted for by agriculture, energy production and the oil and mining industries. The fact that export of natural resources remains the most important factor of the economy increases dramatically the economic development problems of the Republic. Further mismanagement of those resources would result in serious economic problems, international and national, and this in turn would lead to a deep ecological crisis.

The environmental situation in our Republic resembles the ecological crisis experienced by the United States of America and the countries of Western Europe in the 1950s and 1960s. The efforts of the Republic to complete the transition to a market economy as soon as possible could seriously worsen the situation. Western countries had been developing market relations for decades before they directed their efforts towards ecologically sound production following the most acute ecological crisis. Today, we are confident that all of the world's existing environmental problems are most vividly manifested in the Azerbaijani Republic, and it will be very difficult for us to resolve them without the assistance of the world community. I would like to briefly analyse the main environmental problems facing the Republic.

Among the most acute problems is the high level of atmospheric pollution in the industrial centres of the Republic. Evaluation of the volume of emissions and the discharge per unit shows that the most polluted areas are Sumgait and Baku, where oil refineries and petrochemical industries, ferrous and non-ferrous metal industries and the energy sector cause air pollution. The situation has also deteriorated in other cities, where road traffic contributes heavily to contamination of the air.

An extremely dangerous ecological situation has emerged in agricultural areas of the Republic - the Kura-Araxin lowlands and the Lencoran-Astarian zone. Monocultural growing of cotton (Kura-Araxin lowlands) and of vegetables (Lencoran) has contributed to the heavy pollution of the environment of pesticides and minerals, which filter down into underground waters and water-supply sources. A feudal irrigation system and haphazard development of new irrigated areas has resulted in considerable waterlogging, which in turn may lead to epidemics. All this has dramatically aggravated the health of people living in these areas. According to surveys, the Republic's population faces severe health problems.

The situation of the Apsheron peninsula is critical: oil and gas resources have been extracted for almost 100 years without due regard to the consequences of such activity for the soil quality and the landscape; as a result, large areas of land have become unusable. The concentration of technologically backward production facilities in a limited area has resulted in soil pollution by heavy metals at levels hundreds of times higher than the world average.

The condition of bodies of water can be characterized as an emergency. Especially alarming is the condition of the Araks River downstream of the junction with the left branch of the Okhchonchai River, whose waters are contaminated by toxic wastes from Armenian industrial enterprises, in particular by heavy metals, the level of which exceeds 100 times the maximum allowable concentration.

However, the problem of the Caspian Sea remains the most complicated. Here, within one generation, the zone of environmental disaster has spread drastically - a disaster whose proportions are still difficult to assess, but which, we are certain, will affect the whole world.

The crisis of the Caspian ecosystem has become especially evident in recent years. Intensive development of production facilities with no regard to the capacity of the environment, to say nothing of the interests of the people of the region, has resulted in a sharp increase of technological pressures and human-induced pollution.

The Caspian Sea problem has already been discussed at different levels and has been mentioned by representatives of other States of the Caspian region. I would like to reiterate that rivers which bring their waters to the Caspian Sea have turned into polluted flows carrying an enormous amount of substances deadly for the Caspian flora and fauna. For instance, the Kura basin is polluted by oil derivatives, phenols, nitrates and heavy metal compounds. About 12 billion cubic metres of contaminated wastewaters are discharged into the Caspian Sea every year, including 10.2 billion cubic metres carried by the Volga.

The intensive development of oil and gas fields and the lack of guaranteed environmental safety conditions or treatment plants has led to a sharp increase in pollution of the coastal area and a considerable part of the Caspian Sea. In some zones of the Caspian, both chemical and biological contamination has been observed. The lowering of the sealevel that lasted until the late 1970s encouraged active development of the coastal belt, construction of industrial and recreational complexes and oil and gas production facilities. Now a catastrophic rise in sealevel, continuing since 1979, threatens to bring about widespread secondary pollution of vast areas of the Sea. An extremely perilous situation exists in the oldest off-shore oil fields, where a possible environmental catastrophe may be triggered for the whole of the Caspian ecosystem.

We understand all too well that sustainable economic development is impossible to achieve without taking ecological factors into account. The sustainability of ecosystems depends on their biological diversity: the more diverse a system is and the greater the number of species it comprises, the more ecologically stable it is. In this regard, of importance are the issues of preserving and supporting biological diversity, retaining protected areas as samples of natural habitats, and maintaining populations of rare and endangered species of animal and plant life. The preservation of biological diversity and measures to combat deforestation and desertification on our planet, which are among the key issues under discussion at the Conference, are of primary importance for the Azerbaijani Republic.

The state of the environment is worsening as a result of Armenian aggression during the past four years. Estimates made by a commission of experts show that the natural habitat of Azerbaijan has suffered irreparable damage. Unique flora and fauna of the Little Caucasus are faced with complete destruction. Vast areas are being turned into "dead zones" as a result of the use by Armenian guerrillas of chemical weapons and other types of weapons of mass destruction. This aggressive policy is a source of special concern in terms of cultural ecology. The escalation of fighting has led to the complete

destruction of the cultural heritage. Nothing is more destructive to culture than war. Military fighting leads to the loss of human lives, which are of the highest value. What is more, in the conflict zone, Armenian guerrillas have destroyed ancient objects of the Azerbaijani cultural heritage pertaining to the Albanian period. This is an irreparable loss for mankind as a whole.

All the problems mentioned above were inherited by the newly independent Republic from the system of command administration characteristic of the former Soviet Union, and no means are available for their immediate solution. The anthropocentric and technocratic way of thinking inherent in the former state system must give way to one having the biosphere- and ecosystem-wide dimensions required for the sustainable development of civilization on Earth.

The experience of countries that have been through the ecological crisis shows that rehabilitation of devastated nature is feasible, but it requires enormous moral and financial expenses. It is hoped that having realized the serious character of the danger stemming from the devastation of nature, the Republic will be able to abate this process and start restoring the ecological balance.

Expeditious development of a system of ecological payments, legal acts and other ecological regulations should be a priority task for the Republic's Environmental Protection Agency. In early 1992, the Azerbaijani Republic adopted a new Nature Conservation Act which includes environmental protection legislation, legal acts on special protected areas and environmental impact assessment. The purpose of the new legal acts is to facilitate the solution of a number of urgent problems.

Also under way is the elaboration of environmental legislation based on international legislative practice and conventions and agreements adopted by the international community. The law adopted by the Supreme Council of the Azerbaijani Republic is only the first step towards bringing the environmental legislation of the Republic in line with international rules.

Our environmental activities are based on the achievements of the world community in this area, and it is only possible to save the environment through comprehensive "environmentalization" of production, which should become a long-lasting and well-developed state policy. Such a policy should provide for the substitution of existing technologies by more sophisticated and less resource-intensive ones, ensuring at the same time environmental safety. Under existing conditions, this task cannot be realized without the active use of scientific achievements, the development and introduction of less resource-intensive, less polluting and clean technologies and a shift towards closed and waterless technological processes.

We responsibly declare that Azerbaijan, having embarked upon a new course of self-sustained development, is getting rid of the entire heritage of the old system, taking as a basis for its development the ample experience of the democratic countries of the world. Our stated intention to move along that course is substantiated by the necessary political, social and legislative reforms, which are already under way. However, the implementation of economic and political reforms has been impeded by the influx of hundreds of thousands of refugees, deported from Armenia and the Karabakh highlands. Large concentrations of refugees living in ill-suited dwellings, as well as medicine

and food shortages, threaten an outbreak of epidemic diseases and aggravate the social situation in the Republic. Being closely related to the quality of the environment, the problem of refugees might lead to the uncontrollable and unregulated use of natural resources.

The pressure on plant resources has largely increased as forests are cut, pastures overgrazed and soils degraded. Domestic wastes are polluting vast areas of the Republic's territory. All these factors exacerbate the ecological problems and threaten the lives of human beings.

Taking into account the present economic and social situation, as well as the humanism of the international community, Azerbaijan has launched an international initiative aimed at establishing under the auspices of the United Nations or the United Nations Environment Programme an international fund for saving the ecosystem of the Caspian Sea. It is hoped that participants in the Conference will render support to and show concern for the creation of the fund.

The efforts of Azerbaijan to restore democracy and normal economic relations may prove inefficient without adequate assistance from the international community. Documents that are being adopted at the present Conference call for drastic transformation of the entire pattern of the economy and production. We entertain the hope of being integrated into the structure of international environmental programmes and we trust that we may rely on voluntary aid and the assistance of the developed countries, primarily in obtaining environmentally safe and resource-conserving technologies. Without such aid and assistance we shall be unable to avert an environmental crisis and to implement the decisions of the Conference.

In conclusion, let me extend an invitation to organizers and participants of the present Conference to visit Azerbaijan. This will give you an opportunity to have a closer look at the Republic and at the everyday life of its long-suffering people and to understand better our social and economic problems, including the environmental situation.

Direct cooperation will promote implementation of our common goals.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Guy Willy Razanamasy, Prime
Minister of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar

I come from that island which astronauts recognize, from the height of their spacecraft, as "a spreading bloodstain on the blue of the Indian Ocean". In fact, my country with its red laterite soil sees 100,000 tons of arable soil lost each year to erosion; 200,000 tons of sediments silting each year our reservoirs, dams, and ports. Of 10,000,000 hectares of natural forest, 70 per cent of which are primary forest, about 200,000 hectares are destroyed each year.

If I impose this list of woeful statistics upon you, it is simply to tell you that our soil, stripped bare by fires, shifting agriculture, and fuelwood cutting, is offered up to every sort of erosion. It has the melancholy privilege of being known world wide as the most outstanding example of the critical erosion type called "lavaka" - huge crevasses that dissect the

ground. To all this, add the drought afflicting our far South, which is undergoing the process of desertification now, as we speak. The inevitable consequence is famine that decimates the population: dozens of children and women are dying each day. This evocation of facts is not a lamentation, but to let you understand that we are already all too well acquainted with environmental problems.

Therefore, shortly after our independence, towards the end of the 1960s, our leaders reacted:

In 1970, an International Conference on the Conservation of Nature was held in Antananarivo;

1984 saw the elaboration of a National Strategy for Conservation;

In 1985, a second International Conference was held, which complemented the idea of conservation by that of sustainable development;

1986 brought the establishment of a National Council of Conservation and Development;

In 1987-1989, the idea of a "policy of environmental action" took root;

Finally, in 1990, the Charter of the Environment was adopted as a Law of the State.

Unfortunately, these policies, which are carried out with the agreement of traditional external aid donors, are mainly directed towards the priority of saving our heritage of biodiversity. This is certainly extraordinarily rich, yet gravely threatened. Madagascar's endemic species include 100 per cent of the world's lemurs, 95 per cent of its birds and reptiles and 85 per cent of its plant species, including the Madagascar periwinkle, the standard medical treatment for childhood leukemia.

The policies of conservation have indeed been useful in the face of the degeneration of our environment and the extreme vulnerability of our ecosystems. Nevertheless, they have not provided the share of concern which is due the human aspect.

And in this Conference, when we have spoken of the environment and the child, some have remarked: What is the environment if there are no children?

Besides all our internal misfortunes, the Indian Ocean, home of annual cyclones, has become a major route for petrol tankers which proceed to wash out their tanks along our shores, to the great danger of the marine environment.

We can do nothing about this, for lack of means. Madagascar can no longer sustain the weight of its external debt, which holds back all economic and social development. Further, among those debts are those due for saving our environment.

Today, in spite of the scepticism of some, and the reservations of others, I have come to Rio, conscious of being present at a historic moment, but also, and above all, to sign the two Conventions, on Biodiversity and on Climate Change, which represent for us a gleam of hope. I have come to take my place among the men and women of good will, who urgently endeavour to save the planet for our children.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Arnold Rüütel, Chairman of
the Supreme Council of the Republic of Estonia

It is a great honour for me to speak at this World Summit. I want to thank you, Mr. President, for your leadership during this Conference. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, and his colleagues from the Conference secretariat for all the work they have done to make this Conference a success.

Twenty years ago in Stockholm, which is a distance of only a few hundred kilometres from Estonia, the United Nations organized a world conference on the environment. At that time, Estonia was an occupied country and could not participate in that meeting, nor could we contribute during the years following the conference by implementing the recommendations contained in its final declaration. Now, after having regained our independence, we are happy to have the opportunity to participate in this Conference with you, here in Rio de Janeiro, as a Member of the United Nations.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank all those who supported Estonia in our difficult struggle to regain our freedom.

In Estonia, we have been working for decades to protect our natural resources and environment. Our first nature reserve was established in 1910. Our first environmental protection law was adopted in 1935. Nature preserves and national parks now make up about 12 per cent of land use in Estonia.

Five decades of occupation meant that Estonia had to submit to a forced strategy for development, including colonial exploitation of natural resources and the environment as a whole. Environmentally irresponsible enterprises were established. In Estonia, environmental protection became a form of protest against the policies of the occupying country.

In 1988, a strong, popularly supported, movement emerged that opposed the excavation of phosphorites through the use of environmentally dangerous technology. At the time, this environmental movement gave impetus to the political struggle for re-establishing independence. The political importance of a responsible attitude towards the environment, and now development, has not changed in Estonia, and environmental activism is still held in high regard.

We have presented a detailed review of our environmental situation in our national report to this Summit. Some of the problems which we face were listed by our Minister of the Environment in his recent speech at this Conference. I would like to turn your attention to some of the challenges that we currently must address in the areas of environmental protection and sustainable development.

Withdrawal of the foreign military troops that still are in Estonia is our first priority in addressing a legacy of environmental and developmental mismanagement. These troops are illegally within our territory, and operate under the laws of Russia, disregarding Estonian laws. Military troops carry out activities without any regard to Estonia's national environmental legislation. The problems that they have caused include air pollution; fresh, salt and groundwater pollution; soil and sea sediment contamination; noise pollution and extensive landscape disfigurement.

Securing control over foreign nuclear facilities and nuclear waste is of major concern to us in Estonia. The safety of two nuclear reactors installed at a Russian naval base on the Baltic Sea coast must immediately be secured through negotiations. We have been denied information and must immediately obtain details about chemical weapons that were dumped into the Baltic Sea by the former Soviet army. A hazardous deposit of radioactive material was placed along the Gulf of Finland coast by a nuclear enrichment plant controlled by the Russian nuclear industry.

Knowing that environmental and developmental problems must be addressed on a national, regional and global basis, it is particularly important for Estonia to cooperate on a regional basis with countries that border the Baltic Sea. We have already gained considerable experience through working closely together with the Baltic Sea States in the area of marine environmental protection. The importance that the countries surrounding the Baltic Sea place on cleaning and maintaining the Baltic Sea environment has made it possible for countries with diverse social and economic characteristics to work constructively together.

Oil shale mining and processing takes place in Estonia. Unfortunately, environmentally irresponsible technology is used in both mining and processing. Environmentally sound methods must be instituted, if oil shale mining and processing are to continue.

Estonia is concerned about forest management. We have had a national tradition of planting forests since the 1920s. Principles of sustainable management of forests have been applied for decades and need to be maintained, despite the changes our country is currently undergoing. The forest principles addressed through Agenda 21 are of special importance for Estonia.

Estonia is termed a country in transition, meaning that we are moving from a centrally planned to a market economy. For our country, being a country in transition means working in an evolving partnership with developed and developing countries for our mutual benefit. Estonia aims at technology- and information-sharing, professional training, capacity- and institution-building, as well as direct investment.

We share the concerns of other countries about the state of our global environment and know that coordinated world-wide efforts must be undertaken for its protection.

Once again independent, Estonia must undertake large-scale measures to assess and address the demands of responsible environmental protection and sustainable development. These efforts will require resources that currently

are not available in our country. We are working closely with the United Nations system to prepare and implement change. For that reason, the establishment of a United Nations Development Programme presence in Estonia and a Baltic Trust Fund are of paramount importance to us. We believe that the Global Environment Facility will have an important role to play in the implementation of Agenda 21. Estonia is seeking cooperation not just in addressing sustainable development, but also in dealing with the legacy of our recent past.

Estonia considers sustainable development to be a priority of the highest importance. Our new constitution, which currently is under consideration for adoption, includes provisions that address responsible use of our environmental heritage. We know that national security in a post-cold-war world does not mean only the absence of a threat of war; national security means a commitment to sustainable development.

We have come to Rio de Janeiro to sign the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biodiversity. We look forward to implementing the goals and ideals of Agenda 21 along with all of the other States Members of the United Nations.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Vytautas Landsbergis, President
of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Lithuania

Four years ago, in June of 1988, Lithuania saw the rise of a mass movement for change and reform - the Sajudis popular movement, which, though non-violent unarmed political struggle, achieved, in a surprisingly short period, the restoration of the independence of a captive nation.

At that same time, in 1988, a documentary film was produced in Vilnius at the request of Moscow television, which was never shown there. The film was called To Whom Does Our Land Belong? The final scene of the film showed an old farmer once again working the land which had been confiscated from him 40 years prior by the Soviet regime. The farmer carefully worked the land with an old plough drawn not by a horse, but by a tractor. This reality seemed paradoxical, but the greatest reality depicted in that scene was a reality of the spirit with even existential meaning, seen in the contented face and eyes of that thoughtful old farmer, working his land once more, alive once again.

Such people have always cultivated the land, leaving it better than they found it, beautifying it, but never destroying it.

After the Second World War, Lithuania's land was devastated by Soviet ideology and colonial policies, as well as environmental blindness and the instinct of violence.

Violence against nature, against life, against being. The priority placed on what is to be done today as opposed to what may come tomorrow left its mark on my generation, instilling in us the fear of a coming unavoidable global catastrophe. It was this image, among others, which finally brought about our movement of protest, salvation and liberation. But these images also gave birth to entirely fatalistic ideas about an obligatory struggle by

the planet itself against one particular group of inhabitants - people. If people, it seemed, were destined to deplete and consume their planet like bugs that devour leaves on a tree, then the planet must also defend itself. How? Through catastrophes, climate change, holes in the ozone layer, and through the very madness of human activity. We would ask ourselves, is man only a disease for the planet? Will the Earth only heal itself, then, when there are no more people living on it?

These questions and ideas also brought forth a desire to resist the existing course of events.

My country fought for its independence on the understanding that in doing so we were assuming full responsibility for that small piece of the planet on which we live. Now we see that the responsibilities gained by a free people are even greater than the actual possibilities of quickly healing our damaged environment.

But Lithuania is not yet entirely free, and this fact restricts the guarantees our country may give to meet our new responsibilities.

You may know that the former Soviet military to this day forcefully occupies, without any legal basis, agreement or permission, an area greater than 1 per cent of Lithuania's territory, or over 76,000 hectares of land, of which some 52,000 are forests. The Government of a sovereign Lithuania, despite its responsibilities to the world community under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, is not permitted to know what these armed forces are doing on the land it occupies. We can only perceive an increase in the clearing of forests, despite the fact that, on 17 January in Moscow, we agreed with President Yeltsin of Russia that the withdrawal of this army would begin without delay.

The withdrawal has not begun, and yet forests are being cut, petroleum and chemical products burned on military bases, and perhaps even chemical weapons are being dismantled there. The Lithuanian officials are not allowed to control such activities.

I could speak a great deal on this subject, an issue which is my primary concern at present, but I wish to stress one matter which, I believe, is important for this gathering. I refer to Lithuania's political, economic and environmental status. Lithuania is a country in transition to a market economy. This transitional state is a fact which is already reflected in the Conventions that I have yesterday signed on behalf of my country. It is my hope that Agenda 21 will carry forward a similar approach to the understanding of present realities.

I wish to underline that Lithuania well understands the needs and justified concerns of the developing countries. In a similar manner, Lithuania also seeks better understanding of its particular circumstances after 50 years of occupation.

We wish to fulfil and will fulfil international environmental obligations, but in this regard we will also require assistance.

Alone, we cannot guarantee the security of our nuclear plant and alone, for example, we will be unable to extract the mustard gas bombs dumped into the Baltic Sea along our coastline by the Soviet army after the Second World War.

The establishment of a Baltic Trust Fund under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is a significant step towards addressing the specific needs of the Baltic region. UNDP, through its engagement in Baltic development, will bring a very welcome United Nations presence to a part of the world which has been neglected and isolated for many decades.

First and foremost, however, we require international support for the complete liberation of our country from a foreign military, which to this day occupies Lithuanian areas and pollutes our air and water. Our land is still not entirely ours, a fact which cannot be tolerated by anyone.

We desire that the whole of our land be free, beautiful and clean. We have struggled to reach this goal and will continue to do so by all available and peaceful means. Once we were entirely alone, but now we are among friends. This I know from the concern and attention you have shown my country now, for which I express my sincere gratitude.

Statement by H.E. Justice D. F. Annan, Vice-President
of the Republic of Ghana

On behalf of the head of State and people of the Republic of Ghana, I wish to express our gratitude to the United Nations General Assembly and the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development for convening this historic Conference. I also wish to heartily thank Mr. Maurice Strong and Mr. Tommy Koh for the great service they rendered in preparing this Conference. Let me also thank the Government and people of Brazil for the excellent arrangements made for the Conference and the warm hospitality accorded us since our arrival in the beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro.

I also wish to convey to you and to the heads of State and Government gathered here the profound regrets of the head of State, the Honourable Flight Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings, for his unavoidable absence from this Conference. He would have wished, as someone in the forefront of our environmental work at home, to be here on this important occasion. He would, however, wish me to convey his felicitations to you all and to wish the Conference every success.

There is no doubt that the UNCED process has built up a unique momentum of its own and also created a common platform to work together for a healthier environment in the spirit of cooperation and global partnership. This partnership that we seek to build is based on equality and mutuality of interests which, in turn, should be tied together into our common concern for issues of environment and development.

This Summit is being held against the background of important global changes. The end of the cold war has compelled us to devote our collective energies to resolving issues which were in the past viewed within an ideological framework. An enormous potential has been released, which holds

the possibilities for meeting pressing challenges. Apart from the concern of traditional security, our energies are being constantly required in the task of addressing the question of development and environmental security. The ability of our planet to sustain life seems to be the greatest challenge we shall face in the twenty-first century. We have already begun to see signs of this in various forms. This Summit should critically examine and adopt the necessary measures that will protect and safeguard the security of this planet. Much work has already gone into meeting the basic requirements of creating the necessary awareness. This Conference should give its approval to the very important agreements already concluded, which are meant to promote and protect our humankind, as well as meet our development concerns.

I commend the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, which worked tirelessly to discuss and negotiate a number of pertinent issues which are very crucial to my country, the developing world and the world as a whole. Except for issues relating to technology transfer, desertification, financial resources and forestry, I am glad to note that much has been achieved that meets the approval of the Government of Ghana.

In view of the large measure of consensus already reached by our representatives on the major issues involved, we must, at this Conference, endorse and adopt the recommendations. We in Ghana believe that this august gathering has the necessary will not only to endorse and adopt the Conventions and protocols, but also to create a permanent institution of global partnership in a revitalized and strengthened Economic and Social Council of the United Nations to oversee the effective implementation of Agenda 21. We accordingly urge all countries to support this proposed institutional arrangement when it comes up for debate and decision in the United Nations General Assembly.

At this point, I would like to briefly reiterate some of the major concerns of my country, as well as of other developing countries, which hinder the implementation of Agenda 21. We acknowledge that sound domestic economic policies are indispensable to the effective mobilization of resources for sustainable development. It is our firm belief that a marked improvement in the existing adverse international economic environment is equally indispensable to resource availability, especially in developing countries, for promoting sustainable development. Indeed it will lessen the burden of contribution which developed countries are called upon to make towards the implementation of Agenda 21.

Improvement in the present world trade regime to minimize the trade losses of developing countries, we strongly suggest, should be the first step towards making developing countries equally capable of meeting the challenges of sustainable development. Developing countries, as an important part of the international economic system, deserve their fair share of trade gains unhampered by the adverse consequences of trade protectionism, low commodity prices and prohibitive taxes and tariffs. It is important to recognize the inimical effects of this production relationship and the need for action at both national and international levels to eliminate them. We regret to observe that this important issue has not received the urgent international attention it rightly deserves. Consequently, self-reliance by the developing countries shall continue to be undermined by the unfair and depressive

international economic relations which create imbalance in our economies and deepen our condition of poverty and underdevelopment. These in their turn compel us to pursue aggressive, and sometimes inappropriate, exploitation of our natural resources to meet only some of our basic needs: clothe our people, provide food and shelter for them and place at their disposal rudimentary health facilities.

A number of countries in Africa, including Ghana, have courageously embarked on structural adjustment programmes in the hope that our national economies will recover rapidly and move towards the threshold of development. We also hoped that the programme would enhance our ability to conserve and protect our natural resources by adopting more selective and appropriate exploitation methods. We still hope to fully achieve the expected benefits of our much discussed structural adjustment programme. But nine years into the programme, our economy is still very vulnerable and hardships persist; this notwithstanding the palliative measures we have introduced to mitigate the immediate negative social impact which accompanies the fundamental changes involved in the economic restructuring process. We are now convinced that our chances of eventual success in this enterprise of adjustment depend on the payment of the true values for our raw materials and manufacturers and fair access to the markets of the industrialized countries. This means that the dominant nations of the world must play their part to enable us, as well as other countries undergoing structural adjustment programmes, to reap the full benefits of our sacrifices.

There is therefore the need to establish a new and equitable international economic order for creating favourable conditions for truly global cooperation in sustainable development for all countries of the world.

Wasteful consumption patterns in the developed countries should be addressed properly to balance significantly the luxury needs and the survival needs of mankind so that survival needs receive priority.

The enormity of the problem we face requires that we must be given access to new and additional financial resources and we must benefit from the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to enable us to address development and environmental issues effectively.

On financial resources, Ghana views debt cancellation as a major means of assisting developing countries to play their part meaningfully in any global environmental regime. The developed countries should convert the debts into grants. Such an action will ease the burden of debt servicing on the developing countries and release much needed funds for funding of environmental rehabilitation and development.

The content of Agenda 21 is very complex and demanding. One single financial mechanism - the Global Environment Facility as proposed by the developed countries - cannot meet all its programmes. This is why there is the need for us to make use of other regional and private financial institutions to fund these programmes. We therefore reaffirm our position with the Group of 77 and China that separate funding mechanisms should in addition be established to implement new programmes to be endorsed at this Conference.

We recognize the need to use environmentally sound technologies to pursue our sustainable development objectives. However, the cost of technology in many cases is much higher than our economies can afford. We suggest that the United Nations structure should mandate through its membership technology transfer on preferential and concessionary terms, taking into consideration that intellectual property rights should not hinder such transfers and the grim fact of the yawning gulf that divides the technologically advanced nations from ours.

While we acknowledge the fact that technology development lies mostly in the hands of the private sector in developed countries, we wish to call on the Governments of these countries to create the necessary environment, whether through fiscal or administrative measures, which will ensure favourable access for developing countries to technologies held by the private sector.

We are equally concerned about the practice of the transfer of inappropriate technologies to the developing countries. This practice obviously has a negative impact on the environment and on the health and welfare of our people. It is important that developing countries are spared the ordeal of playing host to such environmentally unfriendly industrial and other equipment and technologies. An appropriate mechanism should be adopted to enable potential users to assess technologies and make correct technology choices so as to promote the right kind of environmentally and socially sound development.

We, like our friends in almost all parts of the developing world, are extremely concerned about the tendency on the part of advanced nations to turn a blind eye to the pernicious dumping of chemical and other toxic wastes in poor countries. Our poverty should not be an invitation for this criminal conduct, which puts at risk not only the health of our people but also of our environment. We endorse all efforts to eliminate this practice by providing a global regime of monitoring and punishing such an anti-human and environmentally degrading enterprise.

Ghana recognizes the world's forests as the lungs of the Earth. They constitute invaluable sources of raw materials and an indispensable asset to the survival of the world's communities. Forests also play an important role in meeting energy requirements and performing a wide range of social functions, especially in developing countries. The statement of forest principles should be considered by all as a very vital element in our quest to conserve our forest resources. The greening of the Earth and the restoration of the health of its lungs, must be the responsibility of all countries. In Ghana, only about 24 per cent of our land is under tropical forest cover but we are pursuing reforestation programmes to increase the green land area to the extent that our economy can afford. Inadequacy of financial resources, however, inhibits faster reforestation and at the same time compels further aggressive cutting down of the forest. It must be noted that the effective greening of the Earth, especially by the developing countries, is inextricably bound up with the arrangements the world makes to strengthen the economies of all countries.

Another area of particular concern to Ghana relates to deserts. This makes the call by African countries for a convention on desertification and drought of crucial importance. This convention must be of equal importance to other regions in the developing world. The world needs reforestation and afforestation programmes to be implemented with urgency to redress the grave problems of desertification and drought.

The world cannot afford to postpone or sideline these issues to be resolved elsewhere. I urge the Conference to set up the appropriate institutional, financial and technological arrangements for their solution through national and international action. We must avoid gathering again, years after Rio de Janeiro, perhaps in another city, with the press and non-governmental organizations in attendance, only to talk and try to find out why sustainable development and Agenda 21 failed.

The occasion to take decisions on these issues presents us with a golden opportunity to once and for all eradicate global inequality, poverty and marginalization of vast segments of our common Earth home and its inhabitants. The moral imperative of facing this crucial question remains an important invitation for each nation to examine its own conscience and work hard towards forging lasting answers. The world will not endure half-developed and half-underdeveloped, half-healthy and half-ill, half-hungry and half-fully fed, half-clothed and half-naked.

It is our hope that in the pursuit of our environmental goals each of us shall be recognized as true and equal partners. For those of us who have an abiding faith in democracy, this is an important opportunity to turn the need for a global environmental regime into a true occasion for world democracy, when each nation, however big or small, however strong or weak, will speak with an equal and unfettered voice. It is to this end that we affirm our confidence in the proposition that the United Nations must be the ultimate forum where this transparent and unhindered democratic order, made up of free and sovereign nations united for the purpose of saving our planet, must reside. This is why we strongly support the principle of empowering a United Nations Commission with the ultimate authority to be exercised, through the Economic and Social Council and therefore through the General Assembly, for the execution of this historic task.

It is only in the firm and undivided discharge of the common task before us, through the creation of democratic and just institutions to discharge our environmental responsibilities, and by proceeding to forge a new and a more equitable economic order as a precondition for this assignment, that we can be part of a truly global partnership in which such labels as "donors" and "recipients", "developed" and "developing", "rich" and "poor", "North" and "South", with all their connotations, are obliterated in a common human cause where all are truly equal. We have work to do. Let us begin now.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada

Our generation has seen our planet from space. We know its beauty and we understand our fragility. We know that nature is part of us as we are a part of nature.

Canada's national soul breathes its life from our forests and plains and mountains and lakes. Our native peoples depend on the environment for their spiritual sustenance and material well-being. Canadians are the stewards of 10 per cent of the world's forests. We are the custodians of 20 per cent of the world's freshwater. And we are the guardians of the longest coastline in the world.

Ours is a history of interdependence with a vast, at times forbidding, but always beautiful and bountiful land. Ours is also a history of environmental interdependence with our neighbour, the United States, in one of the world's most successful relationships, from the Boundary Waters Treaty of 1909 to the Acid Rain Accord of 1991. The Acid Rain Accord, which will cut acid-rain-causing emissions in half and which President Bush and I had the privilege of signing, has been called perhaps one of the most significant bilateral environmental agreements between any two countries in recent years.

For Canada, sustainable development is not a slogan; it is a prerequisite of our prosperity and a safeguard of our identity. It is also the standard of our responsibility to humanity. Our children will inherit a world of quickening population growth and accelerating economic development.

The reconciliation of economic development and environmental preservation is not only necessary, it is inescapable.

We are the leaders. We must assume our responsibilities to our own peoples, to each other and to history. We are here to commit our Governments to action. The prevention of global climate change and the preservation of the world's animal and plant species are at the top of our agenda.

I am proud to sign both conventions on behalf of Canada. These agreements are welcome additions to the growing body of international environmental law. Canada supports the extension of international environmental law to cover the world's forests.

Countries have a right to manage their forest resources. And humanity has a right to expect that those management decisions will be ecologically wise. Canada wants clear guidelines, on which we all can agree, and a binding international convention which codifies our rights as well as our responsibilities.

Canada also supports the strengthening of international environmental law to prevent overfishing on the high seas. In Atlantic Canada, overfishing beyond our 200-mile zone has created an ecological crisis. This is why, for Canada, a global agreement to prevent overfishing is quite simply crucial. We are gratified by the support we have received in our call for a diplomatic conference. We want that conference urgently and we are pleased to invite like-minded nations represented here today to convene in St. John's, Newfoundland, in the fall of this year to begin the process of establishing

rules we all can live by. In the meantime, we appeal to all States whose vessels fish our Atlantic shores to respect the conservation decisions of the North Atlantic Fishery Organization - otherwise an extraordinary resource that has sustained Europeans and North Americans for 450 years could be permanently destroyed.

We have made good progress here but the success of Rio will not be found in the minutes of this Conference or the eloquence of its leaders. Success will come from converting our agenda, Agenda 21, into concrete accomplishments.

To capitalize on the momentum of Rio, Canada advocates five crucial steps.

First, all countries need to develop their own plans for sustainable development, what we in Canada have called our Green Plan. Canada's Green Plan is a \$3 billion action plan with targets and timetables on a range of projects from the \$250 million programme for water and sewage services on Indian reserves to a \$170 million programme on sustainable agriculture. In response to the invitation made to Canada by the United Nations Development Programme, we will participate in a pilot programme with any nation represented here that wishes to benefit from our experience in this area.

Second, the agreements on climate change and biodiversity require urgent and constructive follow-up. For our part, we undertake to ratify both agreements this calendar year.

Third, the requisite resources are needed to ensure that developing countries can play their important roles. Canada has spent \$1.3 billion for sustainable development in developing countries over the past five years. We undertake today to do more in the five years ahead. This year once again Canada is contributing \$115 million in assistance to developing countries for forest management. The Government of Canada has also decided to eliminate the \$145 million ODA debt of Latin American countries by exchanging it for sustainable development projects. We will also contribute to the Rain Forest Pilot project initiated by Brazil and the Group of Seven countries and to the work of the Institute of Forest Management of the Association of South-East Asian Nations. We have decided to extend our own model forest programme abroad to support forest management practices in developing countries. The Government of Canada announced last week its contribution of \$25 million to the pilot phase of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and we will provide our fair share when GEF is replenished. It should not be forgotten that this meeting deals both with the environment and development. In southern Africa, a major drought is presently creating widespread hunger and severe hardship for millions of people and death for untold numbers. To assist these developing nations, Canada is providing \$50 million in humanitarian assistance.

Fourth, multilateral institutions must be part of the solution. We will promote action on the results of this Conference by the United Nations General Assembly this autumn and we will endorse the creation of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Institutions that have a global perspective have a pivotal role to play.

With this in mind, the mandate of the acclaimed Canadian International Development Research Centre will be broadened so as to deal specifically with the environment and related concerns. I have invited the Secretary-General, on behalf of the agencies of the United Nations, to propose the 10 non-Canadian board members of IDRC, further internationalizing IDRC and creating a new partnership between Canada and the United Nations. Canada will continue to provide \$115 million annually in core funding to the Centre; over the next decade, Canada's contribution to this agency alone will exceed \$1 billion.

As a well-established organization, IDRC can be active and productive quickly, particularly in the area of research and technology transfer, in building an international network of centres of excellence and in helping developing countries create the capacity they need to follow up on the responsibilities that will flow from the Rio Conference and assist them as they implement Agenda 21.

Fifth, the idea of an Earth Charter of environmental rights and responsibilities, which has slipped beyond our grasp at Rio, should be revived. We propose 1995, the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, as a target date for completion of the Earth Charter.

As political leaders, our job is to force the pace and stretch out the limits of international cooperation. The nations gathered here today have the human genius to create a world free from deprivation and secure from degradation. What remains is for Governments to provide the leadership the world so desperately needs.

Let us find that will and marshall it to the task at hand on behalf of the 5 billion people we represent.

Our children, the Rio generation, will be our judges and our beneficiaries.

Statement by H.R.H. Sidi Mohamed, Crown Prince
of the Kingdom of Morocco

It is a great pleasure for me to address, on behalf of His Majesty King Hassan II of Morocco, this eminent assembly gathered here in Rio de Janeiro to discuss the future of our planet Earth.

His Majesty the King, who takes a keen interest in this issue, has instructed me to transmit to you his best wishes for the success of this Summit which we all hope will produce beneficial results. Allow me also to express my warmest congratulations and most sincere thanks to the Government of Brazil for its efforts in organizing a conference of this magnitude. May its achievements match its ambitions.

In participating in this Summit, dubbed the biggest summit of all time, we realize that our duty is to jointly put into effect a strategy for the survival of humankind. In view of the immensity of the task facing us, we feel that it is the fundamental duty of every citizen of this world to wholeheartedly support the Rio de Janeiro Declaration on Environment and

Development, the Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity and the statement of principles for a global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests.

Similarly, we are of the opinion that with the end of the cold war, the decrease in military spending, progress with respect to democracy and human rights and the growing liberalization of the international economy, we can now draw on the dividends of peace to conclude a new, human-focused global agreement on sustainable development based on a genuine code of ethics.

Therefore, the political leaders represented here should seize the unique opportunity offered by this Summit to remove the last remaining obstacles to the flow of new and additional financial resources, transfers of environmentally sound technology and institutional issues of implementation and follow-up.

The finishing touches could then be put to Agenda 21 in order to usher in for future generations a new era of solidarity among the peoples of the world in a global, harmonious environment.

We have also come to this Summit with a wider range of concerns, convinced as we are that the environment-development equation cannot be reduced to a policy of assistance and should not be subject to ordinary mechanisms.

We believers see the problem of the environment as one of civilization, faith and nature - a divine creature entrusted to humankind, the only species endowed with conscience and reason, for safekeeping.

Nature is also the product of billions of years of evolution that human recklessness has brought to the brink of destruction. Examples abound of how human beings are currently mistreating nature: depletion of the ozone layer, aggravation of the greenhouse effect, climate warming, desertification and soil degradation, deforestation, impoverishment of fauna and flora, extinction of certain animal species, increased risks of natural disasters, depletion of natural resources, pollution of drinking water sources and oceans, transboundary dumping of toxic or hazardous wastes, and the eternal problem of the inability to recycle industrial or domestic waste on a continuous basis.

There is, however, another threat to our planet - rampant population growth coupled with growing absolute poverty. This raises the question of humankind's survival on an overpopulated and overpolluted Earth and of the legacy that we will bequeath to future generations. The preservation of our environment is thus not simply a material problem but an absolute imperative.

The challenge we are facing throws our whole outlook on life into disarray and renders obsolete our views of life in society, while it also calls into question our modes of production and consumption. The future role of the State is thereby transformed and our vision of international cooperation is affected by the needs and constraints of a planet that has suddenly shrunk.

Indeed, technology is developing today according to a logic all of its own, with no human control over its side-effects. As consumer society evolves, market forces do not necessarily work towards the higher interests of humankind.

As a result, now more than ever before the ethical and spiritual dimension must transform the political and economic order so as to achieve a genuinely human development, a development which rejects structural unemployment, social welfare cuts and the destabilization of educational systems and equally rejects uncontrolled urban growth and wastage of non-renewable resources.

Regardless of the costs, our main goal must be to solve, in an integrated manner, the global problems caused by depletion of resources, population pressures, environmental constraints and the demands of development, taking into account progress in science and technology for the advancement of humankind.

A vital balance can be attained only if we adjust our development strategies, particularly our models of cooperation the methods, resources and objectives of which are now manifestly outdated. In other words, the growing interdependence among nations, the interrelatedness of global problems and the increased sharing of responsibilities at the global level call for a new world ethical order.

The Heads of State and Government of countries that play a leading role in international relations must deal fairly with the developing world, which cannot shoulder all its responsibilities in a hostile economic and physical environment.

The task at hand is multidimensional and wide ranging. We should like to recall, in this regard, that His Majesty King Hassan II recently proposed the establishment of an international fund to finance programmes for combating the pollution of global water reserves and to increase assistance to developing countries in the development of their water potential.

Moreover, the Kingdom of Morocco is willing to host a meeting, at the highest level, of countries from the North and the South to devise a joint strategy for dealing with the threats of water shortage facing the developing countries in general, with special emphasis on the African continent which is chronically afflicted by recurrent drought and rapid desertification. In that connection, my country would like a specific convention on this issue to be adopted within the framework of the Rio Conference. The inexorable advance of the desert and persistent drought are in fact two major handicaps to Africa's development efforts.

The Kingdom of Morocco is convinced that only a universal ethical order can harmonize disparate outlooks and behaviours in order to arrive at a global consensus on the environment-development equation in human relations.

That is why an International Seminar on Environmental Ethics and Spirituality was held at Rabat from 28 to 30 April 1992, under the patronage of His Majesty King Hassan II, on man's role and duties towards his natural environment. The Declaration of that Seminar has been distributed as an

official document of this Summit, together with a royal letter which ends by saying that the work of the Seminar "places the overall problem of the relationship between humankind and creation in the only context in which an integrated vision is possible - that of the moral responsibility of thinking beings to whom God has given the privilege of inhabiting a marvellous but fragile world and who have a duty to give thanks for it by respecting its sensibilities and by maintaining it as it was created by God, beautiful and healthy".

Statement by H.E. Mr. George Bush, President of
the United States of America

May I first express my admiration to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and my gratitude to Secretary-General Maurice Strong for his tireless work in bringing this Earth Summit together. This is truly a historic gathering.

The Chinese have a proverb: If a man cheats the Earth, the Earth will cheat man. The idea of sustaining the planet so that it may sustain us is as old as life itself. We must leave this Earth in better condition than we found it.

Today this old truth must be applied to new threats facing the resources which sustain us all - the atmosphere and the ocean; the stratosphere and the biosphere. Our village is truly global. Some find the challenges ahead overwhelming. I believe that their pessimism is unfounded.

Twenty years ago, at the Stockholm Conference, a chief concern of our predecessors was the horrible threat of nuclear war - the ultimate pollutant. No more. Upon my return from Rio, I will meet with Russian President Yeltsin in Washington, and the subject we will discuss is cooperation - not confrontation.

Twenty years ago, some spoke of the limits to growth. Today, we realize that growth is the engine of change and the friend of the environment.

Today, an unprecedented era of peace, freedom and stability makes concerted action on the environment possible as never before. This Summit is but one key step in the process of international cooperation on environment and development. The United States will work to carry forward the promise of Rio. Because as important as the road to Rio has been, what matters more is the road from Rio.

There are those who say that cooperation between developed and developing countries is impossible. Let them come to Latin America, where debt-for-nature swaps are protecting forests in Costa Rica and funding pollution control in Chile.

There are those who say that it takes State control to protect the environment. Let them go to Eastern Europe, where the poisoned bodies of children now pay for the sins of fallen dictators - and only the new breeze of freedom is allowing for clean-up.

There are those who say that change can never come because the interests of the status quo are too powerful. Well, let them come right here to Brazil, where President Collor is forging a new approach that recognizes the economic value of sustaining the rain forest.

There are those who say that economic growth and environmental protection cannot be compatible. Well, let them come to the United States - where, in the 20 years since Stockholm, our economy has grown by 57 per cent, yet we have cut the lead going into the air by 97 per cent, the carbon monoxide by 41 per cent, the particulates by 59 per cent. We've cleaned up our water and preserved our parks, wilderness and wildlife.

There are those who say that the leaders of the world do not care about the Earth and the environment. Well, let them all come to Rio.

We have come to Rio. We've not only seen the concern, we share it. We not only care, we're taking action. We come to Rio with an action plan on climate change. It stresses energy efficiency, cleaner air, reforestation, new technology. And I am happy to report that I have just signed the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

And today, I invite my colleagues from the industrialized world to join in a prompt start on the Convention's implementation. I propose that our countries meet by January 1st to lay out our national plans for meeting the specific commitments in the Framework Convention. Let us join in translating the words spoken here into concrete action to protect the planet.

We come to Rio with a proposal to double global forest assistance. We stand ready to work together, respecting national sovereignty, on new strategies for forests for the future. As a down payment, we will double United States forest bilateral assistance next year. And we will reform at home, phasing out clear-cutting as a standard practice on United States National Forests, and working to plant 1 billion trees a year.

We come to Rio with an extensive programme of technology cooperation. We stand ready, Government and private sector, to help spread green technology and launch a new generation of clean growth.

We come to Rio recognizing that the developing countries must play a role in protecting the global environment, but will need assistance in pursuing these cleaner growths. So we stand ready to increase United States international environmental aid by 66 per cent above the 1990 levels, on top of the more than \$2.5 billion (\$2,500 million) we provide through the world's development banks for Agenda 21 projects.

We come to Rio with more scientific knowledge about the environment than ever before and with the wisdom that there is much, much we do that's not yet known. And we stand ready to share our science and to lead the world in a programme of continued research.

We come to Rio prepared to continue America's unparalleled efforts to preserve species and habitat. And let me be clear. Our efforts to protect biodiversity itself will exceed - will exceed - the requirements of the treaty. But that proposed agreement threatens to retard biotechnology and

undermine the protection of ideas. And unlike the climate agreement, its financing scheme will not work. And it is never easy, it is never easy to stand alone on principle, but sometimes leadership requires that you do. And now is such a time.

Let's face it, there has been some criticism of the United States. But I must tell you, we come to Rio proud of what we have accomplished and committed to extending the record on American leadership on the environment. In the United States, we have the world's tightest air quality standards on cars and factories, the most advanced laws for protecting lands and waters, and the most open processes for public participation.

And now for a simple truth. America's record on environmental protection is second to none. So I did not come here to apologize; we come to press on with deliberate purpose and forceful action. And such action will demonstrate our continuing commitment to leadership and to international cooperation on the environment.

We believe that the road to Rio must point towards both environmental protection and economic growth, environment and development. And by now it's clear: to sustain development, we must protect the environment; and to protect the environment, we must sustain development.

It's been said that we don't inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children. And when our children look back on this time and this place, they will be grateful that we met at Rio. And they will certainly be pleased with the intentions stated, and the commitments made. But they will judge us by the actions we take from this day forward. Let us not disappoint them.

Statement by H.E. Mr. António M. Monteiro, President of
the Republic of Cape Verde

Mr. President, I take a great pleasure in seeing Your Excellency presiding over this most important Summit Conference of heads of State and Government. Your wise and knowledgeable guidance of our work bodes well for the success of this Summit.

I would like to take this opportunity to signify my appreciation for the preparatory work done, in which an important role was played by Mr. Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the Conference, and by Ambassador Tommy Koh, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee.

We live today in an interdependent world, in which global problems require a collective response on the part of all countries and peoples.

Amongst these problems, the protection of the environment, due to its repercussion on the quality of life of all of us and its impact on our very existence, gains a special importance and requires continuous effort and a deep sense of our interdependence in the search for appropriate solutions.

Over the years, environmental problems have been neglected to the point that today we are faced world wide with a very serious situation, characterized by the depletion of the ozone layer, the threat of sealevel rise posed by climate change, and the frequency of drought and desertification, of which the African continent has been the most affected.

Centuries of ignorance, in some cases, and deliberate neglect, in others, have produced, as we all know, irreparable damage to the world's flora and fauna and spawned high levels of pollution, the negative effect of which on the preservation of the environment has been abundantly documented over the years.

Fortunately, there is today a high degree of universal consciousness about the grave problems which are affecting the global environment and the urgent necessity of adopting measures with a view to introducing the required changes for the preservation of this planet for future generations.

As has been widely demonstrated, the solution to environmental problems cannot be effectively reached if the developmental needs of developing nations are not taken into account in order to create the minimum living conditions for their peoples.

It is accepted today that a linkage exists between protection of the environment and poverty. This Conference, in fact, bears witness to the need for tackling environmental problems together with those of development.

In this context, the progress already made in this Conference with a view to creating the conditions for sustainable development is to be emphasized.

In this regard, I underline the fundamental importance of the transfer of safe and sound technology to developing countries as a factor of environmental protection.

Likewise, of fundamental importance is the provision of adequate funds to developing nations in order to enable them, within the framework of their developmental process, to adopt policies and implement programmes which will strengthen the conservation and preservation of the environment on the national and international planes.

Addressing now specific needs affecting many countries, I would like to highlight the importance that I attach to the world struggle against drought and desertification in the context of the preservation of the environment.

Cape Verde, as a Sahelian country whose climate is characterized by recurrent droughts and desertification, is fully aware, from its own experience, of the high negative impact of such phenomena on the ecosystem and the living conditions of the populations.

In this context, it is relevant to note the inclusion of drought and desertification in Agenda 21. I believe that, taking into account the contribution that the struggle against drought and desertification can make to the overall improvement of the environment, special attention should be paid to this issue, and the efforts of undertaking international negotiations with

a view to adopting a convention on drought and desertification not later than 1994 should be seriously pursued.

In the course of this Conference, two important Conventions were opened for signature. The Climate Convention and the Biodiversity Convention are two landmarks in international cooperation in the field of environment.

My country ascribes the utmost importance to the Climate Convention, for it lays down the principles for international cooperation with a view to reducing the emission of gases, particularly carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere.

Being an archipelago with some low-lying islands, Cape Verde is very much concerned with the emission of some gases at current levels, the continuation of which is due to cause some low-lying territories to disappear. I believe that as we implement the Climate Convention, ways and means of reducing the emission of these gases, especially carbon dioxide, should be effectively pursued.

Our collective survival requires a serious, systematic, and realistic approach to the environment. To this end, the contribution of all countries whether big or small, developed or underdeveloped, is of fundamental importance.

All countries are responsible for the protection of the environment and should, therefore, cooperate and contribute to that end.

This collective responsibility should none the less be differentiated. Countries that are endowed with more resources and whose economies have caused damage to the world environment should be in a position to contribute with the human, financial and technological resources to help the non-industrialized countries to implement developmental policies and programmes required for sound environmental management.

This Conference is part and parcel of a long awareness process - that has just started - involving all those who share this planet who have come together to work towards the creation of a new partnership, a world of more interdependence and more cooperation towards preserving the world environment.

I would like to seize this occasion to pay tribute to the non-governmental organizations, many of which are participating in this Conference, for their pioneering role in this field. Over the years, they have taken upon themselves the task of increasing public awareness and have pressed Governments to take measures for the protection and preservation of the rich biological diversity of our planet, to prevent and combat pollution, and to defend nature as a common heritage that should be preserved for the benefit of present and future generations.

I encourage non-governmental organizations to continue their highly commendable effort in this field as spokesmen for all those private individuals concerned with a better, less polluted, more humane, and sustainable planet.

I hope that the results of this Conference are the beginning of a new era in international cooperation of peoples and countries dedicated to building a more interdependent world, in which the problems of development and the protection of the environment are to be seen as different perspectives of the same global issue, on whose solutions rests our collective survival.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Hassan Habibi, First Vice-President of
the Islamic Republic of Iran

Mr. President, I would like, at the outset, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of this important assembly. I also wish to thank the Government and people of Brazil for hosting the Conference.

The Rio Conference provides us with a unique opportunity to, once more, address jointly two important issues, namely, environment and development, in an atmosphere of cooperation and accommodation, in a manner in which peace and human dignity are fully respected.

At this historic juncture, we should all avoid any confrontational approach that will impair the achievement of the objectives of the Conference. Recognizing the necessity of integration of environment and development, we should view these two essential elements as twin prerequisites for protection of the environment.

Poverty, historical colonialism and ignorance of human values, coupled with prevailing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, particularly in developed countries, are leading to irreversible environmental degradation.

Mindful of the recent political developments, particularly the relaxation of major political tensions, the time has come to revise the old approaches in politics. Many resources which were to be allocated to military projects now can and should be channelled to finance environmental programmes, especially implementation of Agenda 21.

One of the principles which should be considered in forging a new partnership between the North and the South is the principle of equity. Developed countries have utilized in an unproportionate manner the resources of the Earth, thus providing their own people with a high rate of growth and welfare at the expense of the environmental degradation and poverty of some other nations.

Wars and armed hostilities have always been a major cause of environmental damage. Hence, peace and security, among others, are indispensable for protection of the environment. In this regard, what has happened in the Persian Gulf region, Afghanistan, and occupied Palestine territories during the last decade has brought devastating environmental problems. Notably, the environmental consequences of the Persian Gulf conflict are of such magnitude that its rehabilitation, as acknowledged by the General Assembly in resolution 46/216, calls for international cooperation.

In short, such concepts as environment, development, divine and human values, and peace are indivisible. Accordingly, this Conference should be a starting point for effective and concerted actions aimed at integration of all the foregoing concepts.

In line with the above-mentioned facts, the points set out below will facilitate the achievement of the objectives of the Conference.

First, protection and rehabilitation of the environment cannot be achieved unless we all agree on the principle of equity. In this context, mindful of the unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, the processes of development in the developed countries, and their respective capabilities, we should recognize the fact that there exists a differentiated responsibility. The largest share of historical and current global environmental degradation originated in the developed countries. Therefore, they should play a leading role in combating environmental problems through recognition and implementation of their proportional responsibilities and commitments.

Second, parallel to the implementation of environmental actions and programmes, there is need for evolution of international law on sustainable development. Unfortunately, a great number of the existing international legal instruments pertaining to the environment and development have evolved in the absence of active participation of the South. While emphasizing the principles of universality, democracy and transparency, any attempt to draft new international legal instruments should begin with a review of the existing laws and governance systems, with the view to incorporating the concerns and interests of the developing world.

Third, the environmental problems of developing countries emanate mainly from their insufficient development. At the same time, without a chance for sustained economic growth and development in the South, these nations will not be able to contribute effectively to protection of the environment. Therefore, creation of a supportive international economic condition, transfer of technology on concessional and preferential terms, as well as provision of new and additional financial resources for developing countries in order to meet the incremental costs of the actions required, should receive priority in our agenda.

Fourth, pooling available financial and technical resources through regional cooperation can play a significant role in promotion of the environment. Therefore the activities of existing regional organizations, including the Regional Organization for Protection of the Marine Environment, should be supported.

Fifth, public awareness and active participation of all citizens, especially major groups, can ensure successful implementation of the environmental and development programmes.

Sixth, a change in patterns of consumption and production in developed countries is necessary to create an economic and social balance between the North and the South.

Seventh, bearing in mind economic and social diversities, in the implementation of various conventions and environmental programmes, the difficulties faced by specific developing countries vulnerable to adverse changes should be fully taken into account.

In conclusion, I would like to assure you and the assembled international community of the commitment and determination of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which stems from its adherence to article 50 of our Constitution, to fulfil its responsibilities and provide its share in promotion of the objectives of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. It is my sincere hope that, inspired by a spirit of cooperation and accommodation, we will all do our utmost to seize this historic opportunity as a springboard for dialogue and will continue to work towards saving the planet Earth, this divine gift, for present and future generations.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Carlos Salinas de Gortari,
Constitutional President of the United Mexican
States

It is an honour for me to address you at this summit meeting for human survival on the planet. This is the call of a new era to move towards the new kind of world peace for which peoples yearn: peace with nature and with ourselves.

On the threshold of the twenty-first century, we realize the magnitude of this challenge, yet we are still struggling to build a world consensus to meet it. How can we build the basic consensus needed for a viable, responsible and productive future? What will be the national foundations from which we can begin? Mexico proposes the following:

First. World-wide environmental degradation is everyone's problem, and at the same time different responsibilities exist with respect to it. The great risks of climate change, threats to biodiversity, a shortage of water and an abundance of toxic waste already know no frontiers and no nation can escape them. Everyone is thus responsible for ensuring a clean and healthy future. However, it must be realized that everyone does not contribute equally to the deterioration, nor is everyone equally responsible for solving it. Each person has his own responsibility in his own sphere of action and only international cooperation can achieve a genuine solution for all.

Second. It is necessary to discard not only toxic development but also sterile environmentalism. The goal is not to stop producing but to produce differently. Access to financial resources and access to technology are certainly two key aspects of this challenge, but open trading is essential if the outside world is not to be an obstacle to development at home. In order to meet environmental challenges, what we need is a better and freer flow of goods, services and financial resources, rather than just aid. We need to ensure access to markets and to clean production technologies.

Above all, what we need is increased support for environmentally responsible growth in the developing countries. Limitations on growth are, at this point in time, imminent threats to human life and to ever-growing

populations. How can we talk of the environment to someone who is trying to subsist from one day to the next? Development is essential not only for peoples but also for environmental protection itself.

For that reason, we must add to the concept of sustainable development that of global development. In seeking to preserve the environment, we must avoid making underdevelopment or impoverishment the only sustainable option.

Third. Agreements must respect the difference between domestic action and action required by international cooperation. This means that each country fulfils its responsibility for protecting the environment at home while promoting practical cooperation abroad.

No proposal will be viable if it ignores the underlying interests of peoples or attempts to impose solutions. Nor will it provide real answers unless countries make a serious international commitment to do their share in solving a problem that affects us all.

Externally, Mexico supports the conventions on climate change and biological diversity. A few weeks ago, as a result of the International Conference on Responsible Fishing, my country promoted acceptance of an international code of responsible fishing which establishes clear rules for promoting the sustainable exploitation and the conservation of marine resources, which are essential for present and future generations.

Internally, Mexico is already devoting almost 1 per cent of its national product annually to restoring the air, the rivers and the land. We have set aside as environmental reservations nearly 6 million hectares of land, more than the entire territory of some European countries. In so doing, we hope to protect in Mexico a biodiversity that is among the four richest on the planet. At the same time, we are creating programmes of productive ecology, which offers peasants alternative means of employment and well-being while combating deforestation. We recognize that we have serious environmental problems, but we are committed to a future of clean growth and we are taking decisive action to achieve it.

A new vision of the world must be created: a moral and ethical vision which takes future generations into account in our decisions. In this mosaic of delicate balances that is our planet, let us create a future where, as the ancient indigenous peoples of my country believed, justice and environment are not mutually exclusive.

This is our pledge and we shall make it a reality for our children and our children's children.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Ion Iliescu, President of Romania

The convening of this forum - 20 years after the Stockholm Conference on the environment - meets an imperative need. The general preoccupation of all peoples for their economic and social development is in fact accompanied by a justified anxiety brought about by the considerable discrepancies existing in today's world, by the conflict that has arisen between society and its natural environment, which are two distinct systems, each of them having its own laws and rhythms.

Our civilization has thus come across certain highly complex issues concerning the very future of our human species, which are determined by the challenge to secure the environmentally sound development of mankind and the protection of the environment.

As we approach the turn of the century, it is very encouraging that, at last, we have all become aware of the interdependence existing between economic growth and development, as well as people's welfare, and the natural resources which are the basis of any living system.

This recognition has led to the concept of "sustainable development" - an ecological concept having extremely important consequences for the future evolution of the world economy. The development of human society over past decades has highlighted the need for a reorientation of development strategies in order to ensure global stability and ecological balance.

In this context, it is important to stress the fact that the deterioration of the environment and ecological imbalance are not the consequence of the general development of society, but mainly the effect of certain unreasonable patterns of economic growth. Therefore we have come to a point in time when it is imperative to sound the alarm and take responsible action for saving the life of our planet.

Actually, the conflict that has arisen nowadays between human society and the environment, reflected in the aggression of man upon nature, or the conflict between man and nature, has its origins in the inadequate functioning of the mechanisms of society and in the conflicts occurring among members of society.

Harmony between man and nature thus means harmony among people on our planet, and this can be achieved by the promotion of a new model of social development, based on human solidarity on both the micro and the macro scale, at the national as well as the international level.

We owe it to the United Nations for having raised at the final stage of this century, the global problems with which our civilization is confronted. It did so after the international scientific community had drawn attention to them and after the ensuing extensive debates.

The phenomenon of underdevelopment and the widening gap between rich and poor at the global level, problems relating to population, food security, protection of the main ecological factors (soil, water and air), species, resources and ecosystems and problems relating to energy, industry and human

settlements - all these require a unified global approach and broad international cooperation.

From this point of view, the Rio Conference has achieved important progress by concluding the convention on climate change and the convention on biodiversity. These two valuable instruments will no doubt strengthen and develop the norms of international environmental law. The Rio Declaration and the comprehensive action programme set forth in Agenda 21 should also be considered as a major outcome of the Conference in our common endeavour to provide viable answers to the complex issues of environment and development.

Even though certain provisions of these documents may not fully meet our expectations and may not cover all fields of major ecological threat, they do represent an important step forward. In fact, the sooner these documents are put into operation on a global scale, the greater their real value and impact will be.

Romania's participation in this world forum should be perceived in the light of her concern for the economic, political and spiritual renewal of society and for its rapid integration into international life.

The economic and political reforms under way in Romania are aimed at the eradication of the consequences of the oppressive communist system by freeing the market, ensuring the rule of law in society and by strict compliance with the fundamental rights and freedoms of all citizens.

Like other countries striving to achieve similar radical changes, we are going through a most difficult but irreversible transition process meant to eliminate the obsolete structures and the mentalities inherited from a totalitarian regime.

The problems relating to the environment rank high on our priority list, because Romania herself faces a number of difficult problems that have captured the attention of this Conference: soil erosion, deforestation, salinization and alkalization of irrigated soils, air and water pollution, the loss sustained by certain ecosystems of their natural regulating ecological functions, degradation and pollution of the sea shore and coastal areas, use of polluting technologies and so forth. We are increasingly concerned about the problem of acid rain, the disposal and transfer of toxic wastes, and the nuclear threat of potential accidents at reactors of certain power stations, operated on the basis of old and unsafe technologies and located in the same part of Europe as Romania. We are deeply concerned about the disruptions which may occur in the ecological balance as a result of the growth of the global greenhouse effect and the deterioration of the protective ozone layer.

I wish, at the same time, to express our preoccupation with regard to the danger posed by attempts to turn territories of developing countries, as well as of countries in transition, into waste dumping areas.

That is why we see in this global forum, held on the initiative of the United Nations and generously hosted by Brazil, an example of the high sense of responsibility assumed by States in considering pressing common problems and in seeking solutions and recommendations that would lead to the survival

of the planet. As a rational being, man has to take care of the air he breathes, the water he drinks and the soil that nourishes and supports him.

Romania is determined to take an active part in the efforts required by this philosophy. We shall do this at the national level, and also at the regional and global levels by way of wide international cooperation.

In this respect, we attach great importance to the activities of the future Commission on Sustainable Development as a United Nations organ. Moreover, we have in mind a proposal for the organization in Bucharest, with international assistance, of a centre for the promotion of an ecological European space, taking into account the specific problems of the Danube Basin, the Carpathians, the Black Sea and the Danube Delta, which is a unique ecological area in our continent.

Being involved, in a spirit of solidarity, in the common work of safeguarding the planet from ecological disaster, we wish to express our satisfaction for the opportunity to participate in this prestigious Conference. At the same time, I would like to thank those who initiated and organized it, thus making our meeting on the generous Brazilian soil, at the closing of the second millenium, the largest Summit ever.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Anatolijs Gorbunovs, President
of the Republic of Latvia

I would like to express sincere gratitude to the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and to the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for organizing this historic forum. I would also like to thank the Nordic Council of Ministers for their support, which enabled our delegation to participate in this Conference.

The twenty-first of August 1992 will be the first anniversary of the re-establishment of independence in the Republic of Latvia. We are proud that independence was achieved democratically and without violence. We are grateful to the democratic Governments that supported us.

Latvia, re-establishing its independence in the wake of communism, must concentrate all of its moral and material resources in order to overcome the legacy of 50 years under totalitarianism. Latvia is a State with an economy in transition. Privatization, policies supporting investment and effective tax structures are mechanisms which will enable us, in a short time, to revive and secure our national economy. During our transition period we would like to see international projects and programmes act as catalysts.

The necessary process of transition to a market economy, like any other revolutionary change, is occurring concurrently with other difficult developments. The breakdown of the planned totalitarian economies in all the former republics of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics has created inflation and diminished production. The resultant lack of investment has hindered the realization of environmental projects. Nevertheless, environmental policy in Latvia even now is a high priority. Upon its becoming a member of the United Nations, Latvia immediately embraced the issues of

critical importance to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

Latvia is committed to sustainable development. We support development with a view to preventing ecological devastation, promoting respect for nature and protecting the cultural environment of Latvia; we wish to protect not only our physical environment, but also our national identity.

The Supreme Council and the Government of the Republic of Latvia are committed to environmental protection through regulation as well as by market forces. The polluter pays principle is applied. Legal and financial responsibilities have been imposed on consumers as well as on polluters of natural resources. This has permitted the accumulation of resources for the implementation of environmental projects. In addition, special attention has been focused on national and regional environmental policy development and on environmental impact assessment. Specially protected natural areas are increasing, a development policy for rivers, lakes and seashore regions has been implemented and environmental protection authority personnel have been engaged. Next, findings of liability for degradation of the environment must be enforced. Preventive principles must be observed and an effective State monitoring system must be created. Those who intentionally submit disinformation regarding the state of the environment will be penalized. Finally, the responsibility of local authorities for environmental protection and effective uses of natural resources has been increased, under the principle of subsidiarity.

Unfortunately, the last 50 years have left behind a legacy of serious environmental problems, which we are unable to solve instantly. The quality of drinking water in our major cities is of immediate concern. Residential communities are located near industrial areas, where insufficiently treated municipal wastewater is intentionally discharged into natural water systems and eventually into the Baltic Sea. The Government of Latvia has incomplete statistics which describe the catastrophic level of soil and groundwater contamination. Latvia, and all the States in the area of the Baltic Sea, are responsible for the Sea's rehabilitation. We must resolve the problem of toxic municipal water immediately. However, insufficient investment has hindered the implementation of environmentally friendly technologies. Other serious environmental problems remain.

Troops of the former Soviet Union, which still illegally occupy the territory of the Republic of Latvia, have purposely caused environmental degradation. To date - particularly in a well-orchestrated propaganda exercise, in March 1992 - only 49 soldiers have left the territory of Latvia. The presence of the Russian troops destabilizes Latvia's political situation, jeopardizes security in the Baltic region and continues the chemical pollution of the Latvian soil that our children will inherit. For the sake of peaceful development, we appeal to the nations of the world to support our demand that the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the territories of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania commence immediately.

Analysis of the environmental situation in other European countries with economies in transition convinces us of the significance of coordinated inter-State activities. Permit me to avail myself of this opportunity to

acknowledge the support and understanding, extended to us by the Governments of the Scandinavian countries, of our aspirations to implement policies relating to environment and development pursuant to the principles of this United Nations Conference. We support, and had the honour to sign, both of the conventions opened for signature in Rio de Janeiro: the convention on biological diversity and the convention on global climate change.

Latvia has the opportunity to include the concepts of sustainable development in its democratic reform programme and my firm goal is to implement these concepts. Vast woodlands and wetlands (50 per cent of the total territory) exist in Latvia, of which considerable areas have a minimum anthropogenic load. If we preserve them adequately, these areas can contribute to the maintenance of biological diversity in Eastern Europe. In this connection, we shall also support the elaboration and signing of a convention on forests.

In the course of our agricultural reform, a prerequisite for newly re-established private farms with low agrochemistry levels is that they should develop an ecologically and environmentally protective farming system while producing food of high quality. This raises the issue of a new, environmentally protective way of life. With the help of balanced tax and investment policies it is possible to stimulate the introduction of environmentally friendly production and technology.

Latvian non-governmental "green" organizations, with the support of residents of Latvia, have taken a stand against the cult of the consumer and in support of a healthy environment and a rich spiritual life. We hope to continue constructive cooperation with these non-governmental organizations and we are grateful for their considerable contribution in providing ecological education to the population and for stirring our conscience towards the development of a protective attitude with respect to the environment.

Now that the process of disarmament has commenced, immense sums will be saved through the reduction of military budgets. The nations of the world could agree that these savings should first and foremost be utilized for the rehabilitation of the environment. In this connection, Latvia feels morally entitled to come forth with an initiative to host a summit meeting with the goal of signing such an agreement, since the effects of the Second World War and the cold war have not yet been eliminated from the Baltic States.

The world is experiencing a period in which initiative is taken by small countries. Our hope is that the family of nations will accept our proposal for a summit with the motto: Disarmament for Environment. Jurmala, a city on the Baltic Sea, which has suffered fiercely from pollution, could be the location for holding the Disarmament for Environment summit meeting. Jurmala, the site of the recent Chataqua conference, which marked the beginning of détente, could host the meeting early next summer.

I hope that we all have enough endurance to overcome our differences and sufficient strength to unite for the sake of our common future. Allow me to express my assurances that the future belongs to the principles of sustainable development.

Statement by H.E. Mr. L. Erskine Sandiford,
Prime Minister of Barbados

I express gratitude on behalf of my delegation for the efficient arrangements the Government and people of Brazil have made for this Conference and the hospitality they have exhibited since our arrival in Brazil. I also express appreciation to Secretary-General Maurice Strong and his able associates for their tireless efforts in preparing for this Conference.

As we approach the turn of the century, the issues confronting our countries and peoples are truly global and cosmic in their dimensions. And they in all verity require a response that is equally grand and global. Our world does require a new world order. But it must be a world order created, not in the image of yesterday's theses and antitheses of sterile ideological confrontations, but one created in the image of justice, equity, democracy, representative institutions and the rule of law, and guaranteeing economic, social and political rights for nations and peoples no matter how large or small, how rich or how poor, how powerful or how powerless.

I make bold to say that there is enough in this bountiful world for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed. And just as all of us as heads of Government should have it at the top of our national agendas to reduce or eliminate poverty, unacceptable privilege and inequality, so too must we have at the top of our global agenda the goals of reducing poverty among nations and creating the conditions for a just economic order for all countries. We must never be afraid to proclaim our ideals; at the same time we must be realistic and practical in working out the programmes, modalities and strategies for achieving our ideals. But before we can distribute wealth, we must first create it; and before we can improve the quality of life for people, we must as a prerequisite first ensure that there is in fact life on our planet to be improved.

That is why we are all gathered here from all parts of the world to recognize the threats to our planet that emanate from environmental degradation in the form of deforestation, desertification, topsoil loss, coastal erosion, air pollution, solid and liquid waste build-up, emission of greenhouse gases, thinning of the ozone layer, climate change, and diminution of the biological diversity of the planet through the reduction in plant and animal species.

That is why we are all gathered here to confess that we are all part of the threatening complex of problems, and to pledge to be part of the solution. Sahara dust may travel on transatlantic wind currents and cause air pollution in Barbados. Locusts too may also be transported that way and cause crop damage. Oil residues from passing tankers may contaminate our beaches.

None of us can isolate ourselves from the problems. We cannot build an impermeable wall from Earth to heaven to cut ourselves off from the problems. We cannot dig a hole deep enough to hide ourselves from the problems. We cannot dredge a moat wide enough, even if Scylla were at one end and Charybdis at the other, to stave off the problems.

No! There is no other way but through effective international cooperation, through the pooling of commitment, efforts and resources that we

can build a secure future. Developed countries cannot solve the environment and development question by themselves, nor can the developing countries. This Conference is crucial because it has the potential to alter fundamentally the relations among States. Its success must therefore be assured. We must move forward together, prodding the spirits of the hesitant and the unwilling, and reigning in the overzealous and the hyper-fanatic. The path we must tread is the path of sustainable development, the path of growth with change that recognizes the environment as a scarce good that we can utilize for the benefit of all mankind, or that we can despoil for the ruination of all mankind.

Indeed, I firmly believe, with Shridath Ramphal, that for sustainable development to have significance for the world's population, most of whom live in poverty, a fundamental change in the international economic system is essential. The challenge ahead is to build a world that is more equitable and just as we embark upon a new era in which the protection of planet Earth is central and sustainable development is the norm rather than the exception, a new era in which war is declared on poverty, a major cause and consequence of environmental degradation.

In the new evolving global partnership which is essential, small island States, like my own country, Barbados, limited in size and resources, have important roles to play. However, I believe that the imperatives of sustainable development and the threat posed to small islands by the impact of climate change in particular and by other environmental threats in general, demand that specific follow-up programmes and resources be made accessible to small island States. Indeed, I believe that one of the specific action areas for follow-up after this Conference should be the formal recognition and acceptance within the international community of small island developing countries as a distinctive category of States with distinctive characteristics.

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) has already participated constructively in the multilateral negotiations on environment and development issues. We will continue to act collectively to secure responses to our particular concerns. This was one of the central messages which ministers from 29 small island countries conveyed at the Inter-Regional Conference on Small Island Countries on Sustainable Development and Environment in Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, held in Bridgetown, Barbados in April 1992, in collaboration with FAO, and entitled the Bridgetown Declaration, which has been issued as a document of this Conference. In addition, Barbados wishes to propose that all the relevant intergovernmental organizations as well as the agencies of the United Nations system each develop, in consultation with the island developing countries, special windows of activity specifically for them.

The negotiations on the Framework Convention on Climate Change were very testing. Barbados constantly maintained that the aim should be to produce a Convention which could be the basis for effective action to deal with the real threat of global warming and its adverse effects. The commitments which we expected are not in evidence and I have to express Barbados' disappointment at their absence from the Convention.

Barbados has, however, signed the Convention since it at least provides a useful basis for continuing negotiations in the post-Conference period. Barbados urges, however, that negotiations on specific protocols to the Convention should commence as soon as possible after this Conference, and I am urging that the first such protocol should be on the stabilization and reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

This issue is of great significance to small island States. We find ourselves in a uniquely disadvantaged position, in that we have contributed little to the problem of global warming, but will be most adversely affected by its impact. The very existence of some small islands as we now know them is threatened as a result of the impact of climate change, specifically by sealevel rise. Other islands like Barbados will suffer coastal degradation, notably with respect to the beaches, reefs and mangrove swamps, and coastal infrastructure. Island States have little time and few options. This is why Barbados would wish to see in the final communiqué of this Conference, a signal from the industrialized countries of their commitment to the stabilization and reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases and a time-frame for achieving it.

I turn now to the issue of biological diversity. We reiterate the necessity for the equitable sharing of benefits derived from research on genetic resources. My delegation is encouraged by the inclusion of the specific references to marine biological diversity. More fundamental research needs to be done in this area, particularly in the marine sphere, and Barbados stands ready to cooperate and function as a laboratory for such research.

I move next to Agenda 21, which Barbados considers to be an impressive collective action plan for sustainable development. It should not, however, be used as a new form of conditionality. Instead, it should be seen as a global commitment by both developing and industrialized countries towards sustainable development.

We are particularly pleased that the special needs of small island States, including their vulnerability, have been recognized. It has been agreed that a special conference on the sustainable development of small islands should be convened in 1993. I wish to offer Barbados as the venue for that conference.

Of central importance to the evolving global partnership is the availability of adequate new and additional financial resources to provide for meaningful implementation of the results of the present Conference. Such resources ought to be brought under the auspices of the United Nations, which alone can secure universality in decision-making and allocation.

The impelling demands of sustainable development for all States require that a new set of criteria be formulated to determine access to new and additional resources. The traditional criterion of gross domestic product per capita by itself has little place in the evolving global partnership for sustainable development. It does not provide a true indication of the capacity of States to address comprehensively the imperatives of sustainable development. This criterion should therefore not be used to determine access to new and additional financial resources allocated for this purpose.

Throughout the negotiations much has been said about the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which has been accepted in the two Conventions as the interim funding mechanism. Let me reiterate that such acceptance is based on the recognition that there is need for a fundamental restructuring of GEF within a truly multilateral context based on the principles of democracy and universality.

On the subject of access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries, I consider that special attention must also be directed to the particular problems confronting small island developing States because of their limited technological base and their incapacity to develop new and more environmentally sensitive technologies.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm Barbados' commitment to the achievement of sustainable development, and pledge on behalf of my country our continuing cooperation in the global efforts towards securing a better future for present and future generations.

Mr. Chairman, I leave you with the words of this poem, entitled "Ode to the Environment", which I have written especially for this Conference:

ODE TO THE ENVIRONMENT

We are the lords of this our sole environment.
Demanding, extracting, destructive, dominant.
From it we source our sustenance,
To it we give our waste.
It is our home, our space our place.

Stand up and breathe,
Shout and sing,
Look down upon the land
Out to the sea, up to the air and sky.
From Earth's metallic core, mantle and crust
To atmosphere, hydrosphere and biosphere,
Man, mammal, plant and fish
Wood, water, gases and fruit,
Metals, minerals, rocks and fossil fuels
All share the enveloping environment,
With ions and electrons
With the birds and the bees,
The toads and the trees,
The sands and the seas.

Our life is but a search for harmony,
A right relation with our inner self,
With fellow people and with destiny,
Fruitlessly fruitful
In the contradictions of inter-dependence,
Amidst co-existent disharmony.

Trees grow and trees decay,
Tides ebb and flow,
Animals frolic and fight,
Night follows day, and day night,
In the constancy of change,
Cyclic, inevitable, arranged.

The environment is kind and benign
Yielding silver and shade, food and wine.
The environment is harsh and unkind
Bringing storms and plagues, quakes and famine.

But stop!
Where are we lords of the planet Earth?
What are we doing, and why?
The climate changes!
Stop now! Make haste,
Come down from thy Zaccheian tree,
Care for biodiversity,
So we may seek and save
That which is being lost!

Tree cover loss,
Plant and animal species loss,
Topsoil loss,
Forest loss,
Air and water quality loss,
Exemplifying the wise folly of humankind
In the wasteland of self-destructive progress,
Unsustainable,
Unsedulous of pollution,
The degradation and depletion,
Chlorofluorocarbons and acid rain,
Ozone layer thinning and global warming.

Dare we then reconcile the irreconcilable,
Renewable and non-renewable, squaring the circle?
Bring the lion and the lamb together,
Reason about war and peace, love and hate,
In the exchange of jealousy for generosity?
Rise up my co-partners in leadership,
Proclaim the destiny of our peoples,
Their holy grail
To be the quest for life's best quality,
Impelled by knowledge and longevity,
Wealth and environmental integrity.

In order to build we must destroy!
But how and what, where and when.
And if we destroy, we must rebuild.
But how and what, where and when.

The themes are grand, the ends climacteric.
So globally we must co-operate,
Share the costs proportionate
Lest the globe itself disintegrate.
Let our sure guides be balance and judgement
So we too may bequeath an environment
Sustainable in development,
Rich, bounteous, beneficent
For our children and their posterity.
Let a great chain of being
Link animate and inanimate
In this space,
In this time and place.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Percival James Patterson,
Prime Minister of Jamaica

I wish to thank the Government and people of Brazil for extending the hospitality of their city, Rio de Janeiro to the participants in this historic Summit.

Jamaica wishes to express as well our special thanks and appreciation for the commitment of the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, Chairman Tommy Koh, their colleagues and others who have prepared us so ably and well for this Conference.

Special tributes must go to the non-governmental organizations who have harnessed the people's power to influence Governments to think beyond their everyday concerns; and to the world's media, which have given such wide exposure to the issues before us.

These groups, representing women, youth, non-governmental organizations and the media, must continue to work with Governments if we are to ensure that the objectives of the Conference are to become the common reality of humankind.

From Stockholm to Rio has been a journey of awakening. If we act now we may still be in time to avert irreversible damage to the planet's complex and intricately balanced life support system.

At this historic Summit, we have it in our hands to restore a balance between the profligate exploitation of the environment and the sustainability of development.

We have in our reach the opportunity to forge a consensus and working partnership in order to address the pressing problems of poverty and physical degradation that despoil our planet.

We have at this meeting an opportunity that we dare not miss - to reaffirm that human development is the objective of our endeavour; but that without a proper regard and respect for the physical environment, human development is simply not sustainable.

The inextricable link between environment and development must be the guiding principle for assured survival of the human race and a sustainable quality of life for all. This Conference must demonstrate its unshakeable will to succeed in this task through the Rio Declaration.

Agenda 21 provides a framework for the twenty-first century, as broad and complex as is the nature of the planet's environment and the dynamics of human development. It would help to meet the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of those who follow to meet their own needs - material as well as intellectual.

The end of super-Power rivalry and retreat from the brink of human annihilation have removed the fear of a nuclear holocaust. There can be no basis whatsoever for the land, the sea and the air to remain huge dumps of nuclear and toxic chemical wastes, while centres of urban population explode and fester from neglect.

Here in Rio, we must seek to reaffirm the spirit of a new global partnership that can protect our environment and thereby create a springboard to promote development.

In order for this development to be sustainable, it must be based on a proper regard for every aspect of the environment. Our critical objective must be to improve the quality of life around the globe, particularly among the millions who survive just below the poverty line. Poverty breeds pollution; pollution entrenches poverty. The result is a suffocating stranglehold of environmental degradation and human injustice.

The threat to the environment is no less when resources are squandered through inefficiency and waste. The effects of poverty on the environment become immediately evident at the domestic level. The effects of excessive consumption on the environment assume a global dimension. Taken cumulatively, they put at risk the life support system of the planet and could become irretrievable unless we halt these trends at once.

There is need for a two-pronged approach.

Vast transfers of financial and technological capital are necessary if we are to tackle the root causes of underdevelopment and environmental degradation. At the same time, we must define the optimum domestic policies which will provide economic growth and balanced development within our countries.

We need to promote sound macroeconomic policies, compatible with national imperatives, supportive of growth and sustainable development. This will harness the resources available from domestic savings and should contribute significantly to the attainment of national goals.

The domestic savings of developing countries are inadequate to tackle effectively the environmental pollution and hazards now facing their populations, which include the lack of clean water, polluted air, inadequate sewage-disposal facilities and the lack of the basic minimum standards for health and education. Our starting point must be the recognition that man's activities can pose real threats to the viability of the global environment.

The resources invested in sound and sustainable programmes in developing countries contribute to a better quality of life on the global scale, which is in the collective interest of us all.

This Conference should reflect a fundamental commitment to the requisite levels of financial resources, appropriate institutional mechanisms, and modes of disbursement. These will complement sound macroeconomic policies at the national level and provide an indispensable supplement to the domestic savings of developing countries.

Once again, we call for a more equitable sharing of the resources of the common heritage of the high seas and the atmosphere. The entry into force of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is for us as urgent and important as the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity. We urge that they receive priority attention.

As our economies become evermore interdependent through trade and financial markets, the opportunities must be provided for developing countries to trade on fair terms so that our producers may secure remunerative returns.

The consequences of the external debt of developing countries have borne heavily on the poor, leading to lower standards of living and polluted environments. Jamaica gives full support to those recommendations which call for practical ways of reducing the stock of debt and debt-service ratios.

The environment is being degraded rapidly by the continued inefficient use of energy by the rich countries. Global warming, which has been addressed through the Convention on Climate Change, clearly must be accepted as a priority responsibility by the industrialized countries. We cannot be content with mere signals of good intentions. These must be translated into binding treaty obligations.

The effects of global warming are likely to be felt more directly by small island States whose coastal areas may become submerged, whose protective coral reefs are threatened and who will be subject to more frequent and stronger hurricanes. These effects are not limited to the environment but compromise severely the possibilities for sustainable development.

The ecologically vulnerable islands and low-lying coastal areas of the Caribbean are subject to all the pressures of urbanization and resource exploitation in small land areas. We are exposed to the danger of wastes being dumped in our seas. We are threatened by sealevel rise, destruction of coral reefs and other effects of climate change.

Jamaica urges that the Caribbean be designated as a special zone with an action plan to protect its fragile but precious ecosystem.

We, the developing countries, must give focus in improving the conditions of our people who are our most precious resource. They cannot be left exclusively to the mercy of the market. We must where necessary provide social and environmental safety nets, similar to those that exist in the developed world.

The role of the scientific and technological community in this new economic environment, where competitive advantage lies not primarily in the transformation of raw materials, but in information and technological processes, is of critical importance.

We need to develop a cooperative approach to the use of technology. If development is to be sustainable as population pressure grows, then it is indispensable for technology to be harnessed to that end through clean, affordable and adaptable processes available to developing countries.

Without this, it is difficult to foresee how the world will break out of the present trap. We must search for solutions where each country plays its part.

Without the right diagnosis, the firm commitment and the unshakeable will to succeed, our next steps are likely to be as tentative and perilous as they have been over the past decades.

The existing mechanisms for channelling the transfers of financial resources to developing countries are currently being reviewed. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which embodies the rules and disciplines for international trade, should ensure that the obstacles facing their exports are removed and that environmental standards are neither unilaterally developed nor imposed.

Financial and monetary policies should be designed so that both bilateral and multilateral transfers meet their objectives. In that respect, the new and additional resources required should be allocated in such a way that they do not become a burden on the human and other resources of the developing countries.

The end result of agreements here in Rio cannot simply be expressed in a quantum of financial resources and identification of mechanisms, but should reflect the overriding importance of settling the policies which are required for the efficient and effective use of these resources.

Institutional arrangements must reflect the specific problems for which they are designed, whether as framework agreements, legally binding instruments or standards to be applied. They should always reflect the concerns and interests of both developed and developing countries, producers and consumers.

It is essential that the issues of sustainable development be addressed at the highest levels and so we welcome the restructuring of the United Nations system and the establishment of the high-level Commission on Sustainable Development. It is essential that the role of this Commission be facilitated by the General Assembly and the key agencies be enabled to carry out their full responsibilities towards global sustainable development.

The people of the world demand a process of environmental recovery and its contribution to true development.

The adoption of the Rio Declaration and the action programme of Agenda 21, and the entry into force of the Conventions, including the Law of

the Sea, will determine in the court of public opinion whether our Earth Summit was a success.

We know what we have to do - it is now time to do it!

We have responded to the summons of conscience and common sense. We have gathered in Rio to affirm the spirit of a new global partnership. Let us commit ourselves to the moral and ethical imperatives of our time. We have in our hands the means to make the difference. May our decisions redound to our benefit and to the benefit of future generations.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Daniel Toroitich arap Moi,
President of the Republic of Kenya

It gives me great pleasure to address this Summit of distinguished world leaders from all walks of life assembled here in Rio, to endorse the course the human race must take for its survival from now into the future. At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to His Excellency President Collor as well as the people of Brazil not only for the cordial welcome extended to me and my delegation in this beautiful country but more so for hosting this important Conference. Indeed, Brazil will be fondly remembered by posterity as the nation that facilitated the global articulation of the twin issues of environment and development.

In 1972 at Stockholm, we, the global fraternity, ushered in the era of concerted efforts in tackling the environmental issues facing humanity. Accordingly, we evolved a declaration on the environment as well as a plan of action. The Stockholm Conference was a historic event, which for the first time put the environment on the international agenda. Another direct and positive output of the Conference was the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In 1982, we again assemble in Nairobi to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Stockholm Conference. But a critical review of the plan of action on the environment indicated that not much had been accomplished over the decade. There was need, therefore, for the world community to rededicate itself to this noble cause once more.

While acknowledging the fact that the Earth Summit will not provide the cure-all to the many problems afflicting the world, I nevertheless have high hopes of it. Indeed, the fact that its principal objective is to provide the basis for the full integration of the environment and development in all aspects of human endeavour is very encouraging. In this regard, and with your indulgence, I would like to pay tribute to members of the World Commission on Environment and Development, who, in their 1987 report, Our Common Future, made it clear that the integration of development and the environment is the only viable path to a sustainable future.

One of the outcomes of this Conference that Kenya and indeed the developing countries await with keen interest is the Earth Charter, which will guide our conduct in ensuring the future viability of the Earth as a hospital home for human and other forms of life. Enshrined in the Charter are a series of principles which Kenya is fully committed to.

As a sovereign State, Kenya subscribes to the principle of non-interference in matters that impinge on the cultural aspects of other nations. In this regard, we passionately believe that the tenets of one culture should not be allowed to set standards of development goals, activities or assistance, nor should they be used as a precondition for any development assistance. We also believe in the right of nations to exploit and trade in a sustainable and responsible manner the natural resources found within their legal boundaries. In the same vein, we feel that the natural resources located outside the legal boundaries of any country, including those located in outer space and in the high seas, are to be treated as mankind's common heritage.

It is, therefore, our expectation that the Earth Charter will provide mankind with the reference point for realizing mutual understanding and cooperation in the course of using natural resources.

This Conference sets the tone of the challenging time ahead for mankind. This is more so with the developing nations. Caught in the classical dilemma of having to exploit the environment in a bid to achieve rapid development, the developing nations expect a lot from Agenda 21 to ensure that development efforts do not threaten nature.

The expression "When environment comes first, development will be durable" has in the recent past gained currency. The other side of this coin is that "where sustainable development is nurtured, the environment will prevail". But in the developing countries, it has emerged that underdevelopment and poverty are the greatest threat to the environment.

The abject poverty which characterizes most of the developing countries is a major constraint to the achievement of sustainable development. Indeed, my country, as well as other countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region, have identified poverty as the most serious impediment to the attainment of food security, sustainable economic growth, improved human health and living conditions.

In view of this, I call upon the international community to institute urgent remedial measures geared towards the alleviation of poverty to enable developing countries to play a more positive role in the search for development that does not threaten the environment.

It is quite clear that this untenable situation needs redressing. In this regard, Kenya joins the leaders of the other developing nations in expressing the hope that Agenda 21 will address itself to the problem squarely.

The Earth Summit could therefore not have taken place at a better time, and as I intimated earlier, the global environmental track record since 1972 has not been laudable. In fact, apart from failing to address fully the original aspirations as charted out in Stockholm, humanity has witnessed the emergence of several environment "monsters" which literally threaten our very existence. In this regard, Kenya takes heart in that mankind still has the capacity to mobilize resources to counter environmental problems such as climate change and global warming, ozone layer depletion, mass extinction of biological resources, desertification and the disposal of hazardous wastes and other by-products of development and industrialization.

Kenya views the related problems of global warming, climate change, and the erosion of the ozone barriers with a lot of concern. In view of the associated problems, I would like to reiterate the plea I made during the 1989 London conference on the ozone layer for aggressive international efforts to delay further warming up of the Earth and halt depletion of the ozone layer. I would also like to underscore that it is important for the countries that have not signed the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol to do so.

The biodiversity problem is one which my country views with a lot of concern. Indeed, this is rightly so in view of the critical role played by biological diversity in the chain of ecological problems currently facing mankind. These include global warming, deforestation, desertification, droughts as well as negative climate changes. In this regard, it is indeed imperative that the global community evolve environmentally sound practices of biodiversity conservation, management and utilization.

Kenya feels deeply honoured in joining the rest of the world in ushering in a new phase of global cooperation in the critical fields of environment and development. Indeed, our commitment to issues contained in Agenda 21 is steadfast. However, the path we have chosen here towards sustainable development is fraught with formidable challenges. I have in mind the enormous resources which the implementation of Agenda 21 entails. Such resources will of necessity include, inter alia, human, financial, appropriate technology, as well as institutional resources.

Maintenance of sustainable socio-economic development and a stable environment through the exploitation of the Earth's resources presupposes a stable and democratic political system. That has been and continues to be the mainstay of the Government of Kenya. It is for this reason that my Government is fully committed to good governance through the rule of law, participation of all citizens in all national efforts and above all free and fair elections.

I would like to conclude my comments on an optimistic note. To me, this forum has already achieved one major objective, that is, the rekindling of mankind's conscience with regard to his selfish abuse of nature. In this regard, it is my strong hope that our great expectations of this Summit will be realized. This calls for mutual respect as well as total commitment from all the peoples of the world. For us from the developing world, we have already accepted the notion of shared but differentiated responsibility in fulfilling the tasks ahead and call upon our colleagues from the North to reciprocate. That way, we are confident of tackling environmental problems and solving them together as a family of the human race.

This Earth Summit marks a turning-point in mankind's efforts to preserve the environment for posterity. It is, therefore, my hope that we shall rise above national interest in addressing the issues that threaten our very existence. This is the last chance for mankind to save the Earth and it is my prayer that we shall not lose the opportunity to do so for future generations.

Statement by H.E. Major-General Elias Phisoana Ramaema,
Chairman of the Military Council and Council of
Ministers of the Kingdom of Lesotho

I am greatly honoured, on behalf of the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Lesotho and on my own behalf, to express our deep gratitude to His Excellency President Collor and the great people of Brazil for the usual warm hospitality accorded us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro. On behalf of my delegation let me convey our sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, and other members of the Bureau on your well deserved election to the Presidency of this very important Conference.

We are confident that under your guidance the deliberations of this Summit will culminate in success. This Conference is indeed unique and historic. It is historic because never before have so many heads of State and Government been assembled together in one place to pledge their strong commitment to an issue so close to their hearts as it relates to the very survival of mankind, and to pledge their support for the pursuit of this noble objective.

We would also like to take the opportunity to thank Mr. Maurice Strong, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and his support staff for their tireless efforts in making the arrangements for this Conference. In a similar manner, I wish to commend all those who participated in the preparatory work, for without their full dedication and commitment, little could have been achieved.

About three years ago, the United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 44/228, called for the convening of an international conference on environment and development, now popularly known as the Earth Summit, in which all States and non-governmental organizations would participate fully in charting a new course to address issues relating to the global environment and its relationship with development.

The UNCED preparatory process provided a unique opportunity for us all, particularly those of us from the developing countries, to express our concerns and priorities for halting and reversing the continuing degradation of the global environment.

We applaud the choice of a developing country as a conference venue, for it signifies the important role which developing countries are to play in following up the decisions of the Conference. One is happy that one's country has actively participated in all the preparatory processes at the global, regional, subregional and national levels. We know all the areas in which significant progress has been made, and can only urge that we all continue with the good work already begun. This Conference should be viewed as but one step in a long and probably difficult process towards sustainable development.

One of the fundamental questions we should ask ourselves is, how we can achieve the noble objective of satisfying today's needs without adversely affecting the needs of the future generations in a world where abject poverty and explosive population growth in the South do not balance with the contrasting affluence of the North. The continued existence of poverty, lack of the barest minimum supply of food, health care, education and alternative

sources of energy other than fuelwood, to mention just a few, cannot guarantee a sustainable environment, which is a must if the needs of future generations are to be met. This notion calls for urgent measures towards making the North's consumption and production patterns more sustainable and eradicating poverty in the South.

We sincerely believe that the supreme goal of this Conference should be the elaboration of a new global consensus on sustainable development and should include new forms of cooperation leading to a total eradication of poverty in developing countries and eradication of unsustainable lifestyles in developed countries.

The time has come when all parties concerned should undertake to commit themselves to preserving our planet Earth using all human, institutional, financial and technological resources at our disposal. We recognize the fact that in order to meet the enormous environmental challenges that lie ahead, there is an urgent need to adopt and implement appropriate macroeconomic and social policies.

Many developing countries have been implementing structural reform policies and have suffered heavy social and political costs, but they have not been discouraged from continuing with reforms even if it is with inadequate international economic support.

While we acknowledge that developing countries have the primary responsibility for the improvement of economic and social well-being and sustainability of their development efforts, it has to be recognized and appreciated that without the necessary external financial and other forms of support, these tasks lie far beyond the capabilities of those developing countries to accomplish.

The Government of Lesotho adopted a national environmental action plan in 1990. The invaluable role played by human beings in the preservation of the environment is duly taken into account in the action plan. In particular, the plan recognizes the importance of developing human resources, particularly women and children, who are involved in the making of decisions with serious environmental implications on a daily basis. Implementation of this action plan requires substantial assistance from our developed partners.

The current drought situation in Eastern and Southern Africa has both economic and environmental implications because all affected countries have to mobilize their own resources for the procurement and distribution of food and medical supplies, as well as for the provision of drinking water. However, these efforts cannot be expected to achieve results without additional international support owing to domestic limitation of these resources. We therefore appeal to the international community to provide generous assistance so as to avoid inevitable human suffering and the destruction of biodiversity.

The African common position on environment and development, adopted by African Governments as part of the preparatory process for this Conference, plus the various declarations adopted at the continental levels such as the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation and the Declaration of heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity in Abuja, to mention but a few, clearly demonstrate that the

continent of Africa views the people as key players in the development process in which protection of the environment is a major component and a high priority area. For us in Lesotho, we deem the struggle against environmental degradation as a struggle for survival which should be tackled in an integrated manner.

As one of the 10 member States of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), Lesotho serves as a coordinator of activities of environment and land management of this subregional group. We coordinated the preparation of SADCC's report entitled "Sustaining our common future" as the subregion's contribution to the preparatory process to this Conference. This contains SADCC's priorities for a transition to sustainable development and emphasizes expanding environmental assessment and reporting. We can only express the hope that the international community, bearing this report in mind, will find justification for extending increased assistance to the subregion, particularly in the areas of environmental planning and management.

Finally, there are a number of very important documents put forward at this Summit for signature. Lesotho stands ready to sign these documents as a demonstration of our full support to the principles contained therein.

Statement by H.E. Mr. R. F. M. Lubbers, Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

First of all, I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Brazilian Government and the people of Brazil for the warm hospitality and the efficient efforts which have made this conference a success. Mr. President, Rio and Brazil have become milestones on the path of men to one world.

This Conference has clearly done a tremendous job by putting forward the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 as a practical approach and a challenge for the future. Agenda 21 is not just another United Nations resolution; it is the result of two years' work, in which the ideas of more than 160 Member States had to be combined into a single programme and compromises had to be reached to make it acceptable to all concerned. The Netherlands is proud of the fact that during the preparations and during the Conference itself, it has been able to make an active contribution to an end result which I have no qualms about taking home with me.

The range of topics dealt with in Agenda 21 indicates the complexity of the issue of environment and sustainable development. The emphasis on sustainable development is the right one, and on that basis poverty and hunger should be tackled even more vigorously.

There is still the question of financing, which has not yet been settled. We face a challenge; whatever solution we find must be financed. This will clearly hurt the people of the developed countries and that is a difficult message to put across to the Governments of those countries. Yet I am still optimistic; people are not prepared to tolerate a situation in which others do not enjoy their rightful share in the prosperity of our world. As far as financing by the Netherlands is concerned, my Government is willing to

provide, in addition to the current commitments for development cooperation, which now substantially exceed the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP, new and additional financial resources up to a maximum of 0.1 per cent of GNP for the implementation of global environmental agreements, provided that other countries take a similar course in generating resources for such an earth increment.

Sustainable development can be achieved by enlarging the concept of the United Nations. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations has said, we must add an economic and ecological dimension to the basic concept of security. Now that the East-West conflict is over, all efforts must be directed even more vigorously to strengthening the relationship between North and South and the cooperation of the world as a whole. This is expressed in the seventh principle of the Rio Declaration, which places special responsibilities on the developed countries in view of the demands they make on world resources. For many people seven is a sacred number. Let it also be a sacred duty, in the knowledge that we all belong to mankind and that no person and no nation can enjoy lasting peace and well-being unless they act as members of the human family with respect for the integrity of the Creation and in harmony amongst ourselves. This requires new forms of cooperation and global partnership.

The following is one small example. The Netherlands has been prompted to enter into a new form of cooperation with Costa Rica and Bhutan. This cooperation in environmental matters will focus on sustainable development, taking Agenda 21 as its guide; it imposes mutual obligations in keeping with environmental measures being taken in each of the three countries concerned. The declarations of intent were signed here in Rio.

Experience in the Netherlands shows that we are at the start of a process of change, a process which will bring about significant changes in our way of life. In 1989 it was decided to make sustainable development the starting point of Dutch policy. This represents a challenge to our society which has far-reaching consequences.

We are at the limits of our capacity to dispose of our own waste. Drastic measures are also called for in respect of car use, agriculture and industry. We need to think carefully about our patterns of production and consumption, and the creation and disposal of waste.

This means incorporating environmental costs in the price of products and making more efficient use of energy and raw materials. Environmental problems begin at home, but they extend across national borders to the regional, continental and global levels. The same holds for economic development - yet another link between development and the environment.

The establishment of a strong and independent economic infrastructure in the developing countries needs to be given high priority if sustainable development is to be achieved. It is an essential basis for prosperity and consequently for certainty about where one's next meal is coming from. Uncertainty about the future is one of the reasons that the population is continuing to grow in developing countries. The environmental degradation which follows often makes it harder to improve people's standard of living, creating a vicious circle which must be broken. Sustainable development is

not just about environment and development, it is also about development and a tenable level of population growth. The forthcoming United Nations conference on population is expected to provide some concrete answers to these questions. The children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the human family must have the chance to lead a dignified life.

Some would say that the lack of binding agreements makes the Conference a failure. I do not agree. To expect the world-wide acceptance of legal obligations is probably aiming too high at this stage. It took one and a half centuries before the human rights enshrined in the constitutions of various countries were translated into an international legal instrument in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. On environment, we do not have that much time. In accepting the principles of the Rio Declaration, however, the countries of the international community will be laying the basis for a sustainable future in the form of norms, objectives and policy commitments, anchored in a new partnership. What is needed now is a consultative process in which the partners allow verification of their compliance with the agreements made. As part of our efforts to change behavioural patterns, all subsidies which encourage inefficient production and the inefficient use of raw materials and energy will have to be phased out and replaced by levies which encourage efficiency. The world trade system will also have to make a contribution, for instance by implementing the polluter pays principle within OECD and GATT. What we need is the polluter pays principle on a global scale. This is of vital importance to prevent delaying crucial environmental requirements on the ground that they will disturb international competition. Therefore after the successful completion of the Uruguay Round, which in itself is very important, especially for the developing countries, we also need a new chapter on environment within GATT in order to reach in the future a General (and global) Agreement on Tariffs, Trade and Environment.

On the subject of Agenda 21, implementation of the points it contains should be tackled with all due speed. There is one in particular which I should like to mention, namely desertification. This is a problem which has assumed world-wide significance as it edges northwards. Evidence of desertification can already be seen on the mainland of Europe. Its full effect is apparent in Africa: the soil becomes unfit for food production and suitable land is rapidly exhausted while the number of mouths to be fed keeps on growing. Therefore we support the proposal that negotiations should start soon on a convention to be concluded on this very important issue.

To eradicate hunger and poverty and to change the patterns of production and consumption where there is wealth and abundance: these are the dual commitments which lie at the heart of the concept of development and environment. In order to put these objectives into practice, it has been decided, in line with The Hague Declaration and with my country's support, to strengthen the existing United Nations agencies - namely UNDP, UNEP and the Global Environment Facility as a major new funding mechanism. Furthermore, the Netherlands will continue to call for the involvement of non-governmental organizations in the decision-making process within the United Nations. They have shown in the course of the preparations for this Conference what a valuable contribution they can make to the formation of opinion in the various countries.

Governments, by making binding agreements between nations and with the increasing authority of the United Nations behind them, and ordinary people, men and women, motivated by non-governmental organizations, are working together to become one human family. Through this double approach - from the top down through Governments and from the bottom up through individuals and organizations - it must be possible to find ways of eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development. The stakes are high: the preservation of a world in which our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren can lead their lives in dignity, wherever they may live.

Statement by H.E. Dr. César Gaviria Trujillo,
President of the Republic of Colombia

First of all, I want to thank President Collor de Mello for his generous hospitality. His leadership is, to a large extent, the soul of this Conference. Brazil will always be remembered for its contribution to a better world. I also thank Mr. Maurice Strong and Ambassador Koh for their enormous contribution.

We, heads of State and Government, came to Rio de Janeiro to keep an historic appointment. We are convened here for the sake of tomorrow. We are here to respond to those generations which have not yet had the privilege of contemplating nature, breathing the air, enjoying life, experiencing well-being. And we are here to guarantee that they will be able to do so.

When those generations judge what we have done or left undone, their verdict on this meeting will surely be that it went beyond what was possible but not as far as was dreamed of. That illusion, that in Rio we would be able to launch a new world capable of reconciling well-being with protection of the global environment, is still no more than an ideal. But at the same time, it cannot be denied that the hard work of the past two years has laid solid foundations and created sufficient reasons for us to persist in this endeavour.

The Rio Declaration provides the framework for a future international law and ethics of the environment. The Convention on Biological Diversity guarantees the indisputable right of the developing countries to reap the benefits of biodiversity. Agenda 21 establishes a programme of work which will ensure that, for the first time, action is coordinated on a global scale. These are undoubtedly great achievements.

Unfortunately, there are other areas where insufficient progress has been made. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has a structural defect, in that it does not establish commitments for technology transfers or specific targets for reducing emissions of the gases which contribute to global warming.

Where we have really fallen short is in financing the gigantic efforts that will have to be made. Not only are the transfers anticipated from the industrialized countries as contributions to the funding of Agenda 21 inadequate, but they are also concentrated on so-called global environmental issues, leaving crucial development issues with nothing.

The tremendous environmental problems that the world is now experiencing were not invented by the developing nations. We already know that most of them are caused by the industrialized economies. For decades, the richest countries have based their wealth on the unlimited exploitation of natural resources. During this time, they have accumulated an unquantified but undisguisable debt to the planet.

Unfortunately, nature does not have the equivalent of an International Monetary Fund to collect on its behalf the tremendous ecological debt owed to humankind by the most advanced countries. Unless a way is found soon for those nations to meet their outstanding obligations and change their life-styles, sooner or later the planet will present us all, rich and poor, with the bill.

Environment and development are two sides of the same coin. We have repeated this truism here on more than one occasion and we want to emphasize it, because much remains to be done. As long as protectionism in the industrialized countries closes the door on products from the developing countries, as long as rural labour continues to be underpaid and as long as commodity producers are forced to witness a steady decline in their relative prices, it will not be possible to break the vicious circle of poverty and environmental degradation.

We shall not, we cannot, renounce the right to development. That is why, in order to reconcile the satisfaction of our peoples' basic needs with environmental protection, a fundamental redistribution of wealth, technology and the capacity to create prosperity will be needed.

The Earth Summit only marks the end of the first stage. A new stage is beginning which will require more decision-making and more work. The Earth Summit is the dawning of a still longer day.

Colombia will remain firm in its commitment to define collective responsibilities and duties, in the common obligation to guarantee development and eradicate poverty without causing environmental degradation. It will abide by the principles of the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity. We believe in these instruments and want to see them developed and, above all, put into effect.

Colombia is among those nations which are privileged to enjoy biological megadiversity. Its territory is so varied that many of its ecosystems are unique and irreplaceable. We are making a significant effort to preserve our environmental heritage while at the same time guaranteeing well-being.

More than 25 million hectares of land in the Amazon and Orinoco basins and other areas of the country are covered by one or other of the environmental conservation systems provided for in our legislation. The new Political Constitution of 1991 is a pioneer in establishing access to a healthy environment as one of the fundamental rights of the citizen. A bill setting up a Ministry of the Environment is before the Congress of the Republic. We also want to set up an Institute of Advanced Studies for Amazonia.

We know that this is not enough, however. We are also suffering from many processes of environmental degradation. We have water pollution, soil erosion and people living in unacceptable environmental conditions. It is precisely these processes of degradation associated with development efforts that we want to avoid, but this will not be possible if the industrialized world holds on to technology as another source of power or wealth, or out of blind selfishness refuses to honour its financial obligations to humankind.

There has been much, perhaps too much, talk of confrontation at the Earth Summit - North against South, the first world against the third world, the industrialized world against the developing world - and in this controversy we forget that there are not one, two or three worlds, but only one planet. I therefore call upon you now, let us put our differences behind us and join hands for humankind and for the Earth.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Bernard Dowiyogo, President of
the Republic of Nauru

May I first extend my heartfelt congratulations to His Excellency President Fernando Collor on his unanimous election to the Presidency of this historic Conference in this remarkable jewel of all cities - this coastal city of unparalleled beauty, nestled in the breathtaking mountains and forests that typify the renowned Brazilian beauty and spirit - Rio de Janeiro. From the people of Nauru I bring warm greetings to all, and best wishes for a successful and historic Summit.

The people of the world are watching us here in Rio at this Earth Summit with great hope. If there has ever been an event which has so captured the collective human imagination, so bound together all people all over the world, from North and South, in one, single, precious moment of hope, UNCED '92 is that event. And in this historic Summit, which brings together the largest number of heads of State and Government ever, lies the inspiration of that hope.

The road to Rio has been long and hard. As we all know, negotiations have been difficult and a lot of hard work and effort by many representatives and delegates who have attended the many long negotiating sessions must surely not be left unsaid. We should be grateful that the efforts by so many dedicated good men and women have successfully culminated in UNCED '92 and to them we give our warm appreciation on behalf of our people.

It is now up to us to make that hope burn even brighter, like the statute of Christ the Redeemer shining brightly at night above this lovely city of Rio, like a beacon of hope and inspiration to all who behold it.

Now it is incumbent upon us leaders, as statesmen, to ensure that our Earth Summit and UNCED '92 are no less than a total success.

We must on the road from Rio be able to tell the world and its people and their children that their hopes and aspirations will become a reality. We must demonstrate to all the people of the world that the process that has been so resoundingly begun at Rio will lead to a cleaner, better and more prosperous and safe world for all.

We all have made the time and effort to come to attend this Earth Summit. I believe we do so because we all believe in the basic goodness of this Conference. Let us, as statesmen and leaders of nations, show the way to a better environment and development.

I cannot agree more with those who have said that future generations will hold us accountable for what we do, or do not do, at Rio. As the leaders of this world, I humbly feel that we are obligated to acknowledge the uniqueness of the times.

We are at the crossroads of history. Are we going to allow this unique moment in the history of global environment and development pass, to be judged by our people and future generations as having failed the hopes of all humanity? We must not.

I am pleased to report to this August Summit that the Republic of Nauru has signed both the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity during UNCED '92. These Conventions do not contain strong commitments, and Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration are not all we might have hoped; but Nauru none the less believes that they all signify clearly and strongly that nations are for the first time sitting down together to consider collectively serious and important problems of environment and development at the global level, and these two Conventions do provide a framework in which further commitment and progress can be evolved on the basis of sound principles and objectives.

UNCED '92 must represent to the world not merely a symbolic, one-time, event, but rather an enduring process that represents a turning point in the history of civilizations. It is our obligation to ensure that this process is a universal and unqualified success.

The road from Rio which we should follow must lead to a brighter and environmentally safer future. We can make it so. Let us emerge from Rio to tell the world that it is so!

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jean-Luc Dehaene, Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of Belgium

Belgium would like first of all to thank the Brazilian authorities for the welcome given to this Conference. Let us hope that, in future, the name of Rio will be identified not only with carnival but also with the concept of sustainable development. To you more particularly, Mr. President, I should like to express my gratitude for your commitment to the success of this gathering. I should also like to thank the scientific community and the non-governmental organizations which have done so much for this meeting.

The Rio Conference on Environment and Development demonstrates that our generation faces an historic task. It is up to us to mark out the path of sustainable development so that future generations can inherit a living and viable planet. Countries and peoples depend on our planet's manifold resources for their development, and the Earth needs people to protect its ecosystems and biological diversity.

Twenty years ago, the Stockholm Conference was the first milestone on the road to environmental protection. Since then, the world has become increasingly aware that the question of the environment cannot be tackled on an individual basis or in isolation.

It cannot be emphasized enough that the main objective of sustainable development is human well-being. Changing the course of our world towards sustainable development is a considerable challenge, and although political will is necessary to meet that challenge, it is not enough. The concept of sustainable development must also take root in our individual and collective consciousness. The world needs a multiplicity of alternative, innovative solutions. At international level, given the magnitude and complexity of the problems now confronting us, mutually beneficial and agreed limits on national sovereignty are imperative. We are learning increasingly from science that some of the most acute environmental problems are those which can be solved only by global efforts.

Belgium therefore welcomes the adoption of the Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity and calls upon all States to sign and ratify them and to join forces to ensure that their objectives are achieved. In that regard, my country wishes to reiterate its determination to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions by 5 per cent by the year 2000. In the European Community, Belgium has also advocated a European eco-tax on non-renewable energy sources. Such a tax could actively discourage the use of those pollutants and, if applied to other kinds of products, could also accustom people and industry to the idea of using products which are less harmful to the environment.

The adoption by this Conference of Agenda 21 seems to me to be equally vital, in that it is a platform and an incentive for future efforts. Additional funding will be required in order to implement Agenda 21. While this could obviously be achieved through the allocation of 0.7 per cent of GNP to development assistance - a goal which Belgium will attempt to reach, keeping in mind budget requirements, by the year 2000 or as soon as possible thereafter - I think it would be more realistic to provide for such additional funding by specifically determining, as of now, what resources can be earmarked. This is in line with the European Community proposal, which earmarks a total of 3 billion ECU. These funds will be allocated, as a matter of priority, to the items of Agenda 21 which the Twelve wish to support, namely, combating poverty, technology transfer, environmental planning and institution-building.

Pursuing international action to alleviate the external debt burden of the poorest countries is, I believe, equally crucial. On this subject, I should like to remind you of Belgium's debt relief effort, amounting to 7.5 billion Belgian francs, made as a follow-up to the Toronto Summit.

The Conference preparatory process and the Conference itself have shown us that the Conventions we have just adopted are only a beginning: additional protocols will have to be adopted and new conventions will have to be negotiated, particularly on the subjects of deforestation and desertification. Beyond those conventions, one important step could be to ensure that any attack on the environment is considered a crime or an offence under international and domestic law.

In order to make progress in the field of environment and sustainable development, Governments must ensure that environmental considerations are incorporated into political decision-making - something which my own Government will attempt to do in cooperation with regional and local bodies. All these legal and political efforts will go nowhere, however, unless they are backed by heightened awareness and a change of attitude on the part of the population at large. This requires, among other things, the mobilization and development of human resources, especially as regards environmental education and training.

We must recognize the indispensable role played by social and economic experts, and also by non-governmental organizations active in the fields of environment and development, in this process of heightening awareness and changing behaviour patterns.

A significant change in production and consumption patterns is also required. Our scientists and our economic and social experts have a new responsibility to answer the challenges of this century's end. We reject both the exaggerated pessimism of some and the blind optimism of others.

I have already stressed that people are the focus of our concerns; sustainable development will remain an empty slogan as long as millions of people live in absolute poverty and are threatened with starvation.

One basic achievement of this Conference is the recognition that uncontrolled population growth is one of the main causes of human pressures on the environment. We cannot implement coherent rural and urban development policies unless population growth rates are brought more fully under control world wide.

Belgium is aware that the developed countries have a special responsibility to the developing world. The cruel disparity between those two worlds cannot fail to exasperate the many populations who each day wage a painful struggle for survival. This unjust situation goes a long way towards explaining the worsening environmental situation in the developing world, which is why my country is ready to assume its responsibilities in the global effort to alter the structures which are the cause of this imbalance.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Arpád Goncz, President
of the Republic of Hungary

Permit me to present, first of all, our gratitude to Brazil for the organization of this Conference, which will go down in history as the beginning of the new relationship between man and nature. The real importance of this Conference that our generation has made possible, will, indeed, be appreciated only by the generations of the future.

Understanding the extreme significance of the global problems of the environment and identifying immediate concerns of its own, Hungary has prepared for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development with the firm belief that the linkage between these two themes presents a tremendous opportunity and challenge to my country as well, which is undergoing a historic process of transition.

Unforeseen and unforeseeable radical changes have taken place over the last two years in the post-communist countries, which had been preaching an ideology that nature can be conquered. These countries, Hungary among them, now have to face not only the problems of the technological and infrastructural gap, the economic recession and social tensions inevitably accompanying the transition process, but also the tragic environmental legacy of the former regime. Their evolution towards a market economy preceded by the establishment of democratic institutions is historically unique and not a mere reproduction of the consolidated and organic development of the economically advanced countries.

There is full national unanimity in Hungary that the state of our environment should be improved and further damage to the environment prevented. This provides us with the strength needed to include environmental considerations in our development policy and to cure the damage caused by the fundamentally flawed environmental policies of past decades. Our philosophy echoes that of sustainable development, that is, full harmony between the environment and development.

Hungary, although small in size and population, attaches great importance to the global problems of the environment. I will sign the Climate Change Convention tomorrow, making the commitment that carbon dioxide emissions originating from Hungarian economic activities after the year 2000 will not exceed the average level of emissions between 1985 and 1987. As soon as the economic performance of the country permits, we will do everything to reduce the level of these emissions.

The protection and conservation of biological diversity and the Biodiversity Convention are of particular significance to us. I will also sign this Convention. Within the Carpathian Basin, the territory of Hungary comprises different biogeographical botanical and zoological regions and subregions. The relatively intact biological diversity stemming from this situation is unique in the East European region and calls for its protection not only in our best interest but also in that of the international community.

The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 establish a new dimension of long-term international political and moral commitments. We will assume our part of the social and economic obligations with a view to averting the dangers of environmental degradation of the planet, while bearing the burden of our transformation. These tasks combined are more than our economy can take, so we count on the assistance of the advanced countries to protect our common environment. On the other hand, we are ready to share our environmental experience with other countries in the framework of an efficient international mechanism. It is the Hungarian view that commitments made can be carried out if global, regional and national priorities, as well as the specific conditions of each country, are taken into account.

Regarding the financing of international cooperation, Hungary is prepared to be part of a comprehensive transfer mechanism where we give and take; however, at present we are not in a position to act as a net donor.

We would like to see the development of the currently existing legal and institutional mechanisms of global and regional cooperation. This would enable environmental considerations to influence economic, social and scientific programmes, too. It goes without saying that my country is prepared to play an active role in this. We agree that follow-up institutions are needed to determine the global and regional activities resulting from the Rio Conference. We would be privileged if the regional conference devoted to the environmental problems of Europe were organized in Hungary.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is sure to open a new chapter in human history and represent not the end but the beginning of a process. I hope for agreements breaking away from the pessimistic views of environmental catastrophes as well as from rosy dreams that disregard existing problems. I trust that responsible answers will be given to the global challenges at the regional level as well. We have no alternative to development that is in harmony with the environment. Our common action is needed.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Dashiin Byambasuren, Prime Minister
of Mongolia

At the outset let me express my deep gratitude to the Government of Brazil for having convened the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in their beautiful country and for their warm hospitality. There is no doubt that Rio de Janeiro will go down in history as the cradle of those important decisions made at this Conference that will in large measure determine the future fate of progress on our planet.

Since the very origin of mankind millenniums ago, our history has basically been the history of relations of man and nature.

Although all of us gathered here are in many ways different from each other - that is, from the point of view of race, nationality, culture, language, way of life - we were all born and live under the same sky on mother Earth. The harmony between man and nature and their equilibrium have become today the necessary and probably the only prerequisite for the well-being and prosperity of mankind. And as people failed to realize this interdependence and to observe its norms, the environment has deteriorated to such a degree that the future life of people is being questioned. Today we must put together our minds and jointly address the question "to live or not to live".

Mankind has approached the threshold of a new era of living in harmony with nature. There have been numerous international meetings world wide to secure the universal right of people to live in an ecologically safe environment, to provide the conditions for stable progress. The distinctive feature of the present Conference lies in the fact that it will determine the scientific and legal principles to attain the above objectives and ways of realizing them, and will formulate the unified concepts of intensifying international efforts. The Government of Mongolia supports the documents being discussed at the Conference, which embrace the issues of environment and development in their intrinsic interrelationship and which in fact constitute an important component of the emerging new international order.

It is with great satisfaction that I have just signed the Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity.

The process of political and economic restructuring and renovation which started in my country three years ago is in full swing today. And despite all the difficulties, we Mongols have firmly chosen the path of national revival and are determined to overcome all obstacles by mobilizing our potential, with the assistance and support of the international community.

A major nucleus of this renaissance policy carried out by our Government is the concept of living in accord with nature and developing together with it.

In fact, the 1.5 million square kilometre territory of Mongolia has kept its virgin beauty and preserved its natural ecosystem with rare species of flora and fauna. Mongolia, as is known, is a watershed of Asia. We have the responsibility for leaving to posterity this ecosystem, bequeathed to us by our ancestors and which has a universal significance for all mankind. Moreover, we cannot envision the development of the country separately from nature, owing to its vulnerability to any industrial and agricultural activities and poor recovery capabilities.

The policy of industrialization and urbanization which was given priority during the last several decades, has resulted today in the deterioration of pastures, erosion and disintegration of arable lands, reduction of forest and water resources, soil pollution, inadequate exploitation of mineral resources. I might add that desertification is becoming a matter of increasing concern in our country. Ecological deterioration ignores man-made boundaries and affects each and every nation, including Mongolia. The natural equilibrium of Mongolia, which is located in the heart of the densely populated Asian continent, must not be exposed to irreversible changes. And we consider this not as a concern of Mongols only, but as a matter of regional, continental and world significance.

In our view, respect and care for mother Earth and nature should be a universal value of mankind.

The newly emerging market economy in Mongolia shall have an environmental and social orientation.

Mongolia considers that the realization of the socio-economic development strategy coupled with the preservation of nature and the environment will not only be to the benefit of succeeding generations, but will also be in accord with the ideals of mankind to live in harmony with nature.

Moreover, in order to draw the attention of the international community to the idea that irreversible ecological changes in the centre of Asia, where three fifths of the world population live, might have unpredictable consequences, Mongolia proposes the establishment of an international network of ecological model territories, are drawing on the knowledge and experience of the international community in protecting the biosphere, and to include the territory of Mongolia in this network as a special biospheric zone under international protection. We hope that this proposal will meet with the support of the countries of our region, as well as the world community as a whole.

The realization of this objective, aimed at contributing to universal environmental protection, is closely linked with the issues discussed at this Conference and is, in fact, an organic part of them.

I express the hope that this Conference will succeed and result in meaningful decisions that will enhance the well-being of humanity.

The Charter of the United Nations starts with the phrase "... to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ...". Let me finish my short speech with the words "... save succeeding generations from the danger of natural catastrophe".

Statement by H.E. General João Bernardo Vieira, President of
the Council of State of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau

Allow me first to convey on behalf of my country, Guinea-Bissau, and on my own behalf, our deep appreciation and the expression of our gratitude to the Brazilian Government and people for the warm, fraternal welcome they have extended to us since our arrival in Rio de Janeiro. We congratulate those who have arranged this schedule of events in general and Mr. Maurice Strong in particular for the untiring efforts they have made and the assiduousness of their preparations for this grand Conference.

Guinea-Bissau, as a member of the international community, has participated and taken a special interest in the preparatory work for this important Conference on the planet Earth.

The reason for our presence in this forum is to help define a concerted position on one of the major global concerns, that is, the intimate link between the environment and sustainable development.

Similarly, the presence in this fair city of Rio de Janeiro of so many eminent figures from all corners of the globe illustrates in no uncertain terms the universal awareness of the great evils that bear upon the environment, endangering human survival.

In fact, the world is today the scene of harmful practices wrought upon nature by humankind.

Now more than ever, our planet is threatened by catastrophes of all kinds and this demands concerted action at the global level, of which this event is an eloquent testimony.

Agreement must be reached here on concerted action that will guarantee that biological diversity is preserved, pollution is reduced and natural resources are used rationally.

However, no such action can be successfully carried out unless essential issues, such as those I am about to mention, receive the proper treatment in this forum and in the near future. I am referring to the following:

The need to reverse the present flow of financial resources from South to North;

The need to bring about sustained economic development;

Changing the global model of consumption and production;

Improving the quality of life and of housing.

In order to accomplish this, steps must be taken towards a basic economic, social and political restructuring, and a new order must be established in humankind's behaviour towards and relationship with nature.

Faced with this challenge, we must continue to pursue our negotiations in a spirit of effective solidarity among nations and on the basis of the proposed agreements and programmes set out in what is known as Agenda 21.

Also urgent is the need to adopt measures capable of actually helping to restore and preserve the environment without holding back development.

The shared responsibility of all nations must henceforth be one of the imperatives of our time.

Accordingly, the situation clearly demands that both the industrialized countries and the developing countries commit themselves to the mechanisms provided for in Agenda 21 on the question of the mobilization of financial resources, without which any agreements will be nothing more than good intentions.

Guinea-Bissau, like every other country in the Sahel, is suffering from the same ills that are seriously compromising any real chance for the community of the least developed countries in their struggle for balanced and sustained development.

Our aim is thus to enter into a frank dialogue with our partners in cooperation, and to define a development strategy that includes an ecological dimension in the mechanisms for coordinating and harmonizing what we do to manage natural resources with the full and responsible participation of Guinean citizens, especially young people and women.

At every stage of their evolution, human beings, endowed with inexhaustible creativity, have always known, through effort and concerted action, how to act with discernment and how to overcome the challenges set before them.

This Conference will certainly be the framework for a historic turning point in the process of eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development throughout the world.

Trusting in the power of international solidarity, we are joining in and turning our energies to guaranteeing the dynamic balance of the environment/development equation for the sake of the well-being of humanity thus ensuring the present and the future of planet Earth.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Franjo Gregurić, Prime Minister of the
Republic of Croatia

Let me first greet all the participants in this global Summit which unites us all in our common concern and the need to save the Earth, our only planet.

What makes me exceptionally happy is that this outstanding get-together of the countries of the world is for the first time attended by the independent and sovereign Republic of Croatia, which, along with Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, is the youngest United Nations Member State.

Unfortunately, international recognition has not yet brought peace to the entire territory of Croatia. A considerable part of it is still in the grip of war, suffering and devastation. Therefore, on our way to the common objective of this Summit - laying down the foundations for a lasting quality of life and a harmonious relationship between man and his environment - we must first restore peace to both the natural environment and the human beings living in it.

Except for people and industry, the hardest hit by the war in our territory, as nowhere and never before, have been many valuable natural resources.

The official toll of the war waged against the Republic of Croatia is more than 5,000 people killed, 13,000 missing (most of them certainly dead), 20,000 wounded and 2,200 confined in Serbian prison camps. Nine major hospitals have been heavily damaged or completely destroyed. The cultural heritage destroyed or ravaged includes about 300 churches and 200 historic monuments of the highest category.

The Serbian-Montenegrin military (former Yugoslav National Army and its "irregulars"), in addition to killing people and destroying cultural treasures, were intent on inflicting lasting damage to our natural environment. The Trsteno Arboretum in Dubrovnik, established as far back as 1498, was intentionally burnt down by the former Yugoslav Army, which continues to devastate the entire city of Dubrovnik, the historical value of which is well known and needs no special elaboration. Still ringing in our ears are the threats made by the former Yugoslav Army to destroy the Krško nuclear power plant, threats they supported by having their aircraft fly over the plant at the lowest possible altitude. They are still threatening to blast the Peruća hydroelectric power plant. Even the European monitors and UNPROFOR are unable to do anything to make them relent and allow water to accumulate in the Cetina river bed, which has run dry.

Still exposed to devastation are some unique natural treasures, such as the national parks of the Plitvice Lakes, Krka River and Kopački Rit (Marshes) in Baranya and other areas well known to nature lovers all over the world. The impact of a change in the ecological balance on such micro-locations and the kind of broader disruptions it may cause remain to be seen. The question is, however, what will be left there to save.

Let me give you but one example of the ecological war against Croatia: the ecological destruction of the river Sava by huge quantities of chemicals and oil spilled into it as a result of wanton destruction of industrial plants along the river bank, especially the Sisak Oil Refinery, which was set on fire several times and is still under attack. From this refinery, alone, 81,000 tons of crude oil and oil products poured into the river and another 50,000 tons either burnt down or contaminated the ground. About 3 tons of poisonous chemicals from the refinery ended up in the river Sava or soaked into the ground.

Endless is the list of chemicals and poisons which the occupation army has dropped from its aircraft on the territory of Croatia, not to mention the shells, grenades and incendiary bombs which have polluted air, water and soil. When abandoning their barracks, the enemy troops left poisonous gases, explosive devices and other materials like booby traps designed to inflict the maximum harm. Thus at Zagreb Airport poisonous materials for making napalm bombs were thrown into the wells.

The withdrawing enemy troops polluted the sea by dumping in it whatever they could not take with them. The arable land and forests are dotted with tens of thousands of mines, which will have to be removed before any work can recommence. Several national parks of Croatia are still partly or wholly occupied by the enemy. In these areas, woods are being devastated by burning and attractive landscapes spoiled. What is particularly deplorable and tragic is the fact that the natural and cultural heritage of Croatia has often been a defenceless victim, a deliberately chosen target of attacks.

After the war in the Gulf, after the war in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, war and care of the natural environment - mutually incompatible concepts - will surely find themselves together in a lexicon of ecology.

In spite of the sad reality of wartime, Croatia is already looking forward to the post-war era of renewal and development under democracy and a market economy. Much of Croatia's planning is based on care for the natural environment as a fundamental value defined even in the Croatian constitution.

Variety and specificity, many examples of valuable natural and cultural heritage, as well as the high degree to which nature has remained unspoiled, are among the main features of the Croatian environment and, at the same time, are among Croatia's principal assets for the future. Its specific geographical shape, a large share of karst areas and the Adriatic Sea also make Croatia rather vulnerable. The overall state of the natural environment in Croatia can be still described as satisfactory. However, there is a certain amount of air pollution in major urban and industrial areas, as well as water pollution in some areas of the land and the sea. True, these phenomena are not yet a cause for serious alarm, but they should warn us of the need to take urgent action.

It should be noted that the environmental protection policy of Croatia has been practised continuously for 20 years because this policy in the former Yugoslavia was almost exclusively the responsibility of the individual republics. As early as 1972, well before the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, the Croatian Parliament defined environmental objectives and tasks in its Resolution on the Protection of Man's Environment.

On the whole, however, what the environmental policies in Croatia have amounted to so far is a host of formal declarations and programmes; practical actions have been more or less limited to accident situations only. Consequently, an integral and systematic approach to the problem of environmental management and protection is still pending. A series of regulations are being prepared, designed to promote organization, legislation and operability at all levels in the area of environmental protection.

The most important progress in this direction has been made through a regulation, implemented since 1985, calling for a feasibility study for all projects likely to disrupt the environment. During that period, people have become aware of the need to carefully check all aspects of a project in terms of its possible impact on the environment and to accept the additional, often extremely high, costs involved in the implementation of environment protection.

Along with the increasingly influential and better and better organized technical and scientific circles, many ecological movements have come into being in recent years at various levels, and they are making a major contribution to the promotion of ecology. They are also becoming a kind of "conscience" of and "opposition" to the official policy makers. The general public, too, and the mass media are showing a growing concern for the natural environment.

To date, the important achievements of Croatia within the international campaign in the area of environmental protection, both regionally and in cooperation with the Mediterranean and Central European countries, will be given a new impetus under conditions of newly won sovereignty. The Croatian Government has not only accepted all the relevant international obligations signed by the former Yugoslavia, but it also intends to enter into new agreements relevant to Croatia. Dealing with the problems of environmental protection in conjunction with other States has also an immediate practical importance for Croatia in that the deteriorating state of its sea and forests is caused not by its own pollutants but by those from neighbouring States. Hence the need for the already streamlined and concerted actions in fighting pollution to be continued and made more effective.

As a State, and through its regions, towns, institutions, experts and individual scientists, Croatia will continue to participate in and contribute to efforts aimed at solving some global ecological problems, such as holes in the ozone layer and climate change. We shall also be relying on the assistance of the international community in dealing with these and other serious ecological problems, which still cannot be properly assessed in their entirety. In the first place, we count on international help in our efforts to save and protect the natural and cultural heritage of Croatia, especially the part of it entered in the UNESCO World Heritage List (e.g., the old city centres of Dubrovnik and Split or the Plitvice Lakes National Park).

Croatia is also faced with urgent development tasks, which, due to post-war reconstruction and new political and economic orientation, must be thoroughly redefined. Immediate tasks include detailed stocktaking of war damage and assessment of the extent to which the environment has been affected, plus overall checking of existing development programmes and devising new ones intended to create conditions for speedy and efficient

renewal, restoration and even enhancement of the quality of life in the war-stricken areas, long-term protection of natural resources and general growth based on a harmonious relationship between man and his environment. It is necessary to start preparing and implementing renewal plans as soon as possible, especially with regard to outstanding natural, cultural, architectural and industrial complexes.

The cooperation and assistance of other countries, international organizations and communities will make it easier for us to cope with these highly complex and long-term tasks with a greater degree of efficiency, speed and quality. UNCED'92 is an opportunity to send out invitations world wide for support and direct participation in the renewal of scarred Croatia.

It goes without saying that all the problems of the natural environment and those of economic growth, as well as their interrelation, cannot be solved at a conference, even a major one like this. What we can expect, however, are certain joint guidelines to be followed in order to unburden our natural environment.

Having experienced the cruelties of the war waged against Croatia since 1991 and aware of the fact that its aftermath will be with us for a long time to come, determining our planning development programmes and priorities, we expect from UNCED'92 an efficient and clearcut international condemnation of any aggression, especially of the kind deliberately planned to destroy natural and cultural resources.

In this context I would propose:

That agreement be reached on an international convention prohibiting any war operations likely to cause disasters;

That a United Nations body (analogous to the Security Council) be set up, able to take efficient action aimed at protecting and improving the state of the natural environment and to take timely steps in the event that the attacking party makes the natural and cultural heritage a part of its war objectives (as was the case with the aggression against Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the war in the Gulf).

I wish to point out once again that, as part of the international community, Croatia will assume its full share of responsibility in helping to solve global ecological problems. As a State which has won its independence under extremely difficult circumstances, Croatia will do its best to create the kind of new development programmes compatible with the preservation of the natural environment in all its richness and diversity.

Statement by H.E. Mr. A. V. Ruts koy, Vice-President of the
Russian Federation

The long and difficult journey of the world community towards an awareness of the need to unite its efforts to prevent an ecological catastrophe has brought us all to this exceptionally impressive Conference in Brazil, which has been organized with the active participation of the President of Brazil, Fernando Collor, and the Brazilian Government. This is the first time that there has been discussion at such a high level of the complex problems of ecology and development and their interrelationship, a discussion which is of the utmost importance for defining the model for the future development of mankind. I particularly wish to point out that we are all attaining a completely new level in terms of documents adopted: a realistic programme of action which is so essential to mankind for saving and renewing the ecosphere that surrounds us.

It is today essential for all people, whether officials of State or ordinary inhabitants of the world, to accustom themselves to thinking and acting in an ecologically responsible manner and to pondering how each step they take may affect the fate of future generations.

Eight years from now, mankind will enter the twenty-first century, a century of new technologies for the harnessing of space, land, water, forests and the depths of the Earth. In that context, it is now time to analyse the situation and to appreciate that the future of the planet depends directly on the extent to which we shall be able, through our collective efforts, to carry out a twofold task: to conserve nature and, at the same time, to ensure the sustainable development of all States and peoples without exception.

We must leave behind in the twentieth century our barbarism with respect to the environment, military confrontation in the world and the cold war, with its gigantic expenditure on militarization. We must direct the resources thus released to the ecology, and open up new possibilities and prospects for conducting a well-thought-out and effective ecological policy for the world community.

Russia, for its part, is ready to embark on that path right now. The democratic processes in Russian society and its liberation from totalitarianism are also propitious for the initiation in Russia of a difficult and at times painful period of "ecological glasnost". However tragic may be the facts that have recently been revealed about environmental damage in recent decades, the people of our country must be told about them. After all, for many years the problems were hushed up, the impending ecological crisis in the Soviet Union denied, and public opinion neglected, and this, to a large extent, has been the reason for the very large number of ecological disasters varying widely in scale, including the most terrible of them, that at Chernobyl.

We sincerely wish to draw practical conclusions from the lessons of history. In introducing the present far-reaching economic and social transformations, President Yeltsin of Russia and the Russian leaders are taking care to ensure that ecological problems are not forgotten and that the development of industry and energy sources is not achieved at the cost of ignoring elementary standards of ecological safety. It is a true saying that

the miser pays twice. It is all the more important to remember that it is not the Government that pays for ecological miscalculations; the cost is borne by the population, in particular, in terms of its health.

The situation of ecological crisis not only in the territory of Russia but also in that of other States is known to many of those here present in this hall.

For its part, the Russian Federation considers it important to intensify its action to conserve the environment. In this connection, a law on the conservation of nature has been adopted, new structures for ecological and nature conservation have been set up and arrangements have been made for regular expert ecological assessments throughout the territory of Russia, especially in major cities; joint action involving the organs of State authority and the ecological community has been expanded. Several hundred newspapers and periodicals are now being published in Russia on problems of nature conservation. Ecological issues were the subject of one of the first agreements reached in the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We fully appreciate, however, that these endeavours remain patently inadequate and that the solution to the ecological problems of our country must be found in conjunction with action along the same lines taken by the entire world community. The meetings and discussions at the Conference bear witness to the interest taken by many States in constructive collaboration with Russia.

I shall take the liberty of dwelling on some of the questions touched on in the speech to the Conference by President B. N. Yeltsin of Russia and in the speeches of many prominent statesmen in this forum.

The ecological safety of the planet demands an effective mechanism that will also, at the same time, ensure the ecological safety of all countries. We are already well aware that ecological disasters recognize no State frontiers. It is precisely for this reason that, in our view, particular attention ought to be paid to permanent global ecological monitoring, including the use of satellites and low earth-orbit space stations. Russia has a certain amount of experience in this field and is willing to share it with other States. This must, of course, go hand in hand with the creation of an operational ecological warning service which will help keep the adverse effects of any ecological disaster to a minimum.

This is where the United Nations system can and must play a special role. We are deeply convinced that the key ecological problems, which are of importance to the entire world, must remain constantly at the centre of attention, including that of the United Nations Security Council.

Ecological well-being is inseparably connected with the process of demilitarization. It is first and foremost a question of the need for a reduction in military expenditure and use of part of the resources released for the needs of the natural environment, the general cessation of nuclear tests and the urgent elimination of chemical weapons, and a reduction in military exercise areas. Russia is taking practical steps in each of these fields and expects a responsible approach from other States.

It is considered that the questions and ideas which may see the light of day in the immediate future include the following:

Conclusion of an international convention on urgent ecological assistance;

Creation of arrangements to avert ecological disasters, including those which may result from military conflicts;

Organization of the international exchange of effective ecologically oriented technologies.

We would also support the creation, within the United Nations system, of a body to ensure the development of the chemical industry in a way that is safe for people and for nature, and the conversion and non-proliferation of military chemical production. Such a body might become a kind of "chemical IAEA".

It goes without saying that Russia is available for the discussion and realization of any constructive ideas and initiatives proposed at this Conference or arising after it.

The Russian Federation supports the basic documents of the Conference and will adopt and sign them. Most important of all, it will do everything to ensure that they subsequently become a reality. This applies to Agenda 21, which formulated for the first time a programme and plan of action for the world community in the field of ecologically sustainable development. The same applies to the Rio Declaration, which is, in essence, a code of international standards for sustainable development, and to the conventions on climate and biodiversity.

We are ready to make the essential efforts to ensure that, once the principles of a unified attitude to forests have been agreed, the matter is taken further and the corresponding international convention developed.

We are well aware that this Conference is the beginning of a fundamentally new process whereby the States of the world will consciously undertake obligations to act in the interest of conserving the ecosphere and creating the conditions for sustainable development. We hope that the efforts of Governments and society, scientists and business, journalists and cultural workers, will be united in this task.

I wish success to the participants in the first summit meeting on the issues of environment and development in making the decisions that will be taken by the Conference a reality. The work accomplished will be a serious investment in the peaceful and ecologically sound future of our planet.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Andrés Rodríguez,
President of the Republic of Paraguay

The Government of Paraguay is pleased to be here at this world Conference, held under United Nations auspices in the Federative Republic of Brazil, to whose President, Fernando Collor, we extend our most cordial greetings. We hope that this meeting will be a milestone for the Governments and peoples of the world, the beginning of an era in which more balanced and humane development will be matched by enhanced protection of the environment.

We realize that this is not simply a question of creating awareness of the harmful effects of the destruction of natural resources or the need to alter the process of environmental imbalance. It is above all a question of creating the means and the conditions, national and international, for reversing the degradation of ecosystems, thereby ensuring a future more in harmony with nature and the well-being of all mankind.

This is the responsibility which brings us here today. After the Rio Summit, the Earth, this rich home of all living things, must be the object of a global policy which launches a process that is the opposite of the present destruction: a process of development which frees peoples from poverty and nature from devastating exploitation.

We in Paraguay must acknowledge that, in general, our production and mining activities have failed to take environmental factors into account. Our country has reached a critical point beyond which these ravages cannot continue if we are to stop devastating our forest resources, eroding our soil and polluting our rivers.

That is why the Government has incorporated environmental policies into development programmes in all areas. We are trying to enhance the quality of human life by transforming production activities equitably while adequately protecting the biosystem.

As part of this strategy, the public sector has started to implement plans for ensuring the rational utilization of natural resources, including water resources, and for regulating land use in both rural and urban areas. It has also introduced plans for combating the pollution caused by increasing urbanization and industrialization.

Our environment policy will always fall short of its goals, however, unless we succeed in implementing a programme of sustainable development for the Chaco. This is a region which so far has been little exploited, is sparsely populated and has a highly fragile ecosystem. Its integration is therefore fundamental to a comprehensive environment policy, which will also require regional and international cooperation.

Through specific programmes, we are promoting research, extension activities and development of the human resources needed to tackle the problems of using our natural wealth rationally so as to ensure the country's sustainable development.

Paraguay reaffirms, at this Earth Summit, the need for a sincere and fruitful dialogue between developed and developing nations. We must move on from rhetoric and mere solidarity to effective international cooperation that reflects, with wisdom, good sense and a spirit of justice, the close interaction of our respective ecosystems, including our economies.

The conclusions of scientists drawing attention to the destabilizing effect of damage to any part of the ecological system must be accepted as applying to everyone and not just to the weakest countries. Accordingly, responsibility must also be taken for the damage caused to third countries by destructive activities.

Paraguay is currently suffering, less than 10 years after the first, from the second most disastrous flood in its history. This catastrophe, which is wreaking untold economic and social havoc on my country, would be unthinkable, absolutely unimaginable, were it not for a world-wide process of ecological imbalance.

Paraguay has good reason to urge the international community to incorporate the principle of shared responsibility into the search for solutions to environmental problems.

We also demand a fairer world order, in which trade relations would consider the need to narrow the gap between rich and poor countries. To accomplish this, it would be essential to do away with certain protectionist policies, set fair prices for agricultural products and encourage the transfer of less polluting production technologies.

It is also necessary to expand international cooperation by generating additional financial resources, without conditions, to make it possible for environmentally sustainable development programmes and projects to be implemented directly.

We reiterate our satisfaction at participating in this important gathering and salute the eminent representatives of member countries, in the hope that the decisions taken here will lead to a better life for our peoples. We repeat: after the Rio Summit, the history of the Earth must change, for the good of the planet and of humankind.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Soeharto, President of
the Republic of Indonesia

It is indeed a distinct honour and pleasure for me to participate in this historic and auspicious Summit. The exquisite natural setting and striking beauty of Rio de Janeiro underscores the truly important and universal significance of the purposes for which we are gathered at this Earth Summit. I should therefore like to take this opportunity to thank the Government and people of Brazil for the warm welcome extended to us and the extensive facilities and preparations they have provided for this Conference.

As requested, I shall abbreviate my speech. The unabridged version will be distributed to all delegates. May I ask your kind assistance, Mr. Chairman, in putting this on record as my official speech in its entirety.

In an era of pervasive change and profound transformation, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development stands out as a major milestone for mankind. No one can deny that the world is facing increased danger of environmental catastrophe, of diminishing quality of life and a grave threat to the long-term survival of the global ecosystem. It is now being increasingly recognized that the problem is global in scope and nature and therefore requires a commensurate, globalized and balanced approach that integrates the efforts and commitments of the entire international community. This requirement is graphically reflected in the various documents now before us for further deliberation and adoption at this Conference.

The relationship between man and his environment, especially since the Industrial Revolution, has been an exploitative and predatory one. Until the early 1970s, little or nothing was done. In the absence of global accountability, greatly accelerated economic activities as well as population pressures combined to erode the carrying capacity of the global ecosystem, to destroy natural resources and habitats, and bring about widespread pollution of air and water as well as the degradation of the soil. Then, 20 years ago, at the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, the world was put on notice concerning the dangers and impact of such excesses on the global environment. The issue of environmental degradation took centre stage at the Conference. Now, two decades later, with the provisions of the Stockholm Declaration largely unfulfilled and the dangers to the environment still rapidly escalating, the international community is again urgently reminded of this clear and persistent danger, most notably by the World Commission on Environment and Development in its report Our Common Future.

This report, together with the findings of many scientists, scholars and environmentalists, as well as the indispensable work of the United Nations Environment Programme, has underlined the magnitude of the risks and imminent dangers confronting mankind. Alarming statistics, reflecting wasteful patterns of production and consumption, *inter alia*, resulting in global warming and the progressive depletion of the ozone layer, have jolted the world into renewed and heightened concern. Unless these self-destructive practices are halted or drastically reduced, our planet is doomed to ecological catastrophe. Life as we know it is at stake. Conditions in the developing South also have an adverse impact on the environment. But here, degradation of the environment primarily results from population pressures and their corollary, pervasive poverty. The General Assembly responded decisively to the continuing deterioration of the environment in resolution 44/228, by calling for a conference that would initiate steps to reverse these adverse trends and to enable a rapid transition to a sustainable way of life in the 1990s and beyond. The present Conference, while building on the foundations of Stockholm, has also added the dimension of development as an essential corrective to the earlier perspective.

This is indeed a necessary and timely correction. For it is obvious by now that we cannot effectively address the problem of environmental degradation without at the same time resolving the problems of development and in particular of human poverty.

The poor and disadvantaged are unavoidably the first victims of environmental degradation. To lift them from their abject misery is therefore a matter of social justice. Moreover, in response to the imperative of daily survival the poor will, however inadvertently, continue to inflict damage on the environment. It is therefore a matter of practical prudence that they be the major beneficiaries of economic development so that they too will contribute constructively to that development.

We therefore have before us two sets of vital concerns: the environment and development. The integration of these two concerns in practice is central to the purposes of this Conference and would constitute a major breakthrough for mankind. It should be noted, however, that the ability of the developing countries to tackle global environmental tasks while simultaneously pursuing their development objectives will ultimately depend on whether a supportive economic environment is in place or not. This fact underscores the basic truth that environmental protection should not be undertaken at the expense of development, and that economic development is the fundamental right of all peoples and countries. It logically follows that natural resources in the developing countries should not be designated as global commons while unsustainable consumption patterns in the developed countries are left unresolved. Otherwise the burden of environmental responsibility will be unfairly shifted to the developing countries of the South - which will certainly be unacceptable.

To us, the interaction among development, environment and population is a cornerstone of national policy. We have learned to be concerned not only with population growth rates but also with the quality of the population, the levels of education that the people attain, and the skills and capabilities that they acquire. We have to consider the rights of individuals as they constitute a population and a society, such as the right of men and women alike to determine the size of their families, the right to further the interests of the communities to which they belong, and other rights guaranteed under our laws. Such rights, together with the right to development and to obtain the best possible quality of life, as well as the right to a proper social and physical environment, are part of the spectrum of human rights that we uphold.

In this light, let us consider the various decisions and measures that have been proposed for adoption by this Conference. The drafts before us not only define the problems and the steps that will bring us to their solution, but they also specify the rights and obligations of all of us who are committed to the cause of environment and development.

I should like to stress that these obligations must be allocated and shared as equitably as possible. That means that we should take into consideration the differences in levels of financial, technological and institutional capabilities of all the countries concerned. It seems clear that our common cause will be best served if we continue to develop and share all our human capabilities. This is true of our environmental efforts, and even more so of our development efforts.

Development has many facets, including social and cultural, but development is primarily an economic endeavour comprising the pursuit of material wealth, of income and earning capacity. Aware as we are of the link between development and environment, we are convinced that when a country is able to increase its material wealth and financial resources, to the same degree it is able to strengthen its pursuit of sustainable development. By serving the cause of economic development, we thus serve the cause of the environment.

Therefore, a major objective of international cooperation, within as well as outside the context of UNCED, should be to enable the developing countries to reach self-sustained growth and achieve sustainable development within the shortest possible time.

One of the means by which that objective can be attained is for the developing countries to be allowed to obtain better and more equitable prices for the commodities extracted from their natural resources - prices which reflect both environmental and resource-renewal costs. Another way is for developing countries to be allowed to achieve higher value-added earnings by processing the yield of their natural resources themselves before exportation. In brief, it is high time that we abandon the colonial heritage whereby developing countries are relegated to the function of mere plantation economies.

This will not be an easy task since vestiges of colonialism still persist in the patterns of international relations, in the patterns of trade and resource flows, which greatly favour the industrialized countries to the inherent disadvantage of the developing countries. And at present we also witness the painful paradox of financial resource flows from the developing to the developed countries exceeding those from the rich to the poor countries.

Indeed the possession of greater wealth and more advanced technology has provided the industrialized countries with the comparative advantage that enables them to unilaterally set the terms of their relations with the developing countries. This has resulted in a further accumulation of material wealth in the industrialized countries, further strengthening their dominant position in the world. This is a vicious spiral that has to be broken.

For today it has become imperative that we undertake joint efforts globally to safeguard the viability of the entire planet. But even in this context, the industrialized nations would still wish to impose their terms on our common efforts. This they do with the full knowledge that all nations, without exception, are under the same threat of an environmental catastrophe. They persist, even in the face of the fact that industrialized countries bear the greater responsibility for the acceleration of global environmental degradation, as evidenced by the fact that their consumption patterns are many times more wasteful and waste-producing than those of the developing countries.

This is an inequity that cannot be justified by the certainty that they will have to make substantial financial contributions to the global programme for the environment. The fact is that they also stand to reap substantial benefits that are proportionately larger than all the benefits to be gained by developing countries. It is obvious that the industrialized countries will derive more than just environmental benefits from such a programme. In

embarking on these environmental efforts, it is not our purpose to perpetuate the gap between rich and poor countries. Yet that is how it would appear in the light of this inequity. In the process, neither the cause of the environment nor the cause of development will be adequately served.

Such a course of events would relegate the developing countries to second class status in the community of nations. It does not require much imagination to realize that such a situation could become the seedbed for potential global conflict on a scale more perilous than any we have experienced before.

Sustainable development implies integration of two elements: environment and development. Both must be simultaneously and equally attended to and their respective objectives reconciled and harmonized. One cannot be sacrificed for the sake of the other. And its implementation requires above all the equitable sharing of responsibilities as well as of opportunities.

On the global scale, it requires the re-integration of all our efforts for the sake of preserving and enhancing the viability of this planet at the same time as we pursue global development. We must overcome the disintegrative and centrifugal forces that only serve short-term economic expediency and the self-centred pursuit of material gain. Our common objectives cannot be achieved when nations and peoples become alienated from one another and lose their sense of global solidarity.

We must therefore learn to nurture the habits and practices of global cooperation, to sharpen the awareness of our shared humanity and of the fact that we are the steward of a single vulnerable environment. We must arrive at a new global partnership. We can forge that partnership not only by adopting a global environmental programme, but also by establishing new patterns of relations between nations in terms of trade, in terms of investments of capital and other resource flows. As we seek to establish such a new global partnership, we will have to reconsider, rethink and perhaps create a new pattern for the division of labour among nations.

We see this Earth Summit as a vital first step towards the establishment of that new global partnership. We hope that the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, and all the other agreements that we will adopt here at this Conference will bring us closer to its realization. It is therefore vitally important that we ensure the successful implementation of these agreements. This, we believe, will be one of the most important tasks of the United Nations in the coming years.

In this context, we realize that the United Nations system must undergo some necessary adjustments. The United Nations system, after all, was established almost half a century ago when issues were less complex and interrelated than they are today. Already it is difficult enough to monitor and coordinate the myriad efforts of all the United Nations bodies, agencies and programmes.

This could become a problem of even greater magnitude when it comes to the implementation of a global programme of sustainable development, which is cross-sectoral in nature and spans almost all of the United Nations agencies and programmes.

We believe that it is essential to establish, within the United Nations, an entity which is mandated and entrusted with the task of coordinating the global pursuit of sustainable development in all its aspects. In particular, this entity should coordinate, monitor and ensure the implementation of Agenda 21 and the other agreements adopted by this Earth Summit.

For administrative and organizational purposes, this entity could be placed under the purview of the Economic and Social Council, but for substantive and policy issues, it should have direct access to the highest decision makers in the United Nations.

I am gratified that developments at the Conference have led towards the establishment of a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development. The specific organizational modalities for the work of this Commission will be determined by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

I believe that it would be desirable for the high-level Commission to convene at the level of heads of State or Government at an appropriate and mutually agreed-upon time. This would lend the necessary weight to the Commission and ensure that follow-up of this Conference will meet our hopes, expectations and aspirations.

I should like to seek your views and support for this proposal and to assure you that Indonesia stands ready to undertake further activities and discussions to explore its practical realization.

We submit this proposal in the awareness that the pursuit of sustainable development, the integration and reconciliation of environment and development, requires a concentrated and unrelenting effort involving the highest decision makers in the community of nations. The stakes are high and they include the future of this planet as a life-support system, the capacity of nations to share the one world in which we live, and the ability of all mankind to practice their shared humanity.

Let us not squander the environment, which has been placed in our trust, nor lose this opportunity to bring about harmony among all human beings and all peoples of the world as well as harmony between humanity and the planet that supports its teeming life. That harmony shall be our worthiest tribute to God's Providence for all His Creation.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Geoffrey Arama Henry, Prime Minister
of the Cook Islands

May I, on behalf of my delegation, begin by joining other speakers in expressing our sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Brazil for hosting this Conference and for their gracious hospitality.

I would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, and his secretariat, for the dedication and hard work that have made this very important Conference possible.

In the 20 years since the Stockholm Conference first placed the environment on the international agenda, there has been recognizable progress realized in diverse areas. Nevertheless, this Summit is tangible recognition that not enough has been done during that time - or with sufficient speed - either to prevent the further serious deterioration of this small globe that man calls home or to link efforts to protect the environment with simultaneous initiatives to improve the human condition.

It is for that reason that my Government has participated actively in the UNCED process, including the negotiations on a framework convention on climate change and why I am here today. As a member State of the South Pacific Forum, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the Alliance of Small Island States, many of the issues facing us today are of vital importance to the Cook Islands, and my Government stands committed to participating in, and contributing to, global and regional initiatives aimed at achieving sustainable development.

An integrated approach to problems of the environment and development is imperative. This is inherent, as we all know, in the concept of sustainable development and is reflected in the principles set out in the Rio Declaration. That Declaration must be respected and form the basis for all that follows in the years to come, not relegated as many declarations before it, to the bin of pious pronouncements, devoid of any genuine significance.

Perhaps nowhere else on Earth is the close relationship between man, the environment and development more clearly defined than in small island countries. Comprising 15 islands and a mere 240 square kilometres of land scattered over approximately 2 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean, the Cook Islands, for example, has all of its activities concentrated on a narrow coastal strip. Indeed, it is possible to stand in the middle of our coral atolls and see the ocean on the one side and the blue waters of our lagoon on the other. There is no hinterland, and rarely does the elevation on those islands exceed 3 metres.

While intensely romantic and paradisiacal to the minds of some, for us, the restrictions and fragility of our natural environment are a daily reality. So, too, is the serious threat of global warming and its attendant effects, especially sealevel rise.

Some have stressed the lack of scientific certainty regarding the matter as justification for lack of action. However, this, in our view, is a convenient excuse for pure procrastination. The American National Academy of Sciences - hardly a group of radical greenies - in a report last year, concluded that despite the scientific imprecision in determining what is happening now and exactly what will happen, the rising levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, a major contributor to global warming, is a problem requiring urgent attention. Moreover, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts a sealevel rise of 3-10 cm per decade, with a most likely rise of 6 cm per decade and anywhere between 40 and 110 cm by the end of the next century. This is a matter of great concern to many nations, including the Cook Islands and other small island countries.

In fact, the scientific uncertainty related to the amount and rate of sealevel rise only magnifies our concern because, like many other small island countries, we feel particularly vulnerable in the face of environmental changes that result from human activities for which we are not responsible and over which we have no control. My country cannot afford to await final, conclusive evidence of sealevel rise while the consequences of man's actions are a daily reality. Indeed, while scientists continue to debate the precise degree of climate change most likely to happen, we, in the South Pacific in recent years, have faced some of the worst hurricanes in living memory, storms against which we can offer only feeble defences and which have ravaged our coastlines and caused great devastation to property and, indeed, loss of life.

For that reason, the Cook Islands participated actively in the negotiations on a framework convention on climate change, hoping that all States, particularly the industrialized countries, would commit themselves to stabilizing their emissions of greenhouse gases at 1990 levels by the beginning of the second millennium and, thereafter, reduce them to much safer levels. It has been a grave disappointment to us, therefore, that the efforts of the vast majority of members of the international community towards that end were everywhere being thwarted.

That being said I have, nevertheless, signed the much weakened and inadequate Climate Change Convention as testimony to my Government's own commitment to resolving the outstanding issues and to formulating effective responses to the problems remaining. Unfortunately, only the first, tiny step has been taken and much yet lies ahead.

Small though many island countries may be, the people of the Pacific Islands are well aware of the importance of biodiversity in maintaining the life support system of our planet. In the Cook Islands, for example, there is a rare species of bird, the Kakerori or the Rarotongan Fly-Catcher, of which only 58 are known to exist, all on our main island, Rarotonga. Vigorous steps have been initiated, including setting aside as reserves very scarce land areas, not only to protect it from extermination but to allow an increase in its numbers. Other flora and fauna species in our national ecosystem of several numbers are as rare, and plans are being implemented or strategies formulated for their urgent protection.

It is with this in mind that I have today also signed the Biodiversity Convention. By so doing, the Cook Islands similarly commits itself to promoting the principle of biodiversity and to continuing its already ongoing

national efforts to protect our unique and endangered species. We are disappointed, therefore, that some countries have indicated that they will not become a party to this Convention. The maintenance of biological diversity and the development of biotechnologies are in the interest of all mankind and both require innovative forms of cooperation and understanding among all countries in order to ensure the equitable distribution of benefits among those who possess genetic resources and those who have the scientific and technological capacity to realize their potential. The first step has been taken in the Biodiversity Convention, but much, much more must be done if the needs of all are to be met and particular concerns addressed.

In fact, as we are all too painfully aware, this Summit is only the beginning, and a long road lies ahead of us. This Conference and its preparatory activities have revealed just how excruciatingly complicated and difficult is the entire issue of sustainable development when considered in the global context - as it must be. Agenda 21 bears witness to this fact, being without doubt the most comprehensive compilation of research, training and other activities that must be carried out if the world's environmental and developmental problems are to be solved. In this regard, the Cook Islands would be honoured to host in 1993 the first global conference for small island States to discuss in detail sustainable development and its implementation.

Given that proposed programmes in Agenda 21 range all the way from those dealing with such pressing problems as desertification to those aimed at protecting the oceans and the resources they contain, it is impossible in the time available today to do more than conclude with a few brief comments on the central challenges that confront us and the overall approach that we, small island nations, feel must be adopted by the global community in the months and years ahead.

The first major challenge, I feel, is for man to realize and accept his rightful humble place on Earth and to learn to live in harmony with the world around him. This secret has long been known to many of those who in a less sophisticated age were described by civilization's spokesmen as "primitive peoples". Even today, many Cook Islanders, for example, would closely identify themselves with the early native American, Chief Seattle, who wisely stated what many of us have all but forgotten:

"The Earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the Earth. All things are connected like the blood which unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself."

This fact of life was reflected by the World Commission on Environment and Development in its seminal report, Our Common Future:

"Many present efforts to guard and maintain human progress, to meet human needs, and to realize human ambitions are simply unsustainable - in both the rich and poor nations. They draw too heavily, too quickly, on already overdrawn environmental resource accounts to be affordable far into the future without bankrupting those accounts. They may show profits on the balance sheets of our generation, but our children will inherit the losses. We borrow environmental capital from future generations with no intention or prospect of repaying. They may damn us

for our spendthrift ways, but they can never collect on our debt to them. We act as we do because we can get away with it: future generations do not vote; they have no political or financial power; they cannot challenge our decisions.

"But the results of the present profligacy are rapidly closing the options for future generations."

I believe that this Conference has done much to bring the wisdom of Chief Seattle and the World Commission home to each of us. While no one would seriously propose reverting to a supposed Golden Age of Rousseau's Noble Savage, this new, world view that we must adopt will, nevertheless, necessitate our redefining security not in cold war terms but rather in multinational, global environmental terms. It will also require measuring quality of life not solely in terms of such things as the number of automobiles, televisions and telephones there are per household, but also by factoring in such environmental conditions as clean air and a clean water supply.

"In the final analysis", the World Commission points out, "sustainable development must rest on political will." As we stand at the threshold of the twenty-first century, those who would aspire to leadership in the establishment of a new world order must exhibit today initiative and action on the main problems of our time relating to the environment and development. Indeed, all leaders must have the courage to take tough decisions on such critical issues as population control, energy policy and resource-use, based on the long-term welfare of not only their own countries but also the international community, rather than on narrow, short-term domestic political expediency. As a leader of a small island State, I might add that decisions on key issues such as those I have just mentioned are no less difficult in small countries than for leaders of great continental States. Nevertheless, through courage and vision, leaders will garner the vital support of important sections of the nation, including enlightened members of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, women, youth and indigenous peoples, as well as the international community. No one expects miracles overnight. But each of us must act quickly, starting now, if we have not already done so.

Translating the world view, to which I just referred, into specific courses of action to achieve sustainable development is another challenge that will depend in large part upon the efficient design and effective implementation of activities set out in Agenda 21. Neither will necessarily be simple, particularly where resources are most limited.

Given today's global interdependence, the activities of one country frequently impact for better or worse on those of not only their next door neighbour but sometimes even those on the opposite side of the world. No longer can we afford either to pursue a beggar-thy-neighbour environmental policy or to ignore the needs of those countries presently without the resources to follow policies aimed at sustainable development completely on their own. As the World Commission points out, "it is impossible to separate economic development issues from environment issues ... Poverty is a major cause and effect of global environmental problems."

While my Government supports the polluter pays principle, we yet believe that developing countries must necessarily bear much of the cost of their own development. At the same time, however, in many cases they will need assistance and will be seeking that assistance from the international community. In this regard, I should add, developed countries have no right to impose conditions on their assistance such as to infringe upon the sovereignty of developing countries. They do, however, have the right to appropriate assurances that their assistance will be utilized as planned and intended. This, in the view of my Government, should constitute the basic principle underpinning arrangements for financing Agenda 21 activities in the years to come.

May I conclude with one observation that I believe gives us considerable hope for the future. For those who care to look, there are growing numbers of Governments and private enterprises in both the North and South that are investing more and more in research and development programmes aimed at identifying and marketing environmentally friendly ways to meet the multifarious needs of mankind. They stand in stark contrast to those merely adopting the short-term easy route of investing their resources to preserve the status quo, claiming in an ostrich-like fashion that there is insufficient evidence of environmental degradation to justify remedial action on their part.

We in the Cook Islands are not alone in realizing, for example, that certain agrochemicals are having deleterious effects on our lagoons and coastal waters or that so-called "disposable" nappies are neither disposable nor beautiful to behold when found littering our beaches. Daily decisions are being made and should continue to be made on an ever-widening scale in favour of environmentally sensitive alternatives. It should never be left to an embargo on products before the producers thereof accept the environmental concerns of their markets. Changes must begin now; changes which surely cannot result in depressed profits and reduced employment opportunities if the products are acceptable in the market place. A resistant market would have severe consequences for us all. Sustainable development is - and cannot but be - of benefit to us all.

This Summit offers an ideal opportunity to make a course change for the planet Earth. We must not fail, for our own sake, that of our children and all children to come. The Cook Islands will join with others in working towards our common goal.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Abdul Halim Khaddam, Vice-President
of the Syrian Arab Republic

It gives me great pleasure to bring you the warmest greetings of President Hafez Al-Assad of the Syrian Arab Republic, with his wishes for our historic Conference to succeed in achieving the aims for which it has been convened.

It also gives me pleasure to commend the great efforts exerted by Brazil's President, Government and people to prepare the appropriate conditions for the convening of this Conference.

This Conference is held while the world is witnessing immense changes in people's lives as well as in nature. With these immense changes, the peoples of the world, including the peoples of the third world, are gravely concerned about their destiny and about the future of man on this planet.

What aggravates the anxiety of the people of the third world is the decline of their role in the changes that are engulfing mankind; and, therefore, they are afraid that all this will be at the expense of their freedom, independence and future. Moreover, the widening gap between the developed countries of the industrial world and the countries of the third world, and failure of the latter to narrow this gap, increases the anxiety of the overwhelming majority of mankind.

Together, the widening gap and the failure of the third world countries to achieve economic and social development curtail their capacity to face political, economic and social changes, as well as changes in nature.

The war waged by some human beings on nature through the huge leaps experienced by some countries in the field of industry since the early years of this century, particularly after the Second World War, subjects all mankind to the lethal consequences of man's war on nature, with all its environmental, climatic, agricultural and biological resources.

Before the end of the cold war, the world lived with the worry about a potential military confrontation between the super-Powers; and although that was only a probability, men were afraid of the possibility of such a war, waged by some human beings on nature in the air, the sea and on land, with all the devastating effects of such a war on life.

Third world countries are faced with two problems: the problem of economic and social development to secure the basic needs of their peoples, and the problem of coping with the harmful consequences of the pollution of nature. The resources and potential of the countries of the third world do not present a shining picture; and this increases the concern and worry of its peoples about their future and their destiny.

Syria, with its position in the Middle East region, located along part of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, which is a semi-enclosed sea, faces serious problems of pollution brought to it by industrial countries through their military and commercial fleets that sail in the Mediterranean.

The wastes emanating from these fleets are swept by sea currents towards the shores of our country. This has begun to have adverse effects on maritime ecology and the coastal ecosystem in the health and economic fields, in addition to the harmful gases conveyed by the wind, thus jeopardizing human life as time goes on.

We are facing difficulties in our endeavour to protect our environment and to avoid the damages and risks caused by environmental deterioration. These difficulties stem primarily from Israeli occupation of Arab territories and the growth of Israel's military capacity, which includes factories that produce weapons, in addition to its huge stockpiles of various other kinds of advanced and highly sophisticated land, maritime and air weapons. All these

weapons are ready to be used against us, constantly threatening us with occupation and expansion.

Furthermore, Israel, which persecutes the Palestinian people, inflicting on them the most atrocious forms of repression, and which continues its daily aggressions on Lebanon, changes natural resources through such practices as uprooting trees, sabotaging water resources and the like.

The Israeli aggression forces us to appropriate a large part of our resources to ensure the minimum requirements of defence; and this, in turn, curtails our capacity to achieve economic and social development and to provide resources for the protection of nature with all its components.

The industrial States carry a heavy responsibility for the harmful materials they pour into nature, whether through emanations that cause global warmth, or through industrial waste, particularly chemical waste. While they were developing their industries and production, they did not take into account the harmful effects of this development on all the nations of the world, including those of the developed, industrial world.

All this should prompt the industrial countries to bear the responsibility for achieving two things: first, for providing substantial aid to achieve development in the third world; and second, for appropriating part of their resources to contribute to the elimination of the damage inflicted on nature, the combatting of pollution and the preservation of life. Solidarity among all human beings to conserve nature and to eliminate the traces of aggression on it is essential to protecting man himself throughout the world.

I would like to express the support of the Syrian Government for the recommendations made by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, in 1991, addressed to the industrial countries, and to the Colombo Declaration on the environment, endorsed by the ministerial conference of the developing countries and issued in April 1992.

The Earth Summit, with world-wide participation at the highest level, is an indication of the perception of the gravity of the threats which face mankind as a result of the ongoing changes in nature at the hands of man. This makes it incumbent upon all our countries to cooperate in order to prevent further risks. This can be done through the conclusion of international agreements to conserve nature and to provide the requirements of such conservation. The failure of the States of the world to reach specific formulas that would assist in bridging the gap between the developing and developed countries, and the adoption of agreements to protect nature, will give rise to unsound regional and international situations. It will also increase the risk of social, economic and security conflicts that could rob the world of the hope for a lasting and just peace in which people will have equal duties and rights, foremost among which is the right to freedom, independence and progress. The superficial appearance of stability in the international situation does not reflect the developments and interactions that are happening or may happen as a result of the sense of injustice and persecution felt by the peoples of the third world.

The continuation of the gap between the rich countries and the developing countries and the frustration of the latter because of their failure to bridge that gap and to enjoy a decent human life - in addition to feeling that their resources do not belong to them and that they are the victims of the developed, industrial world, whether through being deprived of the use of those resources since colonial times or through the harm inflicted on the environment and ecology by immense industrial development - will give rise to a muddled, disorderly situation in the greater part of this planet.

The call to ensure the rights of man as an individual will be meaningless in the shadow of the absence of guarantees to protect the people's right to exercise their freedom, and to live in dignity and peace, free of hunger, poverty and deprivation.

The responsibility of our Conference to draw the outline of serious international cooperation in the protection of the environment and ecology is historic; and history shall remember all those who worked to protect mankind and to stop and eliminate aggression on nature.

It has become an urgent necessity to see some serious steps within the framework of active cooperation among our countries under the auspices of the United Nations. Talk about humanity and its future, explanations of the dangers threatening it and lengthy discussions of the damage inflicted on nature will all remain meaningless unless it is coupled with practical, responsible steps by all the countries attending this Conference.

A new world, devoid of injustice and poverty, a world where dignity is achieved for all human beings, regardless of colour, race and creed cannot be established in the shadow of the current power relations, be they military, economic or political.

Human solidarity, cooperation and mutual collaboration to protect man and everything that enables him to live and survive, away from aggression, exploitation, the use of force or the threat of force - this is what would lead us to the world we hope for and our people wish to see. In the light of its perception and vision of the immense dangers that threaten man as a result of the current changes in nature, our Conference is called upon to adopt the measures and recommendations necessary to face these dangers.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Janez Drnovsek, President of the
Government of the Republic of Slovenia

It is a great honour for me to address this important meeting on behalf of the Republic of Slovenia, one of the newest members of the United Nations. Allow me to express our thanks to the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the warm hospitality and perfect organization of the Conference. The conclusions of this Conference will hopefully exert a profound influence on the future of many generations of people and life on Earth. On this occasion, allow me also to express my sincere best wishes for further successful development of the big and wonderful country of Brazil and its people.

The Republic of Slovenia enters international relations as a new member, as a State which desires and is prepared, to the best of its abilities, to contribute to the settlement of our common issues and expectations. Our cooperation at this Conference is a result of the deep concern of all inhabitants of Slovenia to join you in the common effort to perform all of that which none of us on this planet can do by ourselves. I believe that, in spite of all the problems and various opinions expressed in the discussion and the different possible ways to go, we are heading in the right direction. We have gathered here and are discussing these issues, and this is the right thing to do. The Republic of Slovenia therefore greatly appreciates the efforts which the United Nations has so persistently made in preparing this joint project, but we now wish to be actively involved in discussion and decision-making.

Slovenia is situated in Europe, between the Alps and the Adriatic Sea. Its position in the southern part of Central Europe makes it a typical country of transit since it lies at the crossroads of various links between the north and south and between the west and east of the continent. The openness of Slovenia offers good opportunities for international connections but at the same time exposes this area to all kinds of ecological influences, be they from our country to our neighbours or from them to us. We have therefore been forced to cope with various problems regarding environmental protection and have been building on three foundations: first, the awareness of people who have at their disposal a relatively small space, which should therefore be taken care of; second, diverse legal instruments, contemporary standards and appropriate environmental technology, which is extremely costly and is not always affordable; third, international connections regarding ecological issues - in particular, the protection and use of air, water and forests.

We are well aware that environmental protection is not an easy task and that we cannot expect it to be easier in the future. Our own efforts, however, including the transition to parliamentary democracy and a free market economy, as well as numerous bilateral and regional ecological programmes, have enabled us to move forward. This will become even more important for us because we are entering into the European integration process. Our modest experience and our expectations impose on us a measure of responsibility at this important Conference, and of course we expect similar stands and actions from other, bigger and richer countries.

After all the efforts made and results achieved, we have to be very sensitive and responsive to any set-back in the forthcoming demanding and expensive settlement of the numerous issues regarding preservation of life - in the efforts of millions of common people, of experts working in various organizations and movements, of the mass media in individual countries and, above all, of United Nations organizations and this Conference.

In the broader area which I come from, in the middle and southern parts of former Yugoslavia, war and violence are raging, destroying lives. In the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a Member of the United Nations, people are being killed every day, including women and children. Those who escape join the streams of refugees. The wounded cannot be helped, since even international humanitarian assistance cannot reach them. Month after month the air is being polluted, numerous towns are being engulfed in the smoke of fires, shells and bombs. Rich soil is being devastated, vast areas are

mined. Warships are changing the beautiful Adriatic Sea into a war zone. Cultural and religious monuments and buildings are being devastated.

Allow me, therefore, to make an appeal at this Conference to end the war in the Balkans and to stop those who destroy - an appeal for the protection of life, fields, forests, air, the sea, homes and monuments and, of course, people and nations, and their independent States. Otherwise, one of the biggest ecological disasters could occur, especially if some of the large chemical factories in Bosnia were destroyed. It is imperative to stop the violence so that humanitarian organizations can gain access and to stop the military machine which is destroying nature and preventing people from living in peace and taking care of themselves and their environment. Only by eliminating violence will we be able to implement the demanding tasks we are now taking on in Brazil.

Let me conclude. The international community, all of us included, has come a long way in arriving at this meeting in Rio de Janeiro. It is high time. The Republic of Slovenia accepts our joint decisions and will act accordingly. We will continue to work together with other members of the international community to implement and further develop the goals set. We are counting on world development, in which we are individually but also jointly responsible. The road to the agreement made at this Conference was a long and difficult one. We are well aware that the implementation of our decisions will not be easier. The Conference, however, is the most important and encouraging point on the pathway to the future and, therefore, our thanks go once again to the organizations of the United Nations and to the Federative Republic of Brazil.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Tamirat Layne,
Prime Minister of Ethiopia

Mr. Chairman, first of all, I wish to express my warm congratulations to you on your unanimous election to preside over this historic Conference which is of world-wide significance. I am fully confident that under your wise guidance the Summit will be crowned with success, and I wish to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation in the discharge of your heavy responsibilities.

I would also like to express deep appreciation to the people and Government of Brazil for their warm and generous hospitality and for their excellent preparations to ensure the success of the Earth Summit in this charming and alluring city of Rio de Janeiro.

The most important challenges to our global environment require an all-out effort and the wisdom of the human race irrespective of national boundaries or of regional, cultural and historical differences. Therefore, I wish to express, on behalf of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia and myself, deep respect to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development for painstakingly organizing this important Conference, where principles, convictions and action programmes to tackle the challenges facing us are to be agreed upon. I would also like to acknowledge with appreciation all those who have contributed towards this epoch-making Conference, which

will be a starting-point in formulating new global partnerships leading into the twenty-first century.

We wish to view the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development as a success not only because consensus has been reached on some of the substantive issues, among which the current signing of the Biodiversity and the Climate Change Conventions are the highpoints, but also because the entire process leading to Rio can in no way be described as a failure. A tremendous amount of staff time, financial resources, and intellectual and bureaucratic energy were put into the two-year preparatory process. As a consequence, environmentally sound sustainable development is now at the centre of the agenda, where such traditional issues as finance, institutional mechanisms, climate change, biodiversity and others, figure prominently. What has clearly emerged is that no policy of economic development can be implemented without first considering its sustainability. This has now been legitimized. The success of the Conference, however, will depend on the faith and trust that would be established between developed and developing countries, leading to a true global partnership on the protocols and projects that link environment with economic development.

The two inextricably linked issues - environment and development - are global and universal. This omnipresent fact is a constant reminder of our interdependence, common destiny and common future. It then follows that the various critical problems affecting our global environment - greenhouse gases and climate change, depletion of the ozone layer, toxic waste disposal, biodiversity and biotechnology, atmospheric pollution, forestry, desertification, soil and water conservation in an environment of pervasive poverty - represent serious threats to our world, aptly referred to as Spaceship Earth. These issues cannot be addressed by isolated efforts of individual countries, no matter how Herculean such efforts may be. This is one of the major tasks that this Summit is called upon to accomplish.

We in Ethiopia have the utmost determination to contribute our share to the protection of the global environment. Accordingly, we intend to be parties to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol, as well as the Basel and Bamako Conventions as soon as the already initiated procedural details are completed.

To briefly highlight the scenario, the legacy left to the Transitional Government is a country devastated by three decades of war, where ill-conceived economic policy and inconceivable abuse of human rights prevailed. The responsibility assumed by the Transitional Government was not only to bring the 30-year war to an end and avoid the feared total disintegration of the country, but also to institute democracy and guarantee peace in order to usher in economic recovery and development.

The affirmation of the rights of self-determination of nationalities has laid down the foundation for harmonious relationships among the peoples of Ethiopia on the basis of full equality. To this end, the charter, adopted by over two dozen political organizations in a national conference held in July 1991, guarantees full democratic rights and is the supreme law of the land during the transitional period. The process of democratization and self-rule has been further strengthened through recently completed local elections. Elections at the regional level will commence soon in the presence

of international observers, including the United Nations. Equally, it became imperative to have a complete overhaul of the economy with the intention of bringing it out of the strait-jacket of State monopoly. The new economic policy is therefore designed to encourage individual initiatives and the participation of the private sector, domestic as well as foreign.

The issue of development, most particularly, the economic, social and financial problems of developing countries, is global. Because our interdependence is all-encompassing, they seek global solutions. Therefore, the heavy debt burden of such States, in which Ethiopia is included, and the increasing poverty of their people can hardly be seen as problems that can be effectively addressed without the requisite genuine international cooperation in which democratic Governments can play significant roles. Such Governments, committed to the improvement in the quality of life of their people, wish to ensure security and self-sufficiency in food in an atmosphere of debt cancellation. This is a focal issue for Ethiopia. Hence, technical, financial and material support are needed for sustained economic development.

We are, at the same time, fully cognizant of the fact that all responsibility for change can no longer rest with Governments; that people, as the subject and not the object of change, are decisive. We thus firmly believe that society, through participatory development, has a leading role, not just a shared role, to play. Therefore, we do not think of the two as separate and distinct. This is more true because with peace and democracy being ushered into Ethiopia, there are now high hopes and a belief in the promises of sustainable economic and social development. We also recognize that non-governmental organizations have complemented and enriched, and even at times reached further and faster than, decisions taken by the past regime. We hope that the expected involvement of such groups continues and is not paradoxically abated with out commitment to peace, democracy, economic reconstruction and development. This becomes significant because we face the prospect of an impending drought next year, which constitutes one of the immediate stumbling-blocks that hinder us from transcending the limits to our development.

We wish to declare that we are unequivocally committed to reverence for the environmental imperative, which we do not intend to water down by political pressures devoid of rational and realistic considerations. A contrary course will only lead to despair, not hope, in a scenario where people are not only hungry when they are born and hungry when they die, but also hungry before they are born. Such an alternative means failing the Ethiopian peoples and posterity.

In this commitment, we believe that we do not stand alone on the threshold of the open future - a future which we wish to approach with a forward look and a sense of dedication to a just cause. This is in juxtaposition to the defunct Fascist military regime, which was more famous for the breach of human rights and wanton abuse of the environment than for its performance. This we are determined to change.

In our quest for sustainable development, we do recognize that the behaviour of people does not necessarily change because legislation is passed on environmental protection and conservation. This means that innovative and sustained results can be achieved only if the community accepts new ideas

through a change of behaviour in an environment where better communication channels exist within communities, and in an atmosphere where the agents of change would be more credible and trusted. This is the approach we wish to follow in building the new Ethiopia.

In this quest, we believe that the world community will assist us in the implementation of our plans in accordance with the concept of environmentally sound sustainable development, such that we will not be left prisoners of these concepts. We are, therefore, of the strong conviction that the Conference, and hence the Rio Declaration, will bring changes in the inexorable decay of the Ethiopian ecosystem, where the abuse and disregard of the environment have brought the crisis to ominous dimensions economically, socially and ecologically.

In general, we need to surmount the decline in food and cash crop production, which has been paralleled by the poverty crisis. In contrast, exports have fallen in value while the cost of imports, including direly needed agricultural inputs, has risen sharply. This has led to the crippling burden of the debt crisis, which obviously jeopardizes all conventional development efforts, not to mention combating the environmental crisis. Yet the complexities involved in attaining sound sustainable development could be monumental in a situation where the environmental crisis overshadows all other crises. There is, then, the need for immediate and new and additional funds for capacity-building and technology transfer and for programmes and projects that are ready for implementation.

Desertification, drought, diminishing biodiversity, and possible extinction of some species are not idle concerns in a country where persistent environmental degradation continues to take its inexorable toll. The country is endowed with numerous lakes and rivers which have remained virtually untapped for centuries in a scenario where the majority of Ethiopian farmers are engaged in a desperate struggle for survival under highly unpredictable rainfall regimes.

The population spiral juxtaposed with economic underdevelopment is equally a major threat to environmentally sound sustained development. Consequently, farmers are up against the limits of cultivation, which has led to the use of marginal lands for subsistence agricultural production. This, coupled with the use of wood for fuel, has accelerated the rate of deforestation. Such deforested areas in fragile ecosystems do not sustain production but rather promote soil degradation and deforestation. Consequently, the highlands are exposed to severe erosion, which further accelerates desertification and drought.

As a consequence, national and international efforts need to be focused on finding alternative sources of energy. Equally, energy-efficient devices need to be developed to combat desertification arising from heavy dependence on fuelwood. It would also enhance environment protection and accelerate the rate of development if the many rivers in the country were harnessed for generating hydroelectricity as an alternate source of energy, as well as for combating desertification. This, among other things, calls for catchment management and watershed development directed towards prolonging the life expectancy of dams. Therefore, afforestation and reforestation programmes become imperative. Thus, we need to design and implement projects for

survival. Any delay in building an order which can resolve our predicament is perilous. Therefore, it is necessary to build the scientific, social and political forces that reinforce our decision not only to survive but to prosper.

We need not emphasize that Ethiopia has been a country which was not only adversely affected by political misrule but also by natural disasters associated with recurrent drought. The impact has been especially devastating to our peasant and pastoralist communities, which constitute the overwhelming majority of our productive population. This means that the regeneration of the Ethiopian society is heavily dependent on the restoration of the productive capacity of our peasant population. This must be addressed through, among other things, the initiation and implementation of programmes to optimize the use of water resources in areas best suited for irrigation. Therefore, the implementation of Agenda 21 is a prerequisite for such an undertaking through concessional and preferential financing, which is an essential investment in global environment security.

In Ethiopia, we were surrounded by so much nature that its beauty and immensity was overwhelming. Tragically, only 3 per cent of what was once 60 per cent of the country is now forested. We realize that the damage in the past was done by those who were uninitiated and not fully conscious of the adverse effects that could result from the abuse unleashed on nature. We now know the undesirable impacts of such misuse. Hence, we are determined not to let this opportunity escape us lest we condemn the Ethiopian people to untold miseries, which have not been heralded hitherto. Yet the issues surrounding forests are still contentious to the extent that the sovereignty of States is debated. In trying to revitalize our development without impinging on the national rights of others, we are committed to the management and development of forest resources that fulfil environmental needs.

The conservation and protection of our natural forests, which are the habitat of numerous species, are also an indication of our commitment to the preservation of these endangered species as world heritage. We thus need to map out a future course of action pertaining to forestry and related issues that would ensure a constructive partnership that permits conservation and sustainable utilization. Thus, as opposed to the clear tendencies of some developed countries that are not prepared to share the fruits of biotechnology with countries that possess biodiversity, we believe that the issues of biodiversity and biotechnology must be linked in a spirit of partnership and equity. We therefore endorse the position of the Group of 77 on this and related issues.

We are now signatory to the Climate Change and Biodiversity Conventions. The question of desertification is a fundamental burning issue not only to Ethiopia but to many within the region and elsewhere. We firmly believe that there is the need for a convention on desertification to give the issue the attention it rightfully deserves. With the right setting, then, we believe that the future development of Ethiopia will be less difficult or less cumbersome through the process of peace and democracy where the dynamism and creative capacity of the people can be unleashed with a vengeance not only to heal the wounds of 30 years of war but to obliterate the scars left on nature, and hence the environment. Having gone through the ordeal of overthrowing an oppressive regime, we fully realize that this exaltation of peace and

democracy must be carefully nurtured, such that the assistance from the world community will bring about the long-dreamt of fulfilment of bounty rather than foster the mere absence of conflict.

Among the issues that highlight the closer relationship between environment and development is the need to protect the genetic diversity of our global environment. In this regard, because of their genetic wealth, countries such as Ethiopia can have a unique role to play in protecting and maintaining the genetic diversity of our globe. However, the imperatives of survival in subsistence economies, as well as rapid population growth, which have entailed environmental destruction associated with excessive land clearance and with devastating overgrazing, constitute a threat to these genetic resources. Moreover, the lack of biotechnological capability of countries such as Ethiopia has left them unable to draw benefits from this natural endowment, while others who have such a capability have accrued great benefits from our genetic wealth. This state of affairs needs to be addressed.

Although present treaties deal with some elements of biodiversity, they fall short of comprehensive conservation of genetic resources. Nor do they cover related issues of use, ownership, funding and the transfer of technology developed from biological resources. Therefore, global guidelines on the world's "genetic library" are sorely needed with prospects of a healthy and conducive atmosphere which would not create a dichotomy, hence polarization of the "species poor" developed North versus the "species rich" developing South. While the Biodiversity Convention is fundamental to us, the products return to developing countries at high cost, though in situ conservation is undertaken in the developing countries, including Ethiopia. As a consequence, issues pertaining to intellectual rights and farmers' rights seem to be at loggerheads with patents and hence the control of this technology.

In general, questions on the equitable utilization of natural resources, including international rivers, and generous financial assistance to developing countries to help them effectively address the problems of poverty and their adverse consequences are prerequisites for devising a meaningful and common approach to protecting our global environment.

We now recognize that no generation has the right to squander the heritage of future generations. As a consequence, we need to have the sagacity to explore and make choices among the many alternatives, fully realizing that we must take the consequences for having made the specific choice. Needless to say, we are determined to do this without political timidity. In reconciling the imperative duty of maintaining a healthy environment that permits sustainable development geared towards equity and improvement in the quality of life, we are willing to hold hands with all concerned in our quest for progress.

This quest for progress lies in our determination to look forward as much as an uncertain world permits us. But we are fully conscious of the grim prospect that unless we come to terms with nature, it may appear as though we subscribe to what could be the "we will sink together when the boat sinks" syndrome. We therefore need to realize that we are in this together - both the developed and the developing world - and we must seize the moment!

To face the immense challenges of safeguarding the environment and ensuring development for all, this Conference affords us a unique opportunity to devise ways and means to effectively address these challenges. We thus attach great importance to the follow-up to Rio. In this regard, we support the establishment within the United Nations General Assembly of a high-level commission on sustainable development with a clear mandate, including accountability and a definite time-framed work programme. Finally, we wish to assure you that we are confident that this Summit will arrive at a genuine consensus on a unified approach to protecting the integrity of our global environment and on ways of seeking durable solutions to the problems of development.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Carlos Morales Troncoso,
Vice-President of the Dominican Republic

We are here at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the name and on behalf of the Government of the Dominican Republic, headed by President Joaquín Balaguer. We have been given the task of explaining to this plenary meeting some of the thoughts, concerns and perceptions of the Dominican Government with respect to the environment and global development, the subject of this Summit.

The Dominican Republic believes that humankind is witnessing dramatic environmental degradation world wide, as evidenced by such phenomena as climate change, global warming and the destruction and/or depletion of the ozone layer, with their regrettable consequences for human health, agriculture, biodiversity and human development.

It believes that concern for a healthy planet is no more than the expression of a greater concern for humankind. That is why we must attend to the problems, needs and aspirations of human beings and why we must pool our efforts to better their lot, so that they can recover the dignity that is theirs by nature. In today's world, broad sectors of our populations are experiencing tremendous, growing poverty, malnutrition and marginalization.

The Dominican Government believes that all peoples have the right to sustainable development and that achieving such development requires not only good intentions but also a firm political will, acting on the basis of an objective analysis of the situation embodied in a realistic, practical plan of action.

It is also aware that vast resources are required to accomplish the tasks before us and that, while these resources should be supplied by one and all, not every country has the same capabilities, much less the same responsibilities, for the deterioration of the environment.

The Dominican Government believes that our course of action should lead us to seek practical, viable alternative solutions that, while tailored to the circumstances of each country, will always be directed towards narrowing the social gap created by marginalization and poverty.

It is aware that these objectives can be achieved only by means of a concerted plan of action based on a set of principles shared by the entire international community, principles that the Dominican Republic is prepared not only to support but also to incorporate into its domestic and foreign policies.

Lastly, we wish to express our Government's readiness, its attitude of cooperation and its determination to contribute through concrete action to improving the global quality of life.

In short, we have come to Rio convinced of the relevance and urgency of this international meeting. With every day that passes, the Earth, our home, is in increasing danger. Each day, our population grows larger while our forests and woods grow smaller, our rivers more polluted and our atmosphere thinner. Our non-renewable resources are running out and we are not doing what we should to ensure the sustainable use of those that can be renewed.

It is no longer possible to disavow the harsh reality before us. We cannot exceed the "load capacity", in other words, the possibilities of the Earth. That would be denying people their future, which is something we cannot do.

This Earth Summit is the outcome of the many voices of warning and alarm, and of the reports, plans of action and proposed agendas and strategies that have circulated in the past 20 years. The results of multidisciplinary scientific studies by the most eminent, highly qualified researchers coincide in confirming the diagnoses of our environmental ills. It has taken an enormous effort of work, cooperation, negotiation and consultation to bring this meeting about.

We must recognize that the developed nations have come here with different opinions. And with our limitations and deficiencies, we developing countries have needs so pressing that the question of the environment is not one of quality of life but of survival.

Throughout the world, there has been a proliferation of non-governmental organizations whose purpose it is to arouse environmental awareness. They have done so by means of a Herculean labour of sensitization, through education, research, reporting, protest and political action. Some 12,000 such organizations are represented here. This means that the nature and magnitude of the problems are such that the responsibility for dealing with them does not rest solely with the ruling élites, which are often the prisoners of political interests and commitments that render them indifferent or, at the very least, impair their ability to set and implement policies.

The problem of how to preserve the environment without paralysing development concerns us all. However, the issue of population growth versus development and environment is a complex one. In many countries where the vast majority of the population is Catholic, this issue must be analysed and addressed with care. We must avoid a situation in which population reduction programmes directed and financed by the developed nations of the North readily become substitutes for justice and development in the developing nations. To echo John Paul II, the less densely populated nations of the North are directly and indirectly responsible for most abuses of the global environment.

Society must make a sustained commitment. For those who have plenty, the era of waste is drawing to a close, which is why environmental education is so important. For the developing world, what is needed is additional resources and technology transfers. Only when they have access to environmentally sound technologies will our countries be able to participate fully in global environmental cooperation.

The developed world achieved economic growth by exploiting vast environmental resources that were not preserved. Now, we countries of the so-called third world are being asked to preserve what we have. But let us be frank: this request has an inevitable economic cost. Latin America, for example, will not be able to stop exploiting its natural resources in order to preserve such lungs of the planet as Amazonia if rapid alternatives are not provided for our impoverished masses. We cannot ignore the cost of this if we want to control deforestation effectively. Let no one be fooled.

The Dominican Republic is a country occupying two thirds of the island of Hispaniola, in the centre of the Caribbean. Exactly 500 years ago, Santo Domingo became the entry point for Western culture into the New World. It was there that the conquest and colonization of America began. No matter how one views that event, it cannot be denied that it changed the course of history.

From the environmental standpoint, the Dominican Republic has critical problems that, increasingly, require not only decisive intervention by the Government and different national sectors but also international cooperation and solidarity.

To give a general idea of the country's situation, I shall cite a few of the most obvious signs of our environmental crisis: deforestation, soil erosion, loss of productivity of agricultural land, changes in the system of rivers and streams, water pollution and coastal degradation. Many factors contribute to this process of overuse and deterioration of resources, from the felling of trees and the misuse of water and soil to the dumping of untreated wastes and the deliberate destruction or modification of ecosystems such as mangrove swamps, lagoons and beaches.

The Dominican Government has made achieving a healthy environment a priority. It has established institutions and laws that regulate industrial activity and set requirements and standards for the various pollution-generating activities.

The case of the Dominican Republic is analysed in detail in a rigorous study, the results of which are contained in the national report presented and discussed by our delegation in the course of this Conference. Now is not the time to go into it in greater depth.

We should point out, however, that our situation is complicated by the fact that we share the island with Haiti, a very needy country that is beset by extreme poverty and ecological disaster. Because of our proximity, we need to explore possibilities for carrying out joint projects that benefit both our countries, especially our ecosystems. This has been accomplished in the agricultural development projects in the central basin of the Artibonito River, in the central frontier region.

The Dominican Republic is a small country and a poor one, but we have the dignity, understanding and courage to face the uncertain future that apparently awaits us. We Dominicans, people and Government alike, have the strength to express our opinion, humbly but vigorously, and to speak out forcefully. We have taken measures and implemented solutions to preserve the environment and are continuing to do so, even though much will always remain to be done.

We are prepared to join in a global alliance to ensure a healthy human community on a healthy planet, in which everyone, absolutely everyone, will work together, for we are convinced that poverty and marginalization are the main affront to human dignity.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Roberto Martinez Lozano,
Vice-President of the Republic of Honduras

On behalf of the President of the Republic of Honduras, Mr. Rafael Leonardo Callejas, we should like to extend our warmest greetings to all the participants in this historic world Conference. Our special greetings go to His Excellency the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil and to the noble, hard-working people of Brazil.

We are rapidly approaching the dawn of a new millennium, a millennium fraught with uncertainty yet brimming with hope because we are finally grasping the need to outlaw fratricidal struggles and wars of conquest as an absolute prerequisite for bolstering peace and guaranteeing the well-being of our nations. In the area of environmental management, there are neither borders that separate nor intrigues that divide; all the peoples of the world are one nation. Organized society, businessmen, workers, peasants, intellectuals, politicians, religions and races must all participate actively in the vital struggle to improve the environment. Only when the whole of society is involved in the process of global consultations will we be able to create a proper environment as an expression of our solidarity with present and future generations.

For the past few years, Honduras has been waging an unrelenting struggle to achieve a firm and lasting peace in all the countries of Central America and to consolidate democracy. Now that we are on the right course towards our cherished objectives, we feel better prepared to confront poverty and underdevelopment and to lay down solid foundations for an economic system that recognizes social justice, freedom and democracy as fundamental values. Accordingly, we welcomed with enthusiasm the initiatives arising from the preparatory work for this Conference and have managed, as a result of the stimulus provided by the Conference, to carry out a number of tasks that indicate that our country has begun to deal systematically with priority issues related to the environment. We also realize that the process of degradation of all our natural resources, already evident in the shortage of water for human consumption, the rapid disappearance of forests, the change in rainfall patterns and the erosion of farm land, among other phenomena, must be a constant, fundamental concern of all sectors of Honduran society for the remaining years of this century. In the short term, we will focus on the implementation of three strategic projects: working out a consensus that will enable us to reconcile political, economic and social interests in order to

tackle the contradictions between the current use made of natural resources and their sustainable development; establishing an institutional framework and the necessary legal instruments to consolidate the action taken, which must begin in order to coordinate and guide public and private efforts; and immediately developing an educational action plan, the implementation of which will foster an environmentally sensitive mentality and encourage a positive attitude among the general public towards the sustainable use of natural resources.

Now that freedom walks the streets of Prague, now that perestroika and glasnost are steadily gaining ground in Moscow, now that the Berlin Wall has come down, now that few dictatorships remain in the world, now that democracy is making headway and proving to be the best political alternative for peoples, let the voice of the poor countries be heard throughout the four corners of the Earth. We poor countries want progress too; we too want to take vigorous action within the framework of a society increasingly invigorated by rapid technological change; we too yearn finally to achieve democracy, which spells happiness for all. What we do today for flora and fauna and for our natural resources will usher in a splendid future for the whole of humankind.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister
of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and Chairman of the
Group of 77

Your Excellency Mr. Fernando Collor, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, in offering you my sincere congratulations, allow me to express my profound gratitude for the gracious hospitality, for the warmth of the reception and for the superb arrangements made for this historic Conference in this enchanting city. Your generosity has deeply moved me and my delegation.

It is a singular privilege and honour for me to address this august assembly on behalf of the Group of 77. I do so with a deep sense of humility, responsibility and hope. I would like to express my profound gratitude to my colleagues for the support and cooperation rendered to Pakistan and the confidence reposed in my country.

Permit me to quote two verses from the Holy Qur'an:

Disorder and destruction have appeared on earth and in the oceans due to what the hands of man have done. (Al-Qur'an, xxx:41)

and

Do good as God has been good to you, and seek not disorder and destruction on earth. (Al-Qur'an, xxiii:77)

At no moment in history has mankind faced such a sombre and definitive choice as today. In the march of civilization, many difficult and seemingly intractable problems have yielded before human ingenuity and collective resolve. We have addressed ourselves successfully to the issues of war and peace, to the threat of nuclear destruction, to the scourge of famine and

natural disasters, to the elimination of chemical and biological weapons, to deprivation and aggression.

But, today, we gather to look beyond tomorrow - to arrest and reverse the insidious decline in Earth's environment which, if allowed to continue unchecked, will erode, week after week, month after month, year after year, nature's equilibrium which has been preserved since creation. It is a daunting challenge that all nations, big or small, rich or poor, must face to safeguard the interest of posterity. This Conference cannot, therefore, brook failure. For the sake of the future of mankind and for the preservation of our environment, we must jointly adopt a consummate plan of action that is based on pragmatism and realizable objectives, mutual adjustment and compromise.

As Chairman of the Group of 77, I address this gathering in a spirit that transcends group or parochial interests. As the sea rises, inch by inch, around the island States, as gaps widen, day by day, in the ozone layer, as our air and waters pollute week after week, we must overcome our differences and formulate a common approach to saving our planet.

We have come a long way since the Stockholm Conference in 1972 towards focusing man's consciousness on the grave dangers to our environment. This Summit, the largest gathering ever of world leaders, bears testimony to this watershed in our history.

The fundamental cause of the present economic and environmental crisis must be viewed in the context of an unjust world economic order that has contributed to gross imbalances between North and South. If we look back on the 1980s - the decade lost for development - we see a grim panorama that encompasses:

Deteriorating terms of trade for commodity and raw material exports;

Heavy debt-servicing and repayment burdens;

Trade barriers and protectionism;

Budgetary austerity;

Wage restraints and monetary discipline;

Net negative flow of resources;

Substitution of export crops for subsistence-food crops in face of persistent trade deficits;

Exorbitant international prices of machinery and technology imported for modernization.

Is it fair to expect that countries preoccupied with such bleak economic scenarios can give appropriate attention to their problems of the environment?

Agenda 21 recognizes this basic linkage between environment and development. It is framed to bring about a more equitable distribution of resources at both the global and national levels. Agenda 21 is not meant to be seen simply as a list of demands by developing countries, but rather as a navigational chart designed to take us all from our present hazardous state into an economic and environmental situation which is both equitable and sound. The organic linkage between environment and development must reflect itself in all aspects and decisions emanating from the Rio Conference. Moreover, the era of sustainable development must not create new conditionalities for developing countries, which must not be denied the right to choose their own growth strategies.

The success of these growth strategies would depend on the transfer of environmentally sound technology to developing countries that do not possess the financial resources to acquire it at market rates. As we resolve to attain the common objectives of this Conference, it is essential that technology transfer be provided to the developing countries on preferential terms. It is our sincere hope that the agreements on this vital issue would be implemented in a spirit of constructive cooperation to enable us in the South to expeditiously achieve the goal of sustainable development.

In the range of issues related to the environment, perhaps the ugliest scar is the abject poverty of over a billion inhabitants of our planet. The pain of their undernourishment, the squalor of their habitat and the degradation of their daily lives is not only a basic environmental hazard but is also a shameful blot on the conscience of the world. This Conference must resolve to arrest and eliminate this menace and let the underprivileged of the world receive the clear message from Rio of a new dawn of hope and progress. The eradication of poverty can only be dealt with by a more equitable distribution of resources, at both the global and national levels, and less wasteful production and consumption patterns in the developed countries.

In this endeavour, developing countries must assume their full share of responsibility in limiting population growth to manageable levels. Although overpopulation is a symptom and not the root cause of poverty, a meaningful effort must be made to control it.

The provision of adequate financial resources is the essential condition for the attainment of the noble objectives that have been agreed upon at this Summit. As stated at the Tokyo Conference and in the Brundtland report, the major share - about 80 per cent - of resource mobilization would devolve upon the South. The Group of 77 stands committed to honouring this pledge. But, for such resource mobilization to be effective, it is vital for developed countries to provide new and additional financial resources on concessional terms and within an agreed time-frame. This regular and committed resource flow would enable the South to commence the process of sustainable development and meet its primary environmental objectives. Without such a commitment from our partners, the expectations from this Conference may prove illusory.

It is important that our anxiety on the question of financing is viewed in its correct perspective. It would be unwise and unfair to interpret this concern in purely monetary terms. We take our obligations seriously. We are committed to the implementation of the provisions of Agenda 21. We are within our right to demand that we be provided with the requisite implements to

enable us to contribute optimally to preserving the environmental integrity of our planet.

The Rio Declaration must shine brightly as a beacon for mankind, pointing the way to the future of our environment. In seeking our common objectives, I recommend that we adopt the following guidelines:

First, let us agree to cooperate collectively to banish the inequality in the international economic order so that developmental and environmental needs of the developing countries are met;

Second, let us environmentalize our development and resolve to eradicate poverty from our planet;

Third, let us resolve to enhance our people's consciousness on the need to reverse the degeneration of our environment;

Fourth, let us forge here in Rio a partnership of trust and confidence so that we can all work together to reconstruct the frayed relationship between the activities of mankind and the prerogatives of nature.

We bow our heads before the Almighty Allah and invoke His help, guidance and blessings in fulfilling the obligations we have assumed at this historic Summit.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Carl Bildt, Prime
Minister of the Kingdom of Sweden

The 1992 Conference on Environment and Development is nearing its end. Years and months of preparatory work are finally producing results.

The world will be asking: What has been achieved? And what remains to be done? And it is our task to give answers.

In my opinion, much has been achieved.

Since the conference in Stockholm 20 years ago, we have come to new insights concerning the possibilities of combining economic growth and environmental concerns as well as the dangers looming ahead for this one precious Earth that we all share.

Two decades ago, there was a tendency to see a contradiction between growth and the environment, and to look with suspicion at new technologies. And there was a corresponding tendency to think that only planned economies could cope with the challenges ahead. But since then we have reached new insights.

We now know that only economic growth can alleviate the poverty that is both a cause and a consequence of environmental degradation, and that free trade among all nations is one of the very best ways to promote that growth.

And we have now seen the environmental horrors that were caused by the planned socialist economic systems of Central and Eastern Europe.

The environmental disasters in these countries would never have been possible had they had open and free societies and open and free economies.

These - the lessons of free society, of free economies and of free trade - are lessons that are now gradually becoming part of the new international environmental consensus that is so well summed up in the concept of sustainable development introduced by my Norwegian colleague Mrs. Brundtland.

Accordingly, we can never separate the quest for a better environment from the effort to secure better development for each and everyone. When all the environmental concerns are taken into account, growth is green, and policies to promote growth are policies bringing us all a greener future.

We are all aware of the policies necessary. An early conclusion to the Uruguay Round would be of the greatest significance. Reforms to make markets more responsive also to environmental concerns are imperative in all our countries. Thus we can also facilitate a shift to production technologies that use fewer inputs and thus conserve natural resources.

During the next half century the population of the world will double in size; 90 per cent of this will occur in the developing countries, and 90 per cent of this in the ever larger and ever more congested cities.

This makes the quest for growth even more important. Reducing poverty is the single most effective way of improving the environment for billions of people throughout the world.

The key policies for growth have already been hinted at. An open society and an open economy are essential. But it is obvious that official development assistance (ODA) has an important part to play as a complement.

In my opinion, it should be a moral duty for all of the countries of the rich world to meet the goal of providing 0.7 per cent of GNP in ODA. Sweden is, and will remain, one of the countries providing not only this, but in addition a very substantial amount, and I can assure you that we are proud of this record of ours.

The financial demands on us all will be substantial in the years ahead. The economic transformation of Eastern Europe and Russia will be most demanding. The reconstruction of the war-torn countries of the Middle East is far from complete. The effect of the severe drought in southern Africa will require additional measures by many of us.

On the other hand, the easing of the military confrontation should provide room for substantial reductions in military spending, including in the developing countries themselves.

This Conference has produced important results. But it would be wrong to see Rio as the end. It is not even the beginning of a long and important process.

On some issues, I would have liked to see this Conference go further. But what has been achieved in the Climate Convention is important enough. We all recognize the risks associated with the emission of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere, and we have all committed ourselves to start implementing on our own or jointly policies to meet the goals of the Convention. The sooner we can start the process of presenting and discussing national plans to this effect the better.

And we must also go forward within the framework of the agreements reached on forestry and on the preservation of biodiversity.

Sweden is ready to make its contribution towards meeting the goals of this Conference. Agenda 21 is an agenda for all of us.

We will stabilize our emissions of carbon dioxide and later on start reducing them. We are doing this, among other things, by a carbon dioxide tax, which will shortly be further increased. We hope that others will be ready to move in the same direction and are encouraged by the deliberations to this effect now under way in the European Community.

We will make further efforts to develop our expertise and capabilities in the field of Earth observation satellites. The knowledge gained by observation from space is crucial to our understanding of the way our ecosystem works. Sweden aims at becoming one of the world leaders in the field of Earth observation for environmental and related purposes.

We will continue our substantial ODA efforts and our work to get other nations to meet the goals set by the United Nations. My Government has effectively increased ODA, since the substantial efforts we are making to help our new democratic neighbours in Europe are now over and above ODA.

We must and we will help in solving some of the extreme problems encountered in the former Soviet area. The safety of the nuclear reactors are of special concern to us, and I can only appeal to other developed nations to share in the efforts now under preparation for dealing with this problem.

My Government has set the development of stronger national, European and global policies in the field of environment as one of its four key objectives during the coming years. We are truly committed to greener policies in order to meet the challenges ahead and live up to the responsibilities we have to the generations coming after us.

This Conference has been historic. It has not achieved everything, but it has achieved something that is far better than nothing, feared by so many.

We have shown our awareness. We have demonstrated our will. We have made it clear that we are ready to act today and to go forward tomorrow.

Statement by His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah,
Amir of the State of Kuwait

Mr. President, let me begin my speech by greeting you and all the participants here, and to express to Your Excellency and to the Government and the friendly people of Brazil our deep gratitude for hosting this important Conference of the United Nations and for the efforts you have been making to achieve our common objectives. I am confident that your wisdom and managerial skills will greatly enhance our pursuit of the universally shared goals.

I should also like to take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, and their staff for their admirable preparatory work.

Having said that, may I now quote for your close attention a couple of verses from the Koran. Allah, our Lord, says:

"There are those whose words in this life might appeal to you as they invoke The Lord as their witness to what they bear in their hearts whereas, in fact, they are cardinal enemies. Once they leave you on their own, they pursue vicious deeds bringing about devastation to natural and human life. God likes not mischievous deeds."

God's words are indeed truthful.

The language translation of those two verses might not in fact fully reflect the awesome significance and undertones of those words originally revealed in Arabic. However, the example of human behaviour outlined therein is intended to warn and precaution us against that ever-present type of human being who has always been and will continue to be present on the planet Earth, for therein lie the tendencies for good deeds as well as vicious actions.

It is indeed heartening for us to see such high-level international participation in this gathering. This is an indication of the importance accorded by the world community as a whole to the two intertwined issues of environment and development. Our ultimate goal is to ensure the existence of a clean and healthy planet for the present and future generations of mankind.

Recognition and understanding of the modern ecological problems are among the most pressing concerns that demand comprehensive and effective international cooperation. In this context, concerted joint efforts have become more imperative now than ever before.

In the sphere of collective work, my country stands ready, as we have always done in the past, to contribute effectively towards the common welfare of mankind and we are willing to join the international community in its common endeavours to fulfil the aspirations of the present generation of mankind to live in a healthy sustainable environment.

Quite recently, Kuwait was the theatre of the greatest ecological catastrophe known in living memory due to the raging blaze of over 700 oil wells in addition to the spill of millions and millions of barrels of oil into our Gulf waters. Only God knows the extent of damage caused to human life in

Kuwait as a result of that ecological holocaust. The natural ecosystem in Kuwait too was not saved from the overwhelming tragic consequences of that crime. A full account of this ecological disaster is documented in official United Nations reports.

My point here, drawing on the lessons learned from horrible and painful first-hand experience, is that natural disasters could be monitored, analysed and confronted with all the energies and know-how available to mankind. But the more serious and dangerous disasters are those that are man-made, especially when man is caught in the grip of such a pernicious and selfish driving force that he would no longer heed the human bonds of brotherhood and partnership under the universal norms of conduct. On this occasion and from this rostrum, I invite the international community to take measures in order to adopt the appropriate legal instruments that make the deliberate destruction of an ecosystem a crime against mankind, the perpetrators of which should be severely punished.

In regard to the other theme of this Conference, namely development, may I recall that Kuwait has made enormous contributions in this area. Our policy here is based on supporting many humanitarian projects in a good number of countries in need of such aid. Perhaps the world still remembers that Kuwait had the privilege of launching a world-wide appeal in the United Nations General Assembly to write-off not only the debt interest but also the debt principal of the least developed countries in the world.

In the same vein, may I also add that the people of Kuwait contribute generously in GNP terms to other nations. In point of fact, the aid given by the people of Kuwait to other peoples is one of the highest in percentage terms.

Kuwait has already signed the Biodiversity Convention. Furthermore, the delegation of Kuwait participated actively in the drafting of the provisions of Agenda 21, especially those chapters relating to combating desertification, protecting the atmosphere, preserving freshwater supplies and protecting the marine environment.

If this Conference aspires to elaborate a programme of action to redress the environmental pollution for many years to come, then we should closely examine the underlying causes of all pollutants, including various types of energy emissions, deforestation, desertification, to name only a few. Third world countries, including Kuwait, should not suffer further depletion of their resources in finding the appropriate solutions for those problems.

The raison d'être as well as the objective of our gathering here is to pool all human resources for the benefit of all mankind. A testimony of this common endeavour is the fact that we meet under the umbrella of the United Nations, the forum of all mankind.

May God bless this united march for the benefit of all peoples.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Sidi Mohamed Ould Boubacar, Prime
Minister of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania

On behalf of the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, H.E. Mr. Maaouya Ould Sid' Ahmed Taya, in my own capacity and on behalf of the delegation accompanying me, I am especially pleased to convey to you my warmest congratulations and to perform the pleasant duty of thanking you personally, as well as the Brazilian people, for the warm hospitality which has been afforded us since our arrival in Brazil, a country which is a cultural crossroads and melting-pot.

My thanks also go to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, and his colleagues for their remarkable efforts, as well as for the quality of the documents.

We have the daunting privilege of being participants in the first great world Summit devoted to safeguarding the environment by and for development.

The challenge is to reconcile humankind and its economic activities with the exigencies of nature and the safeguarding of its biological potential. In other words, our task is to achieve sustainable development, which embodies the imperatives of ecological viability, economic efficiency and social justice.

Depletion of the ozone layer, greenhouse gas emissions, desertification and urban pollution are only the most blatant symptoms of the ecological impasse created by current world-wide patterns of production and consumption, the persistence of poverty and the failure of the developing countries to adapt to the interdependence of the world economy.

Of that Mauritania, which like the other Sahelian countries has been engulfed in drought and ensuing desertification for over two decades, is fully aware.

Further to the strenuous efforts made during that period to promote development and combat the most pernicious effects of desertification, Mauritania has, since 1985, been engaged in a process of structural and political adjustment which adopts and fully establishes the market economy and advocates and works for public participation in the country's economic, social and political life. The recent establishment of democratic institutions and the ambitious programmes to develop human resources and combat poverty are vital mainstays of this process.

Lastly, the specific environment component of that process can be found in our recent integrated, multisectoral programme to combat desertification, which is aimed at regenerating the environment within 20 years, making rational use of production potential, encouraging the settlement of nomadic populations and ensuring the food security of rural populations.

We must recognize that, on issues as crucial and vital for humankind as the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development world wide, we inevitably have a shared responsibility, even if in some respects the burden must be shared to differing degrees.

Our shared responsibility reflects our inescapable interdependence and our common destiny on this Earth as we face the ultimate dangers which threaten the very survival of our species.

Accepting that the burden must be shared to differing degrees takes account of our objectively unequal capacities to contribute but also, and above all, follows from an equitable determination of our respective responsibilities for the present situation.

Because of the size of their industrial base and also their patterns and levels of consumption, the industrialized countries are the cause of most of the factors responsible for environmental degradation, whether the emission of pollutants and the uncontrolled destruction of raw materials or the consequences for the environment of the poverty created by an international economic order that remains inequitable.

The developing countries, in turn, must recognize that they bear a not inconsiderable share of the responsibility for at least some regional and local manifestations of the environmental degradation process. That is true of the increasing and excessive deforestation taking place in certain areas, the poor management of natural resources and economies and the low level of investment and public involvement in basic community infrastructures such as drinking water, education and health.

The industrialized countries, which are better equipped economically and technologically and much better prepared to design and promote the necessary transformations world wide, have a duty and a moral obligation to implement appropriate measures to safeguard the global ecosystem, which is indispensable for sustainable development and the survival of the human race.

Therefore, an innovative and necessarily global, integrated approach should be found and agreed to at the end of our work. It is necessary to:

Grant the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, the supplementary financial resources that are indispensable to stimulate environmentally sound growth and promote significant changes in the world, above all in the developing countries, so as to diversify and broaden their production base and tie their economies more closely to the world market;

Improve and facilitate the transfer of efficient ecotechnologies and the flow of environmental information and ensure the rational management of natural resources;

Integrate education, basic health and the fight against poverty into ecosystem protection strategies, operating from a sustainable development perspective.

At the same time, while stressing the importance of the Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity, we feel that a specific international agreement on combating desertification must be reached as soon as possible in order to increase the relevance of the legal mechanism thus established.

Furthermore, it remains essential that the developing countries should continue to be able to operate within environmental parameters that take due account of their needs and actual potential for development. Similarly, the institutional mechanisms for administering the agreements emanating from this Conference should be designed on a democratic basis and guarantee equal rights to all States.

It is only through a real groundswell of solidarity and true awareness of our inescapable common destiny, as we face the dangers which threaten the survival of our species and witness the sufferings of our fellow creatures, that we will finally turn our backs on the relations which hitherto sanctioned our inequality and fostered our mutual lack of understanding and opt decisively for our one and only salvation - sustainable development on Earth.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kiichi Miyazawa, Prime Minister of Japan

Let me first express my gratitude to the host country Brazil for the opportunity to speak before this distinguished audience.

The world is now at a major turning-point. We are searching for a new international order which values the well-being of each and every person; an order in which human dignity is fully respected by upholding the principles of freedom, democracy and sustainable development. We should aim at constructing a new era in which we all live as global citizens.

It is the most fundamental prerequisite of this "era of global citizenry" that environmental protection and sustainable development be achieved in tandem. The survival of our posterity is at stake; the question is whether we can act globally and now.

The Rio Declaration and other epoch-making agreements that have been reached on the frameworks of international cooperation in the field of the environment are a significant first step in our efforts towards sustainable development.

In the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, all countries, especially developed countries, are called upon to fulfil their commitment faithfully. Japan, following its Action Program to Arrest Global Warming, will aim at stabilizing emissions of CO₂ by the year 2000 at about the 1990 level. The conservation of biological diversity is another important area of international cooperation. On the protection of the ozone layer, Japan will strive to front-load the commitment under the Treaty and the Protocol and accelerate its phase-out of substances that deplete the ozone layer towards elimination in the year 1996. We will endeavour to translate into action the statement of principles on the conservation of forests. Since we have undertaken the greening of our land through nation-wide campaigns, we would like to make use of this experience for the promotion of global greening.

Traditional environmental problems linked with poverty in developing countries also require international cooperation, as called for under the action programme of Agenda 21.

But the process has just begun. What is important is the action that follows.

I am convinced that environment and development are not only compatible but also mutually reinforcing in the long run. In the course of its rapid economic growth after the Second World War, Japan suffered a period of serious pollution, which generated tragic diseases such as Minamata disease caused by mercury poisoning and Yokkaichi asthma resulting from air pollution. It deeply grieved the Japanese people, who for millennia had lived in harmony with the order and rhythm of nature. This prompted the Japanese Government to enforce environmental regulations which are among the strictest in the world. The business community also worked hard on technological and other adjustments. As a result, Japan finally managed to transform itself into an energy- and resource-saving society and dramatically improved its environment. Today, the CO₂ emission of Japan, which produces about 14 per cent of world GNP, is less than 5 per cent and its SO_x emission is only 1 per cent of the world total.

The prosperity Japan has achieved through the utilization of the resources of the Earth makes it incumbent upon Japan to play a leading role in the international efforts for both environment and development.

Japanese socio-economic size alone greatly affects the global environment, and I consider it one of our international responsibilities to create a Japan which is gentle to the Earth. This is an important pillar of my policy to achieve a decent society in which people enjoy true satisfaction. Specifically, we will further promote energy- and resource-saving and continue to work for technological breakthroughs, the benefits of which we hope to share with the rest of the world.

Japan will support the efforts of other countries, especially developing countries, through existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms. Self-help efforts on the part of developing countries are of primary importance to make such support truly effective.

In implementing Agenda 21, a useful role would be played by the International Development Association (IDA). Due consideration should be paid to this function by IDA in the negotiations on the tenth replenishment of its resources.

With regard to the Global Environment Facility (GEF), an agreement has been reached on the continued major role it is to play, after necessary improvements, concerning financial contributions in the field of the global environment. Appropriate funds need to be secured once a mechanism which ensures the effective and efficient use of the funds is established. Japan should consider making a positive contribution to the Facility.

Japan is steadily expanding its official development assistance, striving to make its net disbursement during the five years 1988-1992 exceed US\$ 50 billion. In particular, in the area of environment, Japan announced, at the Arche Summit in 1989, its target of committing around 300 billion yen (US\$ 2.3 billion) of environment-related aid during the three fiscal years 1989-1991. We have exceeded that goal by providing more than 400 billion yen (US\$ 3.1 billion) within that time-frame.

Sharing the ever-growing global awareness of the importance of preserving the world environment, which this conference is doing so much to promote, Japan wishes to contribute to preserving the Earth's forests, waters and atmosphere and to enhancing the capacity of developing countries to tackle environmental problems through the appropriate and well-planned implementation of its aid. To this end, Japan will expand its bilateral and multilateral ODA in the field of the environment to around 900 billion to 1 trillion yen (US\$ 7 to 7.7 billion) during the five-year period starting with fiscal year 1992, which began this April.

Partnership with developing countries is indispensable to the successful implementation of environment-related ODA. Japan will, therefore, do its utmost in the funding, formulating and implementing of effective projects through consultations with developing countries.

In addition to ODA, the private sector has a vital role to play by extending its cooperation in financial support, technology transfer and human resource development. Volunteer efforts through non-governmental organizations are also essential. The Japanese Government highly appreciates these activities and will continue to lend them active support.

Our joint endeavour to protect the global environment has just been launched. The real challenge is how we can translate our political will here in Rio into future actions to save the Earth. However steep the climb may be, we must move forward. Let us tackle this challenge with courage guided by our shared sense of purpose as "global citizens".

Statement by H.E. Mr. Barkat Gourad Hamadou, Prime Minister of
the Republic of Djibouti

First of all, I should like to congratulate the people, the President and the Government of Brazil for having organized this special Summit on environment and development so well by placing modern infrastructures at our disposal. I should also like to congratulate the other officers of the Conference and to wish them every success in their mission. This world Summit, held at the dawn of the third millenium, assumes a special importance for the whole of humankind.

As the representative of a small, semi-desert African country which has very little industry even though it is open to international trade, I should like to thank all those who have lent their efforts to organizing this world Summit. The interest and concern shown by the Republic of Djibouti for this United Nations Conference on Environment and Development are not motivated only by certain problems on the Conference agenda which concern the long-term survival of our planet. What political leader from a region where lack of drinking water alone causes several million deaths annually could legitimately be interested in an average temperature rise of a few tenths of a degree per decade? What political leader who knows that in his region cutting down a stunted shrub is the only chance of survival for some people could be interested primarily in the consequences of the hole discovered in the ozone layer or even of the destruction of the great tropical forests?

On the contrary, if the country I represent welcomes the holding of this world Conference it is because of the hopes aroused by a summit meeting of rich and poor countries working together on the problems of the planet. By working alongside the poorest countries in considering problems related to the long-term survival of the Earth, the countries of the North will come to realize that their future can be assured only if the problems of immediate survival in the countries of the South are solved.

If there is one important result that this world Conference should achieve, it is not that it should decide whether to save the planet first or else the stricken economies of the developing countries. The important thing is that the industrialized countries should recognize that the development of the poor countries is indissociable from their own economic and environmental interests. Thus, by seeking global solutions to their environmental problems, the developed countries will come to realize that it is absolutely essential that they contribute to the development of their partners in the South, the main objective being to guarantee the survival of the planet.

In order to ensure that this Conference, already a consciousness-raising event, is also the beginning of a new North-South relationship, it is important that the rich countries should go an extra step towards acknowledging the major problems of the poor countries, debt being the most serious one. Eliminating the debt burden would really show that environment and development are inseparable; as Indira Gandhi said, poverty is one of the greatest pollutants.

Given the global dimension of environmental problems, the Republic of Djibouti is firmly committed to signing the Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Furthermore, we welcome the progress made by this Conference towards adopting an international convention on combating desertification.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Alberto Fujimori Fujimori,
President of the Republic of Peru

I assume that many of the dignitaries gathered here know my country, but I should like to draw attention to three of Peru's characteristics which I think will be of interest to you in connection with this summit meeting.

First, Peru is one of the largest tropical forest countries in the world, a country with vast ecological resources and one of the greatest sources of biodiversity on Earth, largely as a result of the agricultural practices of its inhabitants over the thousands of years of its history.

Secondly, Peru is not a poor country. My Government inherited a country in a state of collapse, a prey to a variety of ills. Peru is not a poor country, it is a country impoverished as a result of an inefficient and corrupt political system that held sway for decades and that we are now beginning to redress drastically under a political regime of transition whose main objective is the country's genuine democratization and, hence, reconstruction.

It is an impoverished country. That is the only explanation for the fact that, with our vast natural resources, extensive land area and extremely hard-working population, we have not been able to overcome our backwardness.

Thirdly, Peru is the world's largest producer of coca leaf, the main ingredient for cocaine, accounting for 60 per cent of production.

This is how the environment too is being destroyed in my country. Every year, coca cultivation and migrant farming, both brought about by poverty among the rural population, are responsible for the deforestation of between 150,000 and 300,000 hectares of tropical forest. In fact, there are 250,000 farmers who are forced to grow the only crop that has an assured and ever-growing market - coca leaf.

An inefficient and corrupt political system, illegal coca leaf production and the impoverishment of the country have, for decades, created a sequence of events that is causing a critical deterioration of Peru's Amazonian region.

Looking at the harm it does today, we can well imagine the destruction that drug trafficking could cause in the future if it is not wiped out. This is not a problem for the year 2000, it is a problem for 1992.

As President of Peru, I am obviously concerned about the depletion of the ozone layer and environmental degradation in general. But I again draw the attention of the world to the need to protect it from an ecological catastrophe brought about by the cocaine empire. The consumption of cocaine hydrochloride, that terrible drug that wreaks such havoc among young people, also causes soil degradation and destroys river life, for the rivers are the dumping ground of tons of sulphuric acid, hydrochloric acid, kerosene and toluene and all the chemicals needed to transform coca leaf into the poison of innocent minds.

The assistance provided by the consumer countries to combat coca leaf supply must not be regarded as humanitarian assistance to a third world country. This is a seriously misguided approach, perhaps excusable in times past. I consider it necessary to appeal again to the consumer countries to relinquish their passive, indifferent stance and to reverse the failure of world anti-drug policy, which in the case of Peru meant a doubling of the land area under coca cultivation in the 1980s and at the same time, paradoxically, greater poverty among rural Peruvians.

Obviously this costs money, money that the poor countries do not have. What is serious is the price that humankind will ultimately pay if this investment is not made.

Only by eliminating poverty, only by fostering a form of development that provides an alternative to the coca economy, shall we in Peru be successful in combating drug trafficking and prevent the progressive destruction of the environment in which it operates.

In Peru, then, we are waging one of the most crucial battles against international drug trafficking. I shall never tire of repeating that this unequal fight between an impoverished country in the grips of a crisis and an economic force that mobilizes US\$ 100 billion a year will be won only if the

rich consumer countries become aware of this terrible threat to youth, peace, democracy and ecological balance. Sustainable development will be feasible in Peru once this harsh reality is brought into focus and overcome.

The spirit of this Summit is certainly not unconnected with the political climate in which the world has been living for nearly half a decade and which has been characterized by the quest for peace. That quest must also go hand in hand with the quest for a genuinely harmonious relationship between man and nature.

Statement by H.E. Mr. André Kolingba, President of the
Central African Republic

I should like to join in the thanks and congratulations addressed by previous speakers to the Brazilian Government, the Secretary-General and Mr. Maurice Strong, who have spared no effort in bringing together this historic assembly. I view it as a meeting of heads of families who are co-owners of planet Earth.

Without peace, all our dreams of development are only illusions, but without the Earth, what have we to develop? The whole world is watching us. The hopes raised are enormous, and so too would be the disappointment if, through self-interest or lack of understanding, we were unable to meet those expectations. Firm and specific commitments are called for here and now. The fact that our meeting is being held on the South American continent during the year of the quincentenary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus is more symbolic than coincidental.

Human communities established in the world's temperate zones developed on a large scale technologies to harness nature and exploit natural resources. They called the civilization they built on this foundation a civilization of progress. In the tropical zone, matters were both easier and more difficult. It was not necessary to set aside provisions for a cold season when, all year round, people could obtain their subsistence from fishing, gathering and hunting without drawing on nature's capital. Their relationship with nature preserved the metaphysical dimension that exists in the innermost depths of human consciousness.

We have come here today to attempt to normalize the relationship between North and South by answering for the stewardship of the heritage for which each has been responsible. It is not, of course, a question of us as individuals, but of our ancestors and their descendants, something which has very profound meaning for us Africans. We of the South are criticized more or less openly for having failed to use our resources to our advantage to ensure, at the same time as our Northern brothers, the development of our communities. We could well retort that their accumulated wealth was withdrawn from the common capital of the zone under their stewardship, and often from that of the others as well.

In their countries, new generations are becoming aware of this situation and are sounding the alarm. Our first imperative in the South is to solve our peoples' problems of health, poverty, hunger and education. We must succeed

in doing this without endangering the environment we have managed to preserve. This will impose constraints and restrictions on us and it means that our brothers in the North, who built their material strength on overexploitation of natural resources, must now share in our efforts. Such participation cannot take the form of aid granted unilaterally, according to the whim of the rich. We are not asking for the world, far from it, simply for cooperation that respects our dignity.

Although we are materially poor, we are immensely rich in the natural heritage which God entrusted to us and which belongs to humankind everywhere. We do not want to be forced to destroy it to create our development, but the corollary of this requirement of preservation is a disinterested transfer of funding and technology.

The Central African Republic has initiated and founded with four other African States, Mali, Niger, Togo and Chad, an institution called the Inter-African Organization for the Quality of Life. My presence at this Summit is an affirmation of my country's desire to see established, on the eve of the twenty-first century, a lasting balance between environment and development and the kind of international cooperation that will secure the future of all of us, peoples of both North and South.

Faced with the looming ecological threat, the objective convergence of human interests should allow each party to assume its responsibilities. My country, the Central African Republic, has requested and obtained from UNESCO the inclusion of the Saint-Floris National Park in the World Heritage List. The park, at 17,400 square kilometres, is one of the largest in Africa and represents a quite remarkable complete ecosystem. I have taken the initiative of giving this site special status and of setting up the world's first ecological free zone for a 30-year period.

The Central African Republic therefore proposes that the entire international community join it in managing this zone, while maintaining its sovereignty. This innovation will permit the joint drafting, in an international context, of a new legal statute for the preservation and use of a site belonging to all humankind.

Since the zone is unpopulated, such legal experimentation will be possible without affecting the rights of inhabitants. We believe that the time is past for begging the question and that practical advances must be made. We intend to mobilize international public opinion to join us in building this first ecological free zone. Through such concrete action, the Central African Republic wants to make its contribution to the new North-South dialogue, which must be instituted by closely linking the protection of the environment and the imperatives of development.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jaime Paz Zamora, President of the
Republic of Bolivia

There can be no talk of environmental conservation when people have no resources. People are at the very centre of nature and, hence, of the environment. Consequently, environmental conservation is the new name for human development.

It has never been truer that humankind shares a single ecosystem, from which we can naturally infer the principles of interdependence and shared responsibility. Consequently, the phenomena of life and death, wherever they occur, have implications for humankind as a whole.

At the same time, we believe that it is impossible to preserve the environment and foster human development without taking into account the culture of the peoples concerned; in the final analysis, people perceive, deal with and reproduce life in the context of a specific culture.

Humankind must be viewed in its overall context. Just as we are prepared to sign, at this Conference, the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to help preserve the unity in diversity of life, so we must respect what could be called the cultural biodiversity of the planet.

That is why on behalf of Bolivia, a country whose population is largely indigenous, we have, along with other countries, proposed for the Americas that a fund be set up for the development of the indigenous peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean. We have made this proposal because we consider indigenous people to be the natural focal points and protagonists of a genuine policy of sustainable development. We are sure that the proposal to create such a fund, which continues to enjoy the support of international public opinion, will soon become a reality, for it is founded on principle 22 of the Rio Declaration which is now before us.

Much has been said about the need to clean up the planet. I fully endorse this view, but I am convinced that in order to clean up the planet, we must first clear our own heads. Human development and environmental conservation require a new way of thinking, a new way of living and organizing our lives.

In order to change the state of the environment, we must first change ourselves. This means that we must change certain entrenched attitudes towards vital issues. For example, who is going to provide the money to pay for this planetary clean-up? How much money will be needed and on what terms?

We believe that the external financial debt is paralleled by a longstanding ecological debt in which the roles have been reversed. The situation in the second case is the opposite of the first: the developing countries of the South are the creditors and the countries of the industrialized North are the debtors. The financial debt is an acknowledged obligation that is being collected and paid, but the ecological debt has yet to be acknowledged, although some more environmentally aware countries are beginning to honour it in the form of cooperation.

By the same token, when it comes to technological resources, we feel that preserving the environment also entails sharing technologies. We could mention still other examples, such as international trade practices, which are more concerned with protecting markets than with protecting the environment.

We must do everything we can to ensure that the twenty-first century does not catch us by surprise with a spate of violent ecological wars, just as in this century wars were unleashed in the search for hegemony or Lebensraum. Herein lies the importance of this Conference, which has been convened at just the right moment in history. The time and patience we invest in the search for consensus and agreement on this crucial issue will be little compared with the rewards.

I am pleased to see that we are making progress and I hope the tide of events will prove that this Conference was not just a sterile show or just one more exercise in global hypocrisy.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Won-Shik Chung, Prime Minister
of the Republic of Korea

It is indeed a great privilege to share with all of you this most important moment in human history.

Our gathering was compelled by unprecedented environmental imperatives. The environment binds us together. No single nation can save our environment on its own - only collective action on a global scale can.

During the last several decades, the world has been divided into East and West, ideologically, and into North and South, economically. However, the revolutionary changes resulting from the demolition of cold war regimes command us to open up new horizons of cooperation on the basis of a "Global Partnership".

Global environmental degradation threatens the very survival of mankind and, at the same time, offers us a great challenge to transcend division and confrontation.

The sudden demise of the East-West tension has contributed tremendously to the wider application of the market mechanism on a global scale.

However, the competition to maximize national interests has been intensified. Globalism is threatened by regionalism, multilateralism by bilateralism, free trade by protectionism.

Newly emerging strategies for sustainable development should not result in unilateral and unfair advantages or disadvantages to particular interests or countries.

In the world of a true partnership for global sustainability, States should be allowed an equal voice as well as fair sharing of the burden, taking into account historical responsibility and economic capability.

Even though the market mechanism has proved its excellence in the maximization of short-term commercial profit, it needs to be innovatively reoriented to adequately manage the limited resources of our ecosystem.

One area of particular concern is the monopoly of critically important environmentally sound technologies.

Devising a workable modality to promote wider accessibility to environmentally clean technology should be a top priority in the follow-up action programme of Agenda 21 within a market economic framework.

Of equal importance in the formulation of a durable global partnership is the equitable and fair sharing of the burden.

As stipulated in the Rio Declaration, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. Developed countries are expected to play a leading role on the global strategy in view of their historical responsibility and predominant command over financial resources as well as technologies.

I would like to draw your attention to the development experience of my own country.

In the development process in the past, much greater emphasis was placed on quantitative growth than on qualitative growth in the effort to industrialize the nation.

We are now facing considerable environmental deterioration resulting from the pursuit of accelerated development undertaken without due attention to the environment. The Korean experience should serve as a lesson to both the developed and developing countries.

Korea has strengthened environment measures to improve the quality of life and to accommodate international environment standards.

Considering ever-growing concerns for a better environment, the Korean Government proclaimed the National Charter for the Environment in commemoration of Earth Day last week.

In August 1993, Korea will host an International Exposition with the motto "The Challenge of a New Road to Development". It is my firm conviction that the Taejon Expo will provide an opportunity to seek ways to harmonize environment and development.

Despite the considerable impact on industry, Korea acceded to the Montreal Protocol in February this year, joining the international efforts for the protection of the global environment.

However, the expansion of industry and trade, as well as the resultant increase of energy consumption, is essential for rapid economic growth. It is an inevitable development stage already experienced by developed countries.

The special situation of countries like Korea, heavily dependent on external economies, should be duly considered so as not to affect their development potential.

Unlike any other region of the world, north-east Asia is devoid of any institutional mechanism for regional cooperation on environment in spite of the massive industrial activities concentrated in the region.

I propose that the leaders of north-east Asia make joint efforts to establish a regional institution for environmental cooperation.

The proliferation of narrow regional interests should be avoided. We must seek for open regionalism to contribute ultimately to the efficient follow-up of the Conference.

We have a unique ecological reservoir ironically inherited from the cold war. That is the 258 km long and 4 km wide demilitarized zone in the middle of the Korean peninsula.

Devoid of any human habitation over the last 40 years, the demilitarized zone has been transformed into an unusual area, characteristically accommodating temperate biological diversity.

While appreciating the particular concern of the United Nations Environment Programme for conservation of the ecosystem, I propose that a joint survey of the ecosystem in this region be carried out by South and North Korea in close collaboration with the relevant United Nations organizations.

I am pleased to note that the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 provide level ground and an even-handed approach for all of us, whether developed or developing, in pursuit of global sustainability.

Let us hope that we will go down in history as pathbreakers to sustainable development and that Rio de Janeiro will be remembered as the birthplace of a new global partnership based on a spirit of common destiny.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Obed Dlamini, Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of Swaziland

Mr. President, allow me, on behalf of His Majesty, King Mswati III, Her Majesty, The Indlovukazi and the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland, to congratulate you most heartily on your election to the chairmanship of this Conference. May I assure you that my delegation and I will render every support conceivable to enable you to steer this Conference towards its successful conclusion.

Permit me, Mr. President, to express my appreciation and thanks to you personally and to the people of Brazil for allowing this Conference to be held in your beautiful country. The hospitality and all the effort that has gone into the preparation of this Conference have not passed unnoticed by the delegations attending this Conference. I would also like to recognize the invaluable work of the secretariat of the Conference, which has handled its coordinating role in a very professional manner. Without the commitment and concerted effort of the secretariat during the preparatory phases, we would not be meeting here today.

It is appropriate and opportune that this important United Nations Conference on Environment and Development is being held at this crucial stage of international development when the international community is at the cross-roads of a new era of development for the 1990s and beyond.

It is easy to trace the conferences and events that have led us to the Earth Summit, but the real challenges lie in the implementation of strategies towards the attainment of the goals of the Summit and the use of these strategies as a means to change from our current path of development to one that is sustainable and long lasting.

The enlightenment received through the UNCED preparatory process has enabled us all to become more perceptive of the true relationship between environment and development. This perception must bring about a change in established patterns of production and consumption. It must bring about a change in the unsustainable exploitation of natural resources in the name of development. Our Governments must commit themselves to changing their economic, social and cultural patterns.

Coming closer home, Swaziland, like most sub-Saharan countries, is experiencing problems of a high population growth rate, inadequate safe water, poor sanitation, overgrazing, deforestation and soil erosion. All these problems have the potential for disrupting the state of the environment.

We are encouraged to note that the Conference is giving great attention to these environmental problems. My Government is committed to implementing programmes which will be approved at this Summit regarding these important issues. It is my fervent hope that my country will continue to be assisted by our cooperating partners in this endeavour.

I would also like to congratulate UNCED for giving the subject of drought and desertification the priority it deserves. Swaziland, together with the other countries in the Southern African region, is currently experiencing a severe drought never before witnessed in the country's recent history. We need all the assistance we can secure as a matter of urgency to alleviate the ongoing human suffering. In view of the above, we would like to express our appreciation for the consensus that has been reached in this Conference on the need for a global convention on drought and desertification.

We need a new economic order in which the environment and development are in harmony with each other. Such a new economic order is well articulated in Agenda 21. Swaziland recognizes that this new economic order has heavy financial implications. The significance of effectively mobilizing new and additional financial resources for the successful implementation of the decisions of this Summit cannot be overemphasized.

In recognition of the important role that women play in development, the Kingdom of Swaziland has adopted "Women and Development" as the main theme of her fifth UNDP country programme. We are therefore pleased to note that this Summit has accorded the same level of prominence to women in Agenda 21.

I urge every one of us here today to demonstrate political will in earnest towards the protection of our environment. This will must be driven

by a personal commitment to see the attainment of targets and to witness our countries move towards a prosperous common future.

Many of us here today are heads of State or their representatives. However, I would like to appeal to each one of us to deviate from our traditional roles as national leaders when it comes to environmental issues. Instead, let us come together and form a common leadership that will speak with one voice on environmental problems affecting this great planet. Only in this capacity of true global partnership can we act with a common concern for the world and the ecological problems that have caught up with us.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I would like to confirm that the Kingdom of Swaziland fully supports the ideals and goals embraced in Agenda 21. Furthermore, I would like to assure you that my country is fully committed to the implementation of this Agenda. As an indication of our commitment, yesterday I had the honour and privilege of signing the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity on behalf of the Swazi nation.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Felipe Gonzalez, President of the
Government of the Kingdom of Spain

I should like to congratulate the Government of the Republic of Brazil on its efficient organization of this Conference and to thank the Brazilian people for their warm welcome. With its boundless natural wealth and its potential for growth, Brazil is an ideal setting for a meeting of this kind.

Twenty years have passed since the Stockholm Conference aroused global awareness of the environment. Since then, compatibility between environment and development has become central to the problems of our time. The presence here today of so many Heads of Government from all over the world is evidence enough.

At this Conference, we must take responsible decisions in order to safeguard the living conditions, and indeed, the life of future generations.

The problem is not just a problem of the future, however. Already today, poverty is at once the cause and the consequence of environmental degradation in many parts of the world, while in other countries, most environmental problems are a result of the patterns of production and consumption that characterize industrialized societies.

Energy consumption is the biggest source of pollution and three quarters of the world's energy consumption takes place in the industrialized countries. The developing countries cannot be asked to stabilize their low carbon dioxide emissions as long as those who created the problem in building their own prosperity make no decisive contribution to solving it.

The grave problems of which we are becoming aware have generated new attitudes in the developed countries that are perhaps a product of the instinct for conservation but are not always consistent in their implications for our way of life. At the same time, some of these concerns may seem a

luxury to those whose most urgent task is survival, even at the cost, as they well know, of their environment.

This is the case with the loss of plant cover, the first victims of which are the inhabitants of the countries undergoing it. In this connection, we think it is an excellent idea to move towards convening a world conference on forests. Two thirds of the world's genetic resources are to be found in the developing countries and they are the raw material, often obtained free of charge, for a flourishing industry in the developed world. We must defend this heritage and, to that end, must all work together to find solutions that guarantee the preservation of biological diversity.

Standardizing per capita energy consumption would quintuple global energy consumption in the coming years. It would have unsustainable consequences because of the pollution, the greenhouse effect and the waste products it would generate.

Thus, environment and development are closely linked. They are, and will be increasingly, two sides of the same coin, or different names for the same objective.

None of us can hope to solve our environmental problems on our own, nor can we solve them against the interests of everyone else; still less can the most developed countries expect to solve them without working with those who hope to raise their levels of well-being.

There is no point, therefore, in dividing the world into two rival camps or in sheltering behind mutual recriminations, each holding the other solely responsible for environmental degradation and underdevelopment. The problem is a global one and the solution too must be global, based on cooperation and solidarity.

The different worlds that coexist on the planet breathe the same air. Since there is only one atmosphere and it has no frontiers, States acting in isolation cannot be effective in solving our ecological imbalances.

The challenge that faces us is that of using efficiently and equitably resources that are limited, unequally distributed and differently valued. We can take up that challenge now, calmly and decisively, because we fortunately are no longer deadlocked in a confrontation which for half a century provoked sterile conflicts and the stockpiling of costly weapons.

Thanks to the initiative of the United Nations, we statesmen from all over the world have the exceptional opportunity of meeting here in Rio to demand of each other the necessary changes of outlook, in North and South, that will make it possible for us to cooperate on a planet that is no longer divided into blocs.

As I see it, the joint problems of environment and development are reflected today in two fundamental issues: first, the ability of pricing systems to properly reflect the cost and scarcity of resources and, secondly, population growth.

Achieving an effective allocation of resources from the standpoint of sustainable development presupposes two conditions: we must ensure that economic agents bear all the social costs of their activity, and we must assign appropriate value to natural resources in order to prevent their being squandered and to reduce the income and wealth differences between North and South.

Global population will have doubled by the middle of the next century. Reducing population growth is therefore a key element in reconciling development and environmental protection. Otherwise, such problems as food, health, water supply and urban development will be seriously aggravated.

In order to halt this process, we must combat poverty, which is at once the cause and the consequence of the population explosion and is, as Indira Gandhi said 20 years ago, one of the greatest pollutants. This, in turn, demands a cooperative effort to which Spain, which is reaching higher levels of well-being without yet having attained those of other European partners, is ready to contribute actively, not only with financial resources but also with the experience gained from our development process.

We already belong to the industrialized world, but we have specific problems which are in no way common to the geopolitical context in which we find ourselves. The environmental challenges which concern my country most are soil erosion and ensuring a supply of water in quantities and of a quality appropriate to our level of development and the standards set by the European Community.

Meeting those standards with regard to the quality of urban waste water would require an investment of some \$15 billion. Building systems for regulating and storing the water resources that would make it possible to guarantee an ecologically sound rate of flow in our rivers and adequate supplies for urban settlements and production activities would also require substantial investments.

These are also problems faced by many developing countries. An institute for managing water as an economic resource and as an element in environmental conservation is therefore a possible United Nations initiative that my country would support wholeheartedly.

Spain is uniquely placed to confront the challenges of development and environment. This also gives it a better understanding of the problems and efforts of many developing countries.

We have tripled our development assistance in the past 10 years and I want to announce here our intention to triple it again in the course of this decade.

Five hundred years ago, humankind became aware of the real dimensions of the Earth it inhabited. Today we are aware of its limits.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Abdou Diouf, President of the
Republic of Senegal

The stakes of this Conference are tragically high; let no one suppose otherwise! Man is destroying the atmosphere with pollution and suicidal acts and now has the ability, with the weapons he has created, to blow up our Earth, a planet in a galaxy among other galaxies, in a universe among other universes. That is why we must cut through to essentials or fail.

Two fifths of the population of the Earth have less than 4 per cent of its resources. The most fortunate 20 per cent enjoy 82.7 per cent of global annual income. Each year, the countries where most of these 20 per cent live consume three quarters of all products and resources and, in the process, generate nearly two thirds of all air pollution.

That, in a nutshell, is the situation we face today and must work to change.

Worsening poverty, environmental destruction and blocked development are not isolated phenomena but different aspects of the same crisis, as is shown by the process of desertification and the spread of shantytowns, as well as by the grave consequences of changes in North-South economic relations.

Desertification is now known to affect 60 per cent of the world's countries, a sixth of its population and a quarter of all its land. More particularly, 55.4 per cent of the surface of Africa is made up of arid and semi-arid land. During 1984-1985, more than 10 million Africans fled their homes, accounting for two thirds of the world's refugees. Senegal is a Sahelian country and desertification is one of our biggest concerns.

For all these reasons, our continent proposes the drafting and signing of an international convention, modeled on the Lomé Convention between the European countries members of the European Community and those of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, to combat desertification in Africa.

Senegal is placing its bets on solar energy, the clean and renewable energy par excellence. Solar energy is a major asset for winning the battle for development and the environment. It will bring the modern age to our countryside, our villages and our towns; it will enable us to refrigerate and keep fresh medicines and food for humans and animals and will ensure a supply of energy for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises throughout the country, thereby enabling people to stay on their land and avoiding the emergence of mega-cities, which are a source of serious and sometimes uncontrollable pollution. Solar energy will enable people to draw water from wells, to desalinate that water if it is brackish and to provide themselves and animals with the clean drinking water essential to their health and to the prevention of all kinds of diseases. In the nineteenth century, a polluting energy, coal, gave rise to the industrial revolution and in the twentieth century, hydrocarbons drove that revolution onwards, while worsening the pollution of, for instance, air and sea. The twenty-first century must usher in another energy revolution, a non-polluting, renewable one: the solar revolution. I am convinced that it will be brought about by those countries which, like Senegal, have made a determined effort to develop solar energy and

to build a new, solar civilization, with all the technological consequences that that implies.

Forest protection, reforestation wherever possible and the fight to win the water battle, particularly through the Cayor canal project, are some of the actions we are taking to safeguard our environment.

Beyond that, what we expect from this United Nations Conference on Environment and Development are commitments to take action on the basis of a clear understanding that protecting the human environment and meeting human development needs are two sides of the same coin: environment and development are indissociable.

All the provisions of the Convention on Climate Change should be enforced.

I also think we should build an endogenous scientific and technological capacity in the countries of the South by establishing a network of 20 international centres for research and training in high technology and environmental science.

This new policy is intended above all for the millions of young people in big cities, often poorly educated and fascinated by a style of consumption which, although unattainable, tends to condition behaviour and shape environments. Frustration, violence and inner-city disturbances are the direct result.

To restore these young people's confidence in the future, we must first recognize their creativity and their right to be heard. We must give them work by revitalizing the economy and building with them new environments in the cities, neighbourhoods and countryside. We must do so by respecting the traditions of each people even while using modern methods.

In addition, for young people and adults alike, the progressive construction of environments can be a common denominator, beyond entertainment, and it is in the environmental management of neighbourhoods, as in that of villages, that democracy will ultimately take root.

What we should be seeking is a reorientation of all international and national policies, and of the efforts of associations, in terms of the priority fight against poverty and for development, environmental protection and a broad empowerment of youth to face the future.

That, as you well know, will be impossible without a fundamental rethinking of North-South relations.

For instance, we can no longer afford to address development primarily from a monetary and macroeconomic standpoint and without considering the current debt in the context of unequal economic relationships and the ecological debt built up over the centuries.

In that regard, a revised GATT is needed but also, and especially, a GAS (general agreement on solidarity) which would be adjusted periodically and adapted to this new adventure: a humanity shielded from distress on a planet safe from disaster.

The South has, in any case, its own views on the lifestyles and behaviours of the North which imperil the whole planet, particularly through the consequences of the greenhouse effect and acid rain.

In the context of our Conference, my country seeks the dawning of a new age of global partnership which will emphasize economic growth and associate the eradication of poverty with environmental protection.

The right to a quality environment is inseparable from the right to security of our planet Earth, whose survival requires that particular attention be paid to the build-up of weapons capable of apocalyptic destruction.

Respect for human rights is inseparable from respect for the right to development. Respect for the right to development is inseparable from the adoption of market mechanisms that take into account the interdependence of our respective economies. No lasting peace can be attained on Earth as long as there is still a large part of its population living in subhuman conditions.

Rio gives pride of place to environment and development. Rio is the urgent need to combat poverty. Rio is the struggle to save the planet. Rio is also the dawning of the twenty-first century and effectively shared responsibility for overcoming poverty and the threat of environmental disaster. We must act together, act differently, but act quickly.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Stanislav S. Shushkevich, Chairman
of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Belarus

The course of the Conference demonstrates convincingly that we are all experiencing a profound sense of alarm and anxiety over the immediate and long-term fate of our common home, the planet Earth.

My delegation considers that the draft documents of the Conference and the two Conventions we have signed, on climate and biological diversity, meet the fundamental political and economic interests of the Republic of Belarus and of the entire world community as well. Taking advantage of this unique opportunity, we confirm our adherence to the commitments we have assumed and also, since Belarus is one of the successors in law to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, to the conventions and agreements to which the USSR was a party.

I have the honour, at this unique Conference, to represent a young democratic State which has become the coordinating centre of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The Republic of Belarus, situated in the heart of Europe, is not so much newly emerging as being reborn on the political map of the world. We are thinking, in particular, of the thousand-year-old traditions of our State, our ancient legislative acts which, hundreds of years ago, set forth the principles of environmentally sound conduct and ethics in the form of a natural philosophy. Without idealizing the distant past, I would suggest that our forefathers, living as they did in harmony with their natural environment, without casting society into the abyss of ecological calamity and disaster, were more reasonable and rational than we.

Who could have imagined, even 10 years ago, that the system which claimed to carry high the banner of humanistic ideas and to personify the progress of mankind as a whole would produce the apocalypse of the twentieth century, Chernobyl, the largest nuclear disaster of modern times, which, in terms of its consequences, was equivalent to a limited nuclear war in peace time. In order to realize the scale of what took place, I need merely cite a few figures:

The damage sustained by the Republic of Belarus as a consequence of the Chernobyl disaster is estimated at 16 times the budget of the Republic;

One fifth of the territory of Belarus was covered with radioactive ash;

The resettlement of more than 100,000 people from those regions of the Republic with the highest radioactive contamination is in the process of completion.

For several years the leaders of the former Union callously and hypocritically lied to their people and concealed the truth from the entire world; as a result, today, the genetic stock of the Belarusian nation is exposed to a deadly threat. Over the past five years, the incidence of cancer of the thyroid gland among children is said to have increased 22-fold.

Today we are no longer shouting or appealing or turning to the international community. Unfortunately, we have received no timely support through international channels. Our long-suffering people have reached the conclusion that they have been left to the mercy of fate, and we must rely on our own efforts. This cruel but realistic appraisal has forced us to adopt another approach to environmental forecasting, to draw up a national programme of concrete measures to protect environmental security. It consists of the fundamental points set out below.

First, the principle of non-nuclear neutrality should be proclaimed in the Constitution and applied.

Secondly, "clean technology" should be used in the production sphere at the stage of radical economic transformations in moving towards market relations. We take as our starting point the fact that, despite the complexity of the transition period, the establishment of a new economic structure geared to the twenty-first century must be fully in accordance with the highest environmental standards and free from the irrational legacy of the past.

Thirdly, military expenditure should be sharply reduced, on the basis of the principle of reasonable sufficiency and of the radically new national defence doctrine. I should like to make this point especially clear. The fact is that we have inherited from the past the grim legacy of a militarized economy and the burden of huge military expenditures. In the current financial year alone we were compelled to spend for these purposes, and also on the Chernobyl programme, up to one quarter of the national budget. Today, in the territory of Belarus, there are three to three and a half times as many military personnel per 1,000 civilians as the average in the territory of the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Paradoxically, the fact is that

although the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from its territory is proceeding ahead of schedule, Belarus continues to have one of the mightiest nuclear potentials. I say this not out of pride, but because it is a grim and essentially tragic reality which we aim to overcome within the next few years. We intend to make the national army, which was brought under our control in March of this year, several times smaller and to reduce its strength to between 50,000 and 80,000. The demilitarization of all spheres of the Republic's life and the conversion of production will, of course, bring with it a new quality with respect to the environment and will establish more favourable conditions for the civilized, gradual return of Belarus into the community of European nations.

Today, in the largest international forum of modern times, we have become convinced how tremendous and similar are the misfortunes and adversities of many other peoples, how tragic the situation of many of them is. The Belarusian people have always been very sympathetic to and understanding of the suffering of others. Our tragic and blood-stained history has taught us to empathize with and to understand the problems of others no less than our own. Despite the fact that Belarus, like the other countries with transition economies, requires external support, we are prepared to make our contribution to providing environmental training and further training for specialists from developing countries free of charge, and to make our modest contribution to other international efforts connected with the implementation of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21.

Feelings of hopelessness and pessimism must be replaced by coordinated actions to prevent the further degradation of nature. Let each one of us be guided by the principle "If I do not do this, who will?".

Statement by H.E. Mr. Franz Vranitsky, Federal Chancellor
of the Republic of Austria

We have now reached the concluding stage of this momentous Conference. Numerous speeches have been made, important decisions have been taken, countless pages have been filled with powerful information. Many of the leading figures of the world have come together here as a sign of their strong commitment to this Conference and its great objective. Millions of people around the globe are following the events here with close and careful attention, aware that this Conference in many respects is going to influence their lives, to meet their concerns. They will be the final judges of whether we have been successful in accomplishing our mission here.

In 1972, shortly before the Stockholm Conference of the United Nations was to convene, the American scientist Dennis Meadows published his report about the Limits of Growth. Today, 20 years later, as we are dealing with the same subject, we know that some of the scenarios he sketched did not occur, some others - and worrying ones - however did. It would be presumptuous and highly unrealistic were we to state that we have found positive and satisfactory answers to all the major economic and ecological problems which confront us.

When questioned again recently, Dennis Meadows none the less conceded that mankind - in spite of some unfavourable, even damaging preconditions - would have a good chance to deal with these problems. He bases this assumption on the fact that environmental consciousness, the general awareness of environmental protection, has developed rapidly during the last 20 years. Therein he finds - and I would agree with him - the one and only base for continued progress.

There are also other signs of hope and progress: infant mortality is declining, human life expectancy is on the rise, access to education is growing and global food production is increasing faster than population growth. Nevertheless, in absolute numbers there are more people in the world going hungry than ever before and their number is still growing, as is the number of those without adequate shelter, fuel or safe drinking water. The gap between rich and poor is widening, not shrinking. It is imperative that this trend be reversed. For one fact has become obvious: it is impossible to separate economic development from global environment issues. Poverty is a cause as well as an effect of global environmental problems.

This is our chance to reverse the trend. We have to take this chance in the conviction that protection of the environment, economic development and economic prosperity are not mutually exclusive or contradictory, but are indeed two sides of one and the same coin. In Austria we have worked very hard for a convergence of these interests. We have based our efforts on the conviction that solid and lasting environmental policies cannot be formulated against or without the economy. And we have been quite successful. During the last 10 years, for example, Austria lowered its SO₂ emissions more than any other industrialized country. And we could assure this success because both the Austrian economy and our industrial sector became aware of the urgent problems of our time.

Although sound national policies for the protection of our endangered biosphere are essential, they alone do not suffice. Most of the real threats to the environment transcend political boundaries, even continents. Many are national in cause, but global in impact. We must learn how to operate on a large scale and we must learn to formulate and to view our national policies as part of the world community's response to a global problem, on the basis of shared responsibility and a pooling of all our creative capacities.

I am convinced that in order to be successful, structural changes in the economic, the social and the ecological systems of the industrialized States will be inevitable. I am convinced, and there are already many who share this conviction, that we have to look for a new definition of wealth, a definition that no longer adheres to the maxim of unlimited economic growth, but of sustainable economic development. If we are serious about this principle we have to accept the need for change in many areas, such as energy consumption, traffic, agriculture, industry, as well as in many of the bad habits of a consumer society.

Sustainable development is indivisible. It is a process based on partnership and sharing, in which we are all students and teachers at the same time. If taken seriously, it offers the opportunity for a joint learning process of global dimension and a learning process which takes into account that we are faced with interlocking problems. There is not an environmental crisis, a development crisis, an energy crisis. They are all one.

Certainly, a solution to the energy problem is one of the central questions in this regard and one that concerns the industrialized and the developing world equally. The energy systems at present in use, characterized as they are by a heavy reliance on fossil energy sources and in large part also by a dependence on nuclear energy, in all probability cannot be maintained in the long term. In our view, the use of nuclear energy, in particular, stands as a symbol for risky and very expensive technologies which are not in line with the principles and priorities of sustainable development. We are convinced that we have to find new energy policies which aim at minimizing the demand for energy and at the increased use of renewable sources of energy. As mentioned, we are convinced that the use of nuclear energy is not a viable option in the fight against the greenhouse effect and the related threat to the world climate. Austria thus supports the introduction of a CO₂ tax on fossil sources of energy as well as on nuclear energy. This would represent a first step in the right direction.

It has become evident - and the discussion of the last few days has reinforced this insight - that, for the first time in the 10,000 years of agriculture and forestry, the intricate balance of world climate, global water resources, biological diversity and other ecosystems is severely endangered. Today, the problems of the tropical rain forests in the southern hemisphere demand our immediate attention. None the less, we should also remind ourselves that the landscapes of Europe did not always look as they do today.

I am glad to announce that Austria has earmarked an additional amount of 200 million schillings for bilateral projects geared towards the protection of the tropical rain forest and towards the support of its inhabitants. I am aware that in view of the size of the problem this is only a small amount. We hope, however, that our projects, which will be formulated in close cooperation with the local population, can serve as models for possible solutions on a larger scale.

Nobody came to this Conference expecting to receive clear-cut answers and simple remedies. Given the size and the scope of the problem this would indeed be unrealistic. We are, after all, confronted with an extremely demanding challenge, and decisions which we take or do not take now will affect generations to come. With courage, a sense of responsibility and a commitment to decisive action we have the chance to meet this challenge and to live up to the idea that planet Earth is ours only to safeguard as a trust for our children. We should not miss this chance.

Let me conclude by extending heartfelt congratulations to the organizers of this Conference, most particularly to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Maurice Strong. We highly appreciate the efforts which have been made by the host country to create conditions conducive to fruitful negotiations.

Our thanks go to the warm hospitality which President Collor and the Brazilian people offered us during the days we spent in this beautiful city of Rio.

Statement by H.E. Mrs. Violeta Barrios de Chamorro,
President of the Republic of Nicaragua

It is a source of particular satisfaction for me, as President of Nicaragua, as a woman and as a citizen of the world, to be able to participate in this important Conference, to which the leaders of our respective nations have come to support the aspirations and hopes of our peoples in their search for a better life. I have come to this Conference to work with you to find solutions to the major issues posed by the relationship between environment and development, solutions which will enable us to conquer the problems of poverty and all the attendant damage which it causes to the environment. Let us continue our efforts to devise a global framework for the adoption of policies and actions that will enable us to bequeath to future generations a more viable and habitable world characterized by greater social justice and a healthier environment.

For many years Nicaragua has endured political confrontations and experiments which for decades have frustrated our yearnings for progress. The Nicaragua which I represent has now overcome war and wishes to reaffirm here its dedication to peace, freedom, democracy and development.

The support of the international community for our process of unification and reconciliation is vital to the preservation and consolidation of democracy; it is vital as well if we are to honour international commitments such as those on environment and development which we are adopting at Rio. Nicaragua asks for understanding and continued international support for our efforts to consolidate our democratic process.

The seven countries of Central America are owners and custodians of a great biodiversity representing over 10 per cent of the species on this planet. We are a veritable biological bridge between two continents and two oceans. To preserve this great wealth, we have launched a policy of environmental cooperation which has enabled us to establish a regional system of protected areas. Moreover, one week ago, on 5 June at Managua, Nicaragua, the Central American Presidents signed an agreement on the preservation of biodiversity and the protection of priority forest areas of Central America, in recognition of the responsibility which the management of these resources implies for our region in particular and for humankind in general. This agreement has the merit of being the first of its kind ever signed in the world and is one element of our Central American Agenda for Environment and Development. It was also decided at Managua that in the coming months we would sign an agreement on the monitoring of the transport and disposal of toxic substances and hazardous wastes.

We view with optimism the results achieved at this Conference and agree with those who have pointed out that it is a starting point and not a final destination. At Rio, we have launched a process of far-reaching change regarding how we can best relate with nature and at the same time encourage development. We therefore should like to express our firm commitment to the spirit and the letter of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as to the underlying purposes of the Rio Declaration.

For Nicaragua, the action envisaged with respect to forests, in particular the principles adopted in the relevant statement, is one of the most significant accomplishments of this Conference. We also propose that gradual progress be made towards an international convention on the protection and utilization of water resources. Substantial progress has been made with respect to financing. We welcome the fact that various sources have been identified.

We wish to congratulate Brazil, the United Nations and all participating delegations on the success achieved at this Conference. Its results show that the North-South dialogue can be energized through progress in specific sectors, and we are confident that progress will be made towards agreement on a new world order.

We call upon the international community to continue to transform conflict into cooperation, and we urge all the nations of the world to settle their disputes in a peaceful and civilized manner. Our countries' scarce resources should be used for the development of the human person and the reaffirmation of humankind's ethical and moral values.

In this beautiful city, surrounded by the human warmth of its inhabitants and protected by the outstretched arms of the Christ of Corcovado, I declare on behalf of Nicaragua that my country will honour the commitments we have entered into here.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Ali Hassan Mwinyi, President of the
United Republic of Tanzania

First of all I wish to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and other members of the Bureau for your unanimous election and for the exemplary manner in which you continue to guide the proceedings of this historic Conference.

Allow me also to thank the Government and people of Brazil for the warm reception and gracious hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro. We are most grateful for the excellent facilities at our disposal, which greatly facilitate our work.

This Conference is historic indeed. It will go into the annals of history as the most comprehensive international initiative on the fundamental problems of our time. It marks the opening of a new era in international relations and in humankind's relationship to the natural environment.

This Conference takes place at a time when there is a shift towards a new world order, in which lasting peace seems more possible. We all have an important role to play in making the new order a reality for the benefit of all the people who inhabit this planet.

Our planet is now poised on the threshold of an epoch, where the survival of human existence as well as that of other species is threatened and endangered. The human environment has already set off alarms, on land, in the atmosphere and on the seas. In the course of humankind's development process, the natural capital stock has suffered considerable depletion and degradation. Nations are now faced with many environmental threats, such as

drought and desertification, flooding, the effects of ozone layer depletion, sealevel rise and other natural disasters.

The preparatory process leading to this Conference has yielded a wealth of information. A range of comprehensive programmes and strategies for rehabilitating the environment, for conserving nature and for achieving sustainable development have been prepared. The facts about environmental degradation are shocking, but they are not the exaggerations of excited minds. Rather, they portray the experience of human reality.

It is a reality indeed that about 10 per cent of the Earth's potentially fertile land has already been turned into desert or wasteland, while a further 25 per cent is endangered. Some 35 per cent of the Earth's surface is threatened by drought and desertification. The human dimension of the impact of drought and desertification is even more relevant.

Some 19 per cent of humankind or 850 million people are threatened by drought and desertification world wide. In Africa, the Sahara is encroaching southwards on useful arable and pasture lands at an estimated rate of 1.5 million hectares per annum. The creeping desert is threatening about 34 per cent of the continent, directly affecting the livelihood of at least 36 per cent of the continent's population, or some 185.5 million people. Decline in soil fertility is widespread. It has been estimated that soil erosion could reduce agricultural production in Africa by 25 per cent by the year 2000, if urgent conservation measures are not taken.

The world's forests are disappearing at the rate of about 12 million hectares per annum. Scientific evidence has revealed that in spite of uncertainties and lack of knowledge in a number of areas, our planet is already experiencing global warming. With current trends in man-made emissions of greenhouse gases, significant changes in the global climate are inevitable. It has been established that the decade of the 1980s was the warmest in the century. The science of ozone depletion is no longer a theory but a stark reality.

This environmental crisis is global in nature. Both developed and developing countries are linked through this crisis.

Tanzania relies most heavily on the direct exploitation of its natural resources. The pertinent feature of our economy is the extractive preponderance in agriculture, mining and livestock, all heavily dependent on environmental factors. The most graphic expression of this pervasive dependence on nature is the dominance of the primary sector.

Subsistence agriculture generates both food and the bulk of the export revenue which is vital for economic growth and development. The pervasive dependence on nature means that our economy is extremely vulnerable to the impact of negative changes in natural conditions, particularly climatic, as well as to world market conditions for primary products.

Our major environmental problems are manifold. They include deforestation, desertification, drought, massive soil erosion and air and water pollution. Semi-arid and arid land account for some 35 per cent of our total land area. The stark realities of everyday life have shown that

environmental degradation in our country is poverty-driven. Increasing poverty and environmental degradation go hand in hand. Poverty is both a cause and a consequence of environmental degradation.

The poor, the hungry and the diseased cannot be expected to put the preservation of their environment above their own pressing struggle to survive. Survival necessarily takes precedence over concern with future viability of resources. Through sheer necessity, the poor mine soil nutrients, cultivate steep slopes, and overgraze rangelands. For the poor, it is not the quality of life that is at stake, it is life itself.

The reality of poverty-driven degradation of the environment is felt throughout the third world, where the incidence of environmental degradation and poverty is always a cause of untold misery. Beyond the screaming headlines of the "Loud" environmental emergencies such as global warming and depletion of the ozone layer, which receive much of the world's media attention, there are the silent environmental emergencies, the more solid aspects of human reality which affect the daily lives of millions in the world.

The "Loud" emergencies have yet to affect many people. But the silent emergencies, the more immediate issues of human survival, are already wasting many lives. Consider the following: some 1.5 billion people in developing countries do not have access to health services; 1.75 billion do not have access to safe water; 2.8 billion are without access to sanitation facilities; 750 million children suffer from acute diarrhoeal diseases annually, of which 4 million die; 150 million are malnourished.

These dimensions of human deprivation find expression in shortened life expectancy, high death rates, low productivity and environmental degradation. Just the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, and some education in hygiene can alleviate many of these environmental problems and relieve much human suffering.

No nation can afford to neglect factors which undermine its own development, such as the degradation of vital productive natural resources. But the grinding magnitude of poverty has been persistent in its contribution to environmental degradation. The problem is compounded by the compulsive pressure imposed on us to maximize export production and foreign exchange earnings to meet external debt service payments of more than twice our annual per capita income. International debt does indeed preclude the opportunity for placing poor economies on a sustainable path. Declining terms of trade and other adverse international economic conditions undermine our capacity to meet the basic needs of our people.

What I am saying is that environmental degradation in Tanzania, as in other poor countries, is principally a development problem. Its solution must therefore be based on the need to combat poverty and promote development. For the poor, the choice is not to sustain poverty, but to overcome it through economic growth. Economic growth is not an option for us; it is an imperative. Environmental protection is vital, but it is not an end in itself. Like economic growth, it is a means to an end. The primary objective of sustainable development must be to improve the living conditions of all humankind.

Some arguments tend to generalize the population growth factor in environmental degradation, especially in developing countries. It has often been argued, for example, that the rate of demographic increase in many African countries militates against development. I agree that population dynamics are not completely irrelevant to sustainable development and environmental protection. The relationship between population, environment and sustainable development is an issue upon which serious action needs to be taken by Governments in order to release population pressures on natural resources. We in Tanzania have undertaken a number of programmes related to the management of demographic change. Such measures include family planning. The results achieved are encouraging. The rate of population growth in Tanzania is 2.8 per cent. It is still high, but certainly not the highest. The fact remains, however, that population growth is not the primary factor of environmental degradation. It is only a component in a mix of factors that include poverty and inappropriate land-use practices.

It must be remembered that large numbers of people in the poor countries use insignificant fractions of the resources consumed by the rich, and contribute insignificantly to the pressure on global resources. It is estimated, for example, that the 25 per cent of the world's population that lives in the developed countries consumes about 75 per cent of the world's resources. Furthermore, the large majority of the poor in most developing countries participate the least in the production and use of the products which cause the most environmental destruction. Those products are not within the purchasing power of the poor.

In recent years much international attention has focused on tropical forest loss. Concern about deforestation in developing countries has centred on the loss of biological diversity and the size of the carbon sinks. This concern has given rise to calls for a ban or restriction on trade in tropical timber and timber products.

The problem of deforestation has occupied considerable attention of my Government for many years, although not so much from a carbon sink perspective. The impact of deforestation is not the subject of scientific conjecture. It is very well known that deforested land is subject to soil erosion, which undermines much of our cropland. Depletion of vegetative cover, reduction of the soil's organic and nutrient content, deterioration of soil structure and its capacity to retain water are major causes of frequent and prolonged droughts leading to desertification. The impact of deforestation needs no emphasis. Quite aside from effects of soil erosion leading to eventual desertification, deforestation is also responsible for the growing scarcity of energy supplies. Woodfuel accounts for 90 per cent of calories of primary energy use in Tanzania. The current demand exceeds the capacity of our forests to regenerate by about 12 million cubic metres a year. In several developing countries woodfuel constitutes over 75 per cent of the total energy used. Over 2 billion people world wide use woodfuel for domestic heating and cooking. Projections for the year 2000 suggest that, without remedial action, 2.4 billion people will be unable to meet their basic energy requirements.

The woodfuel crisis is not simple. Alternative sources of cheap fuel for the poor, such as dung, crop residues and other forms of biomass are not plentiful, and their use has the effect of depriving agricultural land of

vital nutrients such as mulches and fertilizers. Unfortunately the woodfuel crisis is an aspect of deforestation which has often gone unnoticed by those accustomed to addressing "global" issues. As a problem affecting the lives of half the world's population, the woodfuel crisis deserves as much attention as the impending climatic change.

Another area of major significance to my country is biological diversity. Tanzania is known world wide as a tourist destination on account of the variety of animal wildlife in our national parks. Not so well known is the fact that our country is also home to a diversity of plants, many found nowhere else in the world.

The rare plant species found in our forests may also be of potential benefit to our people. They provide a unique gene pool for use in improvement of agricultural crops and useful but hitherto unknown medicines; they have great horticultural potential and enhance the ecological stability of fragile systems. It is therefore important to conserve these areas of high diversity of plant species, and other areas with endemic species. These may serve as sources of income, potential food and drugs, and as genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Similarly, biodiversity has assumed increasing importance in the world in the light of recent advances in biotechnology. The area of biodiversity and biotechnology has become of great scientific curiosity. Let me make two observations regarding this area. Many of us in developing countries find it difficult to accept the notion that biodiversity should be considered the common heritage of mankind, while the flow of biological products from the industrialized countries is patented, expensive and considered the private property of the firms that produce them. This asymmetry reflects the inequality of opportunity and is unjust. Another primary concern relates to the potential effects and hazards of biotechnology, which many developing countries are not technically equipped to handle or lack the capacity to monitor.

For example, certain herbs and other forest resources in high demand for biotechnology have often been extracted to depletion in developing countries, thus threatening the continued existence of plant varieties and undermining biodiversity. Genetic engineering could also be ecologically damaging to animal life from excessive use of particular species, such as monkeys, rats and birds for research and experimentation.

Let me emphasize once again that the problems of the environment cannot be isolated from national realities and the international economic factors that perpetuate poverty. Similarly, the consequences of poverty cannot be contained within national borders. They travel all over the world without a passport. The depletion of the world's oxygen reserves and environmental pollution affects all nations, not just one. The distinction which is often made between national and global environmental problems tends to disguise this fact. Unfortunately this distinction is enshrined in the current operations of the Global Environment Facility, whose mandated scope covers only the issues of global warming, depletion of the ozone layer, conservation of biodiversity and pollution of international waters. These "global" environmental problems result from a series of national and local actions. One cannot tackle them effectively without first tackling their root causes at the national and local levels.

In developing countries it is through the process of development that the protection of the "global" environment can be achieved. It would be indefensible if measures for the protection of the environment were to perpetuate hunger, disease and poverty. It would be unacceptable if, out of concern for environmental conservation, this Conference were to impose new conditionalities on the debt-ridden and resource-starved economies of the poor. The challenge is to pull large populations out of mass poverty to ensure their full participation in global efforts for environmental conservation.

The international community now faces a decade of difficult decisions. Policies to control greenhouse gas emissions would require redirection of energy use in order to increase efficiency and redirection of investment towards renewable sources of energy.

In the developed countries, the challenge is to restructure production and consumption patterns, so that they are less wasteful and less environmentally destructive.

Reduction of fossil fuel consumption in developing countries would not be a viable option in the short term. Such a move would only mean larger numbers of users of woodfuel and other biomass fuel, with obvious implications for deforestation and soil degradation.

Apart from the need for fundamental policy and institutional changes, financial resources would be required. Putting development on a sustainable basis in developing countries, without increasing their contribution to global environmental degradation, will pose a major challenge, both to those countries and to the international community. The rich are better equipped to show solidarity with the rest of mankind. Developing countries will require new and additional financial resources to enable them to implement sustainable development programmes. Environmentally sound technologies would need to be transferred to developing countries on concessional and preferential terms to help these countries to meet the imperative of sustainable development. Action should also be taken to relieve developing countries of the burden of foreign, commercial and official debt in order to release resources for sustainable development.

In view of the additional responsibilities that United Nations agencies will have to bear in order to promote the goals of sustainable development, there is an urgent need to increase their resources so that they may not have to divert resources from current programmes. Emphasis should be placed on long-term commitments through national budgets to enable these institutions to meet their sustainable development obligations.

Certainly, the costs involved are high, judged even by the fragmentary estimates available so far. But the potential for redeployment of resources within national budgets of developing countries through reduction of military spending and elimination of subsidies to environmentally destructive activities are immense. The report of the World Commission on Environment and Development and the UNEP Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond have guaranteed a renewed vision of the unity of the world, and the interdependence of the human race. This vision has created the hope and expectation that the persistent poverty of the South and the deteriorating conditions in the global environment are not beyond human solutions.

It is now urgent to build upon the present political momentum so that the new environmental lexicon of sustainable development does not become an empty slogan. We must therefore lay out, in practical terms, a course of action and specify the means for its implementation in the spirit of cooperation and for the benefit of all humankind. It is by acting together that we can succeed in these common and noble endeavours. So let us start to act together to meet the great expectations of the countries and peoples we represent.

Statement by H.E. Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland,
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway

We owe it to the world to be frank about what we have achieved here in Rio: progress in many fields, too little progress in most fields and no progress at all in some fields.

We have opened two important conventions for signature. It is imperative that we make them more effective. They will not work unless all major countries sign them, ratify them and implement them.

We have dealt with a wide range of issues important for sustainable development, but we have not dealt seriously enough with extremely important issues such as the need for more open trade and its environmental and developmental impacts, which are so vital for developing countries. These are issues that will remain with us.

We will be watched closely by our constituencies as we move into the field of implementation and further negotiations. We will be held accountable.

There is no turning back from realizing that we are heading towards a crisis of uncontrollable dimensions unless we change course. The North as well as the rich in the South will have to change consumption and production patterns.

The poor must be brought home from their exile of bondage and humiliation. Fair distribution of wealth and opportunity must be provided. We must curb population growth by means which are more effective than we were able to agree upon here, and which recognize and are more strongly linked to poverty and the rights of women.

It is we ourselves who are to decide by our actions how effective Agenda 21 is going to be. Implementation requires financing and new priorities to be set in all countries.

We are disappointed by the lack of adequate financial commitments made. The 20-year-old target of 0.7 per cent of GNP as official development assistance must be reached before the year 2000.

I say this with confidence since we provide 1.1 per cent of our GNP. This is three times higher than the average for OECD countries.

We reached the 0.7 per cent target some 15 years ago. We exceeded 1 per cent more than 10 years ago. Norway, with its four million people, contributes almost US\$ 500 million more than is required to fulfil the

0.7 target. We are the eighth largest contributor to the United Nations system in absolute terms and by far the largest in per capita terms.

We are already providing new and additional resources to counter global environmental threats. These contributions are not counted as ODA. We finance them by having the highest CO₂ taxes in the world.

Our development assistance has always had an Agenda 21. It has always been poverty-oriented. It has focused on health, on basic needs, women, children, education, family planning, and, increasingly, the environment.

If more countries increase their efforts and improve the quality of their contributions, Agenda 21 can become Accomplished 21.

The road from Rio will take us many extra miles together. Burdensharing will remain essential. There are several bills that need to be covered in an unruly, troubled world. Bills of peace-keeping, refugee relief, famines and natural disasters. The environmental threats and poverty, however, are cross-cutting, long-term, predictable and unavoidable unless we establish a world order of burdensharing, common perceptions and common responsibility.

Critical decisions remain to be taken. I welcome the high-level Commission on Sustainable Development and expect it to become effective under a revitalization of the economic and social responsibilities of the United Nations.

Those difficult decisions which could not be taken here in Rio will have to be taken in the very near future. For this to happen, accountable Governments must work together with increasing millions of responsible citizens, in particular when the necessary measures seem costly in a short-term perspective.

One main challenge is that the forces of technology and finance have increasingly taken over the powers which should be vested in people to shape their own future.

The idea of government for the people by the people is gaining ground, but choices about our own future can be made only if Governments have budgets and if they can cooperate internationally where strong forces of power operate today.

The nation State alone is too small a scene for addressing regional and global challenges. And if national Governments are basically unilateral in their attitudes towards global problems, anarchy will prevail over international governance and world order. What should be our global village may turn into a global jungle.

The challenge of the 1990s is to deepen and widen the forces of democracy and to lift democratic decision-making to the international level.

Traditional international conferences run by consensus can only advance at the pace of the most reluctant mover in each field. The future requires stronger decision-making procedures. Nothing less will serve us.

When we arrive at our final consensus here in Rio, we will have taken neither a small step nor a giant leap. But the direction in which we are heading will have been set.

Statement by H.E. Mr. François Mitterrand, President
of the French Republic

Every people has conceived in its childhood terrible or wonderful myths about the creation of the world, but today we have to deal with the destruction of the world.

In the long sequence of time, we are in fact the first generations, some 3 million years after our distant ancestors emerged, to acquire awareness of the physical laws which govern us. Let us try to formulate those laws which will invest our meeting in Rio with its true meaning.

The first is that the Earth is a living system whose parts are interdependent, and therefore that the destinies of all species - human, animal, plant - are connected.

The second tells us that the resources of the Earth are limited.

The third says that humankind cannot be separated from nature, for it is part of nature itself just like water, trees, the wind or the depths of the seas. Dominated by the elements since the dark age of time, humankind has the capacity to now kill off all life on Earth and thus to destroy itself. That is indeed the question. One day they will say to us: You knew all that and what did you do? That is the true topic of our Conference.

Our duty - and it is the same everywhere and for everyone - is to see to it that the Earth which sustains us is both our dwelling and our garden. Our shelter and our food.

That is what prompts in us an unrivalled ambition, a project for the century, for all the centuries. Our Earth suffers both from the harshness of its climates and from the passions of men; we cannot mitigate that harshness without controlling those passions. But how should our task be defined? It is to conceive and implement a mode of growth and development in North and South alike which preserves and restores in the biosphere and in every region of the planet the environment necessary for the various forms of life. Environment and development go hand in hand. Let us try therefore to identify the goals which will guide our action. I see four of them.

First, to learn to know our planet better and to begin with the biosphere, which is a necessary precondition. Many of you have carried out useful experiments at home which contribute to the common debate; I can tell you that in 1989 France requested the establishment of a "planet observatory", which it developed further so that fuller use could be made of spaceborne facilities, including the European SPOT 4 satellite and its sensor "Vegetation".

In Africa, France was the originator of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory, a major tool in the fight against desertification. It now proposes, with its European partners, that all the countries of the world should have access to space data with environmental applications.

Secondly, it would be useful to determine more clearly the role, or the responsibility, of the countries of the North. I think that they have to preserve and restore their own domain (water, air, towns, countryside), a task which their Governments are tackling unevenly. That they have to refrain from any action harmful to the environment of the countries of the South. Such is the purpose of France's very strict laws on the export of wastes. And that they must contribute to the reduction of changes in the global environment (air, atmosphere, oceans, weather systems); it was with this in mind that Australia and France initiated the protection of Antarctica and that my country embraced the European plans for stabilization, within 10 years and at 1990 levels, of carbon gas emissions. I would add that France endorses the Framework Convention on Climate Change, which it advocated not long since at The Hague and the Convention on Biological Diversity, even though it would have preferred more ambitious commitments. But this is a beginning. We have lift-off; tomorrow I hope that we will go further.

For the same reasons and with the same comments, France endorses the statement on forests.

I also hope that without further delay we will get down to the drafting of a convention on drinking water, which is an equally essential matter. It is astonishing that this has not already been done.

And, lastly, I expect the countries of the North to endeavour to identify areas requiring emergency environmental action and to encourage the activities of the non-governmental organizations of North and South, which I take this opportunity to salute.

Thirdly, the countries of the South, notwithstanding their legitimate wish to secure their development, cannot be excused from playing their part in the common effort to protect a biosphere which is the same for all. I wish them to look after their immediate environment and ensure their economic and technical progress without causing pollution in the way the industrialized countries did in the past. Thanks to technology and the faster acquisition of knowledge, they will gain at least a century!

But this will be possible only at the cost of a planet-wide effort of solidarity, assistance in the transfer of technology and sharing, an effort which is primarily the responsibility of the developed countries. Those countries, I repeat here, should be devoting 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to such assistance by the year 2000. France, which today contributes 0.56 per cent, is determined to achieve that target. It will also double its contribution to the Global Environment Facility and work for the renewal of the Structural Adjustment Facility. It is involved in the European initiative for funding Agenda 21 and will take an active part in its implementation.

Fourthly, of course, world public opinion and the non-governmental organizations which are often its expression expect immediate results from the Rio Conference. But this Conference must be above all the beginning of a process which will be continued and expanded.

Let us schedule a new meeting for three to five years from now; let us move ahead with the implementation of the four main sections of a programme for the twenty-first century: Agenda 21 drafted by this Conference. Let us help those who need help by making new funding available. Let us set up the permanent institutions and machinery to ensure the follow-up of our work. In this connection, France approves without reservation the creation of a commission on sustainable development, the first step towards that top world authority which my country proposed at The Hague and towards the "Earth council" suggested by President Collor, for these ideas are less Utopian than they seem. I am happy to see the countries of the European Community close ranks on this point. And why should the Secretary-General of the United Nations not be entrusted with the task of taking stock of the implementation of Agenda 21 every year?

In order to keep this statement short, I have not mentioned the countries of Eastern Europe which are suffering both from poorly managed industrialization like the North and from lack of infrastructure like the South. The example of nuclear power stations ought to be sufficient to mobilize the countries capable of taking action in this field. They will take action, I suppose, in other places. Any response to the problems of the environment, we must repeat over and over again, can only be global and universal.

We know that we still have a very long road to travel in reconciling opinions and identifying common solutions. But our meeting will not have been in vain if it helps to convey the message to the peoples of the South that the environment is not a luxury of the wealthy, and to the peoples of the North that there can be no genuine environmental protection without development assistance.

Never before has humankind set itself such ambitious goals. But never before has this been a condition of its own survival. We will have to explain, persuade, encourage, but also prevent. Our first duty in a United Nations increasingly ready to perform its functions will be to preserve or restore peace in the world, for without that nothing else will be possible. But it is also our duty to impose cooperation in place of parochialism, mutual respect in place of domination, solidarity and sharing in place of introversion, and concern for the future in place of short-term considerations. The world stands in dire need and this imposes on everyone an obligation of reciprocal environmental assistance. It would be impossible to overemphasize this point - the role of education, which alone is sufficiently important for our countries to decide to make it an area for priority action.

We are in fact going to experience a change of the magnitude of those of the neolithic age and the beginning of the industrial age, a change which will unfold over decades and perhaps even longer.

The "new international order" will be an order which combines disarmament, security, development and respect for the environment.

It is for us, the people in charge, to prepare and build the new order by preventing or resolving conflicts. This imperative requirement will give birth to a world ethic which will value this kind of behaviour and stigmatize those who just create more obstacles.

A last thought: do you not think that drugs, violence, crime and fanaticism are to be ranked with the worst forms of pollution, and that one of the biodiversities to be protected without delay is the biodiversity of cultures and civilizations threatened with extinction?

Ladies and Gentlemen, I urge you to make the name of Rio 1992 stand for hope.

Statement by H.E. Cardinal Angelo Sodano,
Secretary of State of the Holy See

In one of the books of the Bible, much cherished by millions of believers, we read that in the beginning God created the universe with all its wonders - the heavens, the Earth, the sea. Last of all, God created man to be the ruler of this universe and entrusted it to his care. This is the account found in the Book of Genesis.

The view of the Catholic Church, and of the Holy See in particular, regarding the problems under discussion is inspired by those pages of the Bible. Those pages are part of the heritage of all mankind. Allow me briefly to recall them. They tell us that the created universe has been entrusted by God to man, who has a central place in the world. He is to govern it with wisdom and responsibility, and with respect for the order which God has placed within his creation (cf. John Paul II, Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, 22 November 1991, No. 6). In the light of this profound conviction, we can make the following considerations:

The present ecological crisis is one disturbing aspect of a more profound moral crisis. It is the result of a mistaken concept of inordinate development, which fails to take into account the natural environment, its limits, its laws and its harmony, especially with regard to the use or abuse of scientific and technological progress. The Earth is suffering because of human selfishness.

"God intended the Earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people, in such a way that created goods should abound for them in a reasonable way, according to the law of justice, inseparable from charity" (Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Pastoral Constitution Gaudium et Spes on the Church in the Modern World, 69). This is the basis of the duty of solidarity among all and towards all, and the basis of cooperation for a development which gives priority to the less favoured peoples (cf. John Paul II, Encyclical Letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 45).

The words of Pope Paul VI have proved prophetic: "The peoples who suffer hunger are making a dramatic appeal to the peoples blessed with abundance" (Paul VI, Encyclical Letter Populorum Progressio, 3). The increasing, morally unacceptable and unjust gap between the North of our world, which is growing ever richer, and the South, which is growing ever poorer, is obvious. To the

"undoubtedly grave instances of omission on the part of the developing nations themselves, and especially on the part of those holding economic and political power" (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 16), must be added the "growing forms of selfish isolation" on the part of the more developed countries and the tendency to "ignore, for questionable reasons, [their] duty to cooperate in the task of alleviating human misery" (ibid., 23).

It is necessary that humanity discover its common roots and that our awareness of being brothers and sisters give rise to a great creative effort aimed at the effective exercise of solidarity. It should be considered quite normal for an advanced country to devote a part of its production to meet the needs of the developing nations (cf. Populorum Progressio, 48). In the early centuries of the Christian era, it was said: "Feed the person dying of hunger, because otherwise you are responsible for that person's death" (Gratiani, Decretum ch. 21 dist. 86; ed. Friedberg, I 302; cf. Gaudium et Spes, 69). A proper ecological balance will not be found without directly addressing the structural forms of poverty that exist throughout the world (cf. John Paul II, Message for the 1990 World Day of Peace, 11), and unless the rich societies seriously revise their pleasure-seeking and extravagant way of life.

Everyone is aware of the problems that can come from a disproportionate growth of the world population. "The Church is aware of the complexity of the problem ... (But) the urgency of the situation must not lead into error in proposing ways of intervening. To apply methods which are not in accord with the true nature of man actually ends up causing tragic harm ... placing the heaviest burden on the poorest and weakest sectors of society, thus adding injustice to injustice" (John Paul II, Speech to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, 22 November 1991, Nos. 4 and 6). It is not possible, from the moral point of view, to justify the attitude of that part of the world which highlights human rights but attempts to deny the rights of those in less fortunate circumstances by deciding, in a "devastating tyranny" (ibid., 6), how many children they can have, and by threatening to link aid for development to that dictate.

The association between poverty and the high rate of population growth certainly demands appropriate attention. In any case, "the poor, to whom the Earth is entrusted no less than to others, must be enabled to find a way out of their poverty" (Message for the 1990 World Day of Peace, 11). This will require addressing the structural forms of poverty, by ensuring employment, education and primary health care for mothers and children, with special concern for overcoming child mortality.

The Earth and its resources will be sufficient, if only humanity will learn to share them instead of wasting them among the few. On the other hand, it is clear that the pollution of the environment and risks to the ecosystem do not come primarily from the most densely populated parts of the planet (cf. Speech to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, 22 November 1991, 4).

As the work of this great world assembly comes to a close, we must remember that we are only stewards of the common patrimony of the planet. The dignity of the human person, who is the only creature in this world capable of concern for the other species, for the environment that surrounds us, and for our brothers and sisters, ought to lead us not only to protect the balance of

nature in general but also "to safeguard the moral conditions for an authentic 'human ecology'" (John Paul II, Encyclical Letter Centesimus Annus, 38), as well as a "social ecology". "Not only has God given the Earth to man, who must use it with respect for the original good purpose for which it was given to him, but man too is God's gift to man. He must therefore respect the natural and moral structure with which he has been endowed" (ibid.).

God grant that the Rio Conference will offer our contemporaries new reasons to hope, to believe and to love!

Statement by H.E. Mr. Albert Reynolds,
Prime Minister of Ireland

It is my great privilege to address this historic Conference which has engaged so many countries and international organizations in the common cause of the global environment and sustainable development. I thank the Government and the people of Brazil for their generous hospitality and for their outstanding commitment in hosting a conference of this unprecedented scale. I pay tribute also to the Secretary-General of the Conference and his staff for their enormous contribution to the success of the Conference.

Exactly two years ago in Dublin, the heads of State and Government of the European Community agreed upon their first ever declaration on the environment. This strongly asserted what have not become some of the central concerns of the Conference: the shared responsibility of the world community for the protection of the environment, the need for solidarity with the developing world, and the urgency of action to address major threats to the global environment. These and other important issues have now been addressed by this Conference in a series of historically important agreements.

The twin concerns of the Conference - environment and development - are inextricably linked; and it is right that the structures and the outcome of the Conference should reflect this.

It must be difficult for the developing world, whose people are hungry and desperate for development, to be told that it should show a sense of global responsibility. The poorer countries might well consider that the developed world in its time gave little evidence of this. Yet the fragility of our planet touches us all. We need the solidarity of all countries to fulfil the vital objectives set for us by the Conference.

Global responsibility implies global fairness. Concern for our common environment must henceforth be matched by an equal concern for all of the human beings who share that environment. The developed world must give the lead on this.

Against this background, the Rio Declaration is a new and comprehensive statement of basic principles - a code of conduct which we must all now pledge ourselves to respect in our national and international undertakings. The Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity, which I have signed this morning on behalf of Ireland, are important new steps towards improved environmental management at the global level. We must implement these

Conventions quickly and build further on them, drawing on all available strategies.

Ireland believes that the development of new technology is one of the most important of these strategies and should be rapidly accelerated. Obsolete and inefficient technology and practices are contributing far too much to pollution and depletion of natural resources. Improvements in this field should have particular benefit for industry in the developing countries and in countries, such as those of Central and Eastern Europe, whose economies are in transition.

Much innovative work is under way world wide to advance technological and other solutions to environmental problems. Ireland is ready to participate in these developments. I am particularly pleased that Irish and Brazilian interests, with support from the EC Commission, are currently involved in efforts to demonstrate the environmental and economic benefits of hydrogen steel technology. If successful, this technology could replace the use of wood charcoal and coke by the steel industry, which accounts for over 10 per cent of man-made CO₂ emissions from the burning of fossil fuels. This substitution would reduce not only global warming but also the demand for rain forest timber and, in this practical way, assist countries concerned with rain forest conservation.

Another substantial source of CO₂ arises from the practice of flaring gas, which occurs in association with the extraction of crude oil. These emissions exceed the overall emissions of many industrialized countries. We need to accelerate the development of technologies to deal with this problem, and I am aware of efforts (in which Ireland is participating) to transform these damaging emissions into an economic and clean energy resource.

Agenda 21 is the key outcome of the Conference. We as heads of State and Government have a particular duty to secure its implementation across the many sectors of governmental activity to which it applies. We cannot as world leaders ignore the deep concern of our peoples for the environment. The millions of signatures to the Earth Pledge, many of which I saw for myself when I visited the Global Forum, are eloquent testimony to this.

Agenda 21 rightly underscores the special role of women in caring for the environment. Guardianship of the environment by women is an important and positive force, and one which we must harness in our various environment action programmes.

The Irish people have a long and distinguished record of providing practical assistance to developing countries both through government channels and voluntary efforts. My Government has committed itself to a planned programme of increases in official development assistance in the period 1992-1994 in the face of difficult domestic economic circumstances.

I welcome the fact that we have reached agreement among the 12 States members of the European Community to establish a start-up fund to support key Agenda 21 sectors. This fund will amount to 3 billion ECUs and will include new and additional resources. Ireland will participate fully in this initiative.

The huge effort dedicated to Conference preparations, and the major achievements of the Conference will be betrayed if we do not proceed quickly and effectively to implementation and follow-up. In Ireland, we intend to use our Environment Action Programme, which is already in place, as a vehicle for implementing the objectives of the Conference.

We have also taken the important initiative of establishing an Environmental Protection Agency. While this organizational model exists elsewhere, the Irish experience may be of interest to smaller developing countries. I offer our experience to these countries and assure them that our new agency will be at their disposal.

The Conference is a powerful manifestation of global unity. Science has taught us of the underlying material unity of our world. The great philosophies and religious traditions emphasize mankind's moral and spiritual unity. It is now for the Conference to establish a political unity to protect our common environment against the many global threats facing it.

Let us not fail in this great task.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Patricio Aylwin Azocar,
President of the Republic of Chile

On behalf of Chile and its Government, I should like to thank the people of Brazil and President Collor for their warm welcome to this beautiful city and their invaluable contribution to the success of this momentous meeting. Our thanks also go to Secretary-General Maurice Strong and to all those who have worked with him on his far-sighted, indefatigable and fruitful enterprise.

This Conference is a crucial step in the search for a much needed harmony between human activity and the environment. The topic has already assumed prominence among societies which, instead of merely watching and waiting for us to make substantial progress, are also making their contribution to the common task through meetings parallel to this official one, organized by businessmen and non-governmental organizations. Never has an international forum affected so many people and attracted so many participants.

Chile is joining in this effort in a spirit of solidarity; it is prepared to cooperate to the fullest and pledges to assume and abide by the commitments required to halt the deterioration of the Earth and bring development into line with the rational use and conservation of natural resources.

We Chileans are assuming our responsibility in this challenge. Our Constitution enshrines the right of all individuals to live in a pollution-free environment and stipulates that it is the duty of the State to ensure the preservation of nature. Our Government takes this duty seriously. We are striving to overcome pollution and to adequately regulate the activities that cause it. A short while ago, we submitted to Congress a bill on the protection of native forests and forest development. We shall soon be submitting to it framework legislation on the environment.

For the developing world, environmental protection is closely linked with the fight against poverty. We should all realize that phenomena such as air pollution and the greenhouse effect, depletion of the ozone layer, loss of biodiversity, acid rain and toxic waste, and other phenomena caused not by high levels of consumption but by extreme poverty and underdevelopment, such as hunger, malnutrition and infant mortality, lack of health services or educational and employment opportunities, urban overcrowding and lack of structures, and that affect a considerable proportion of the world's population, are all equally harmful.

We believe that environmental protection should not be presented as an obstacle to development but rather as one of the elements of development. When we talk about sustainable development, we are thinking of economic growth coupled with social equity and preservation and care of natural resources.

We know that this task entails considerable costs that we must all assume. We share the opinions expressed here on this delicate issue by the President of the Inter-American Development Bank and believe that each country's contribution towards such costs should be guided by two fundamental principles: first, the "polluter pays" principle which responds to an elementary requirement of justice and responsibility; and, secondly, the principle of solidarity, which demands that nations that have more resources because they have attained a higher level of development, often by misusing their own or others' natural resources, should contribute more resources to permit the necessary environmental investments in developing countries.

In this connection, we should like to draw attention to the unenviable position of countries whose development is based primarily on their natural resources and which, as a result of the trade barriers erected by the industrialized world to products with greater added value, are forced to overexploit such resources, so that they are degraded, depleted and ultimately exhausted.

On the other hand, we deem it neither responsible nor equitable that legitimate environmental concerns should be invoked to justify the establishment of "green barriers" to trade. We reject protectionism disguised as environmental concerns because we believe that multilateral, non-discriminatory environmental trade standards that take into account the situation of developing countries should be established.

It goes without saying that in these matters there is usually a conflict of interest in the short term; however, if the issue is considered from an ethical and human standpoint, we should all realize that what is at stake, as His Holiness Pope John Paul II has pointed out so aptly, is life itself and the fate of the Earth as the common heritage of mankind. We all stand to lose from its deterioration, and its destruction would simply put an end to human life on this planet.

As the subject is vital for all of us, it would be unwise to use it as an excuse for confrontation instead of requiring each one of us to contribute to the best of his intellectual capacity and to show good faith in order to seek, until we find, effective, rational and fair solutions. Over the past decade, the world has demonstrated its ability to arrive at agreements that only yesterday seemed impossible. From our experience of those years, we in Chile

know that courage, imagination and generosity are needed in order to reconcile interests and work towards the common good. However, we also know that the effort is worthwhile because it is a path that leads to peace. Therefore, we are convinced that international understanding on the environment is possible and that we can and must achieve it. The fate of humankind depends on it.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Zhelyu Zhelev, President of
the Republic of Bulgaria

I represent a country which belongs to a special category of States in the modern world, a country which has undertaken a historically unprecedented transition from communist totalitarianism to democracy and from a centralized State-run economy to a free market.

Along with the many serious problems which we have to tackle today in the grips of a deep crisis, we must address problems inherited from the vicious anti-ecological practices of communism, such as contaminated soil, the result of excessive and thoughtless application of chemical substances in agriculture; and polluted water and air, the effect of aggressive and indiscriminate industrialization. Chimney stacks issuing smoke used to be a symbol of progress in the communist system, praised by the bards of the regime and depicted in the works of socialist realism. Now they are a curse!

The senseless expansion against nature caused an imbalance in our ecosystem, led to a deterioration in living conditions, seriously harmed human health and broke the natural links between man and environment.

The communist system proved devastating both for the human spirit and mentality and for people's natural environment. Our bitter experience woke us up to the awareness that there can be no real development when the environment is being destroyed. Moreover, we realize that modern democracy, which is the aim of our social development, can only be achieved on the basis of harmony with nature.

Guided by this awareness and the desire to share in the responsibility to act now, we signed the two conventions here in Rio. We believe that everyone should have a role to play and do his or her bit of the vast amount of work which has to be done in solving the ecological problems facing all of us on this planet and which is more or less identical for all, regardless of the size or degree of prosperity of our countries. Small or big, rich or poor, each country should participate within its means in the common actions to save nature as a condition for the sustainable development of humankind. Environment and development are locked together in a fatal embrace and we must intervene very carefully and see to it that neither of them gets the upper hand. We must find a way to urge them on and guide them so that both survive in good shape because we will be the main beneficiary if they do. Prompted by this understanding, we subscribe to the Agenda 21 programmes and the principles underlying the Rio Declaration.

As I mentioned earlier, Bulgaria represents a more specific group of countries, which could do more for the environment with less means. We can help too, but before that we shall need assistance and support for our efforts.

We welcome the idea shared by many and voiced by some heads of State and Government at this Conference about the "debt for nature swap". We would like this idea to extend to the new democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as to the developing countries.

There are no national or regional problems when it comes to saving the environment. Ecological problems affect us all, the whole community. They are global problems. We feel encouraged by the spirit of this Conference - the spirit of a new humanism, a caring for the completeness of human life, for the future of our children and a forceful sense of sharing the problems of the weak.

I would like to thank the President and through him the Government and people of Brazil for their hospitality and patience. Our most sincere thanks to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for this extremely important forum and to the Secretary-General of the Conference for the excellent organization and the huge effort he put into the holding of this event.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of
the Republic of Zimbabwe

Allow me to express my congratulations to you, President Fernando Collor, upon your election as President of this Conference. May I also express my profound gratitude to you, and to your great country, Brazil, for the warm reception which has been accorded me and my delegation. In the same vein, may I congratulate the United Nations Secretary-General, His Excellency Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, and the Secretary-General of this Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, together with their dedicated staff, for assisting Governments in accomplishing the preparatory steps that were necessary to yield this historic Conference. I also salute the non-governmental organizations, the grass-root movements and the ordinary citizens for making this event possible.

This Earth Summit could turn out to be one of the greatest achievements of our century, precisely because it represents an attempt to save humanity from the spectre of an environmental disaster of world-wide proportions.

All our nations have been meeting in various forums in order to address the current environmental crisis. Heads of State and Government of the Commonwealth, meeting in Malaysia in 1989, reaffirmed their commitment to achieving sustainable development. In their Langkawi Declaration, they recognized the need to advance policies and programmes aimed at combating poverty and achieving sustainable development. They further resolved to strengthen and support the development of international funding mechanisms and appropriate decision-making procedures to respond to environmental protection needs, including assistance to developing countries to obtain access to and transfer of needed environmentally sound technologies. The subsequent Harare Meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government, which took place in October 1991, reaffirmed support for the Langkawi Declaration and resolved to work for the success of the Rio Summit. We thus come to Rio to contribute towards achieving a global consensus on the means of achieving sustainable development.

I express the readiness of the Government and people of Zimbabwe to assume their responsibilities for the preservation of our planet, our only home together. That, indeed, is the choice we are called upon to make at this Summit. It is a challenge which we freely accept in the spirit of a new global partnership based on the principles of equality, justice and fair play. We therefore expect all nations to assume, in the same spirit, their own fair share of the burden and obligations that this crisis imposes on us. We of the South should intensify our efforts in preventing the further destruction of endangered fauna and flora and in adopting measures to stem desertification and the siltation and destruction of our rivers. The North must also curtail its wasteful production and consumption patterns, which have contributed to the depletion of natural resources and biological diversity in the South.

The North has also contributed to the excessive, life-threatening pollution of the planet's waters, air and protective ozone layer. It scarcely needs stressing that the progress of science and technology and associated production systems which has brought so many blessings to mankind - in particular, to that part of mankind that inhabits the developed countries - now imposes burdens and obligations that must simply be taken up, if that progress is not to lead to the unintended but otherwise inevitable destruction of life on this planet.

We, in Zimbabwe, despite limited resources and other constraints, have gone a considerable way towards finding and implementing solutions to the problems of environmental degradation in our country. We have embarked on a national conservation strategy which addresses comprehensively all the key issues relating to the environment and threats thereto. We have on our books laws that seek to ensure that the development of key sectors of our economy (mining, agriculture, industry) will proceed in a manner that poses minimal threats to the environment. We have also taken determined measures to prevent or deal with illegal poaching of our wildlife, particularly such endangered species as the black rhino, the cheetah, the leopard, the python and the humble pangolin. We have additionally taken measures to improve the management of all wildlife species, including the elephant, which has thrived and multiplied. In other areas we are working purposely and with determination to improve the situation of the environment, both legislatively and by way of moral suasion, especially as regards air and water pollution, the safe disposal of toxic wastes arising from industrial processes, the safeguarding or reestablishment of our depleted woodlands, the reclamation of our silted waterways and the development of environmentally safe sources of energy for use by the mass of our people. We hope, in undertaking initiatives in these and related areas, we can count on the practical support of our cooperating partners of the North in particular, and the international community in general.

On a broader front, we have signed the treaties and agreements that resulted from the prolonged and difficult negotiations of the UNCED process. These include the framework convention on climate change, the convention on biodiversity, and the related Agenda 21 programme. This programme is the most important policy initiative of this unique international Conference. It is a very comprehensive conception and description of the environmental crisis. But to succeed, it will require large-scale funding by the developed countries. We call on all States, but especially the developed countries on

whom, as I have already noted, rests much of both the responsibility and the burden, to take a positive attitude and to support fully these vital initiatives. This commitment should also be shared by developing countries, which should adjust their economic and social policies in order to achieve sustainable development.

Apart from the need to formally accede to the declarations of principle and specific conventions already negotiated and agreed upon through the UNCED mechanism, the North, we hope, will accept our call for a restructuring of the world economy in order to enhance the prospects for development in the South. It must simply be accepted that development and protection of the environment are two sides of the same coin. As stated in the World Bank's World Development Report 1992, "Without adequate environmental protection, development is undermined; without development, resources will be inadequate for needed investment, and environmental protection will fail." It is certainly time that the North paid the full price for our natural resources and removed existing barriers which prevent the South from processing and exporting manufactured products. Equally, in our monetary relations, there must be an immediate halt to the reverse flow of financial resources to the North which arises from excessive debt repayments and high interest rates. These debt obligations, under conditions of stringent market access and declining aid disbursements, can only be met at severe environmental costs. The South needs to be economically viable if it is to play its full role in safeguarding the environment. It makes no sense to mount a campaign against deforestation when alternative fuels or resources cannot be made available.

An international economic system which limits the economic activities of the South to the extraction and export of raw natural resources is completely inconsistent with the values we seek to implement today. The international community must formulate new financial and technological transfer policies in favour of the South so as to enable the latter to overcome poverty and contribute effectively to environmentally sustainable development.

It is within our willpower to make a new beginning. The existing asymmetrical, political and economic relations cannot simply be atoned for by handouts to the South in order to allow the present consumption patterns of the North to continue unabated into eternity. The present must give way to a sustainable use of the Earth's resources.

We believe that on the basis of the Charter of the United Nations we can, together, build a new international order which can serve humanity and posterity well.

To that end, we seek the establishment of democratic international institutions and practices to oversee the implementation of our common objectives. Let us now establish a new and equitable global economic and political order through which all nations can discharge their responsibilities towards accelerated socio-economic development and the preservation of a thriving world environment.

This Summit is about change; change in habits, change in attitudes, change in the functioning of international institutions and, above all, change in global economic and political relations for the benefit of all mankind. Let us cause that change!

Statement by H.E. Dr. José Eduardo Dos Santos, President
of the People's Republic of Angola

Allow me to welcome all the peoples of the world deservedly represented here by Your Excellencies and to convey to you on behalf of the Angolan people a message of high regard and friendship on the occasion of the holding of this Summit of heads of State and Government in the framework of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

I also wish to express our deep gratitude to President Fernando Collor and the fraternal people of Brazil for the enormous effort made so that we may all enjoy, here in Rio de Janeiro, the best conditions for the debate and harmonization of the positions that we are about to assume in defence of our common future.

The undeniable importance of this event is expressed, certainly, in the high-level participation of such illustrious personalities from political, scientific and other areas of activity, expressing our common concern in preserving nature, thereby guaranteeing a viable future to humanity.

The need to combine the efforts, resources and all other factors to enable us to meet the challenges with which we are confronted and to achieve the objectives that we propose to attain with the holding of this Conference appear more important to us than making somebody or other responsible for the present level of ecological imbalance.

The People's Republic of Angola is not indifferent to the enormous problems afflicting us collectively and is fully aware of the need to search for joint solutions not only to global problems, but also to those with which Angola in particular, and Africa and the third world in general, are struggling.

In the particular case of the People's Republic of Angola, in addition to specific environmental problems, we also have the effects of the war that has devastated the country these past 16 years as an aggravating factor. For this reason, the Angolan Government has made the economic and social reconstruction of the country a priority, paying proper attention to existing ecological problems, even though it does not have sufficient financial resources for this purpose.

Despite the reasons cited, we have established the self-sustained development of our country as an objective by taking appropriate steps to educate the people with a view to changing habits and practices that are harmful to environmental conservation, as well as steps to restrict unbridled exploitation of natural resources. In this regard, a declaration of the Angolan Parliament establishing a set of principles to be observed was adopted on 19 October of last year, already under conditions of peace.

It is obvious, however, that this effort must be made on a realistic basis, since it is not easy to reconcile the state of need of poor peoples with the imperatives of development without colliding with those of environmental protection. Under these circumstances, perhaps we are caught up in a dilemma that must be faced objectively so that we do not arrive at paradoxical situations in which the strategies of environmental protection are

a condition of meeting the basic needs of human survival and consequently of development.

If, on the one hand, the developing world has to stimulate development, then criteria must be found for the transfer of technology that will allow that development to proceed while satisfying our common concerns about the environment and take their decisive importance into account.

This is a matter pertaining to a field in which the People's Republic of Angola is particularly interested, since it has enormous potential in resources that we intend to utilize rationally in the short term to assure the economic growth of the country in the framework of a policy of mutually advantageous cooperation with partners equipped with adequate capacity.

Our presence at this Conference has been motivated by the conviction that the positions that we come to assume may determine the creation of a climate favourable to the implementation of a collective effort permitting the establishment of cooperative programmes for greater international integration in the search for solutions towards an economic development that remedies the past, corrects the present and preserves the future.

It is in this context that we intend to call attention to the serious problem of desertification, with which the African continent is struggling. This situation has a negative impact on the rain cycle, causing prolonged periods of drought in vast regions on the continent, encompassing millions of hectares of arable land annually, causing a worsening of the already precarious living conditions of countless peoples. For this reason, I would like to emphasize that a position on this terrible problem would be greatly appreciated by the peoples of the regions affected and would certainly make it possible to achieve, on a more global basis, the common programme that we have come here to announce.

With the holding of this Conference and with the results that are obtained from it, I consider that a significant step is being taken in harmonizing the will and actions of all peoples of the world on the road to modernizing the economic structure and towards an increase in efficiency in the use of our common patrimony.

Once again, I take delight in the magnificence of this Conference, which symbolizes a timely increase in awareness of the need to rethink how we have faced the development/environment equation. I reiterate, on behalf of the Angolan Government, our full readiness for dialogue and mutual assistance in the implementation of common programmes devoted to the preservation of our planet.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Maxime Carlot, Prime Minister of
the Republic of Vanuatu

Mr. President, I take pleasure in congratulating you on your election as President of this historic meeting, and in congratulating you and your fellow Brazilians on all that has been done to make our stay here in Rio de Janeiro pleasant, productive and meaningful.

We have journeyed long and far from the South Pacific to be here for the many distinguished friends and leaders gathered from all over the world in order to face one of the greatest challenges ever faced by mankind. As long and as far as that journey has been, the journey we are about to embark upon when we leave Rio will certainly be longer and farther, and probably filled with many more obstacles and potential set-backs.

In a sense, we have already embarked on that latter journey. This Conference continues a process that began decades ago when scientists, concerned citizens of the world and various non-governmental organizations with vision began to warn industrialized countries of the North that the continuation of their unrestrained assaults on the resources of nature would seriously impair the ability of the Earth to sustain the many varied and intricate forms of life we know and appreciate, and many of those we are not even aware of.

These few days in June do, however, mark a new beginning - if not a new journey. Never before have so many leaders attended a single meeting. Never before has so much international attention been focused on our words, and perhaps never again will so much depend upon our deeds.

Underdevelopment, poverty and restricted economic opportunities continue to plague the majority of the world's population and have led to the accelerating deterioration of the physical environment. Three quarters of the world's poor continue to live in ecologically vulnerable areas with low agricultural potential, arid land and soils with low fertility.

Global economic integration, at the expense of the producers of raw materials and other primary products, has seriously undermined the economic and social development of most developing countries. We must compete in an international market-place in which the principal sources of added value and comparative advantage are technology, capital and scientific knowledge. The tireless efforts of a majority of the world's population to eke out a subsistence living and to eat perhaps one meal a day have resulted in the rapid depletion of fragile soils and natural resources, and in frightening assaults upon the environment in order to pay excessive debt obligations. One must realistically ask whether we can really save this planet if these conditions continue to plague the daily lives of the majority of the human beings who inhabit it.

Therefore, we are pleased to note that the Rio Declaration contains some principles that offer hope to the world's poor that their poverty will not necessarily be permanently institutionalized in the name of global action to save the environment. As a small island developing country, which is also a least developed country that is ecologically and economically vulnerable,

Vanuatu is, of course, concerned with its physical survival. We want to see strong measures taken to save the environment. However, we are very well aware that these measures will not succeed if they are taken at the expense of the legitimate dream of people in developing countries everywhere for an improved standard of living.

Like our friend and highly respected colleague, H.E. Mr. Maumoon Abdul Gayoom, President of Maldives, I too am pleased to note the inclusion of an islands programme in the oceans chapter of Agenda 21. We also support the idea of a small, but competent, scientific and technical secretariat within the United Nations system to serve as a focus for mobilizing the resources needed to tackle immediate problems of sustainable development.

President Gayoom spoke yesterday early in the proceedings of this Summit Conference. He was the first head of State or Government of a small island developing country to speak, and he spoke for us all when he stated, "I stand before you as a representative of an endangered people."

It is for this reason that within hours of my arrival in Rio de Janeiro, I signed both Conventions which are the centrepieces of this important meeting. The Framework Convention on Climate Change can become a powerful instrument if it is utilized properly and effectively. Therefore, having signed the Convention, we intend to ratify it within the next few months and hope that others will do so and that the Convention will enter into force one year from now. We also intend to participate in the continued work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change (INC) and to play an active role in the Conference of the Parties once the Convention enters into force.

Much remains to be done on the Convention. There are protocols to be negotiated, particularly on CO₂ emissions and coastal zone management, and perhaps on new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency technologies as well. We intend to actively participate in all phases of the work to breathe life and meaningful substantive commitment into the Convention.

The Convention on Biological Diversity will also be ratified by us within a few months. For those who are concerned with intellectual property rights, we wish to state for the record that, in a sense, we understand and share your concern. However, our concern is of a somewhat different nature, and from a somewhat different perspective. It is our view that the intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples and people in developing countries have been either ignored or very much undervalued under current practices by developed countries. This is a subject which we feel should be closely examined in the future.

The UNCED process, including the INC negotiations, have been an enlightening experience. As always, we have learned from the opportunity we have had to interact with every country represented in the various processes. We will continue to do so. What is unique is that for the first time in these processes, others heard from, began to listen to, and perhaps even learned something from, the small island and low-lying coastal developing countries. We hope that they, like us, will continue to benefit from such opportunities in the future. In conclusion, we offer to do our part to see that they do.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Amata Kabua, President of the
Republic of the Marshall Islands

At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, and your Government, for the warm reception and generous hospitality accorded my delegation here in your most beautiful country.

As I stand here before you, I am humbled by the awesome weight of responsibility that rests upon our shoulders. We who are gathered here in Rio de Janeiro stand at a juncture of human history, which will be viewed by future generations as the pivotal point in our collective life on this planet.

We have come to Rio, both as leaders of our people and as individual citizens of the world, because we have been forced to acknowledge that the world's existing physical, social, political and economic systems are fundamentally unsustainable.

If we have come together at a time in history of great turmoil and crisis, we have also come together at a moment which offers a unique opportunity - an opportunity for us to choose a course of action which will lead humanity into a future that is at once more peaceful, prosperous and equitable.

The complex and interdependent challenges confronting the world today - poverty, the debt crisis, the population explosion, global warming and ocean pollution, to mention but a few - are causing a steady deterioration in the living conditions of the generality of humankind. This sad state of affairs is a testimony to decades of collective shortsightedness and neglect on our part.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is a nation consisting entirely of low-lying coral atolls in the Central Pacific Ocean, with an average elevation of just two metres above sealevel.

I need not dwell on the ramifications of the sealevel rise for the future of our nation. Suffice it to say that any significant sealevel rise will be catastrophic to the Marshall Islands, the homeland of the Marshallese people for thousands of years.

There is a certain irony in the fact that with the end of the so-called cold war, the threat of world-wide nuclear holocaust has been greatly diminished; and yet, the rising sealevel threatens to destroy our nation as completely and effectively as nuclear weapons.

Moreover, unlike the nuclear weapons race, which has been resolved through the political willpower of a few nations, the issues of environmental degradation and the need for sustainable development can only be dealt with on a truly global scale.

While the Marshall Islands understands the reluctance of some nations to fully commit to binding and definitive agreements at this time, we are also deeply concerned that if there is not a consensus to undertake serious preventive and restorative action on a global scale, time may run out.

After we depart from Rio, we must actively and affirmatively work to fulfil the principles espoused at this Summit, while realizing that sustainable and balanced development is essential to alleviating the existing conditions of poverty and despair which afflict much of humankind.

Now that the nations of the world are focused on the problems at hand, we cannot afford to lose the momentum that this Summit has set in motion.

We would, therefore, call on the United Nations to consider convening a follow-up Earth Summit in 1995, which coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

My country has signed the Biodiversity Convention and the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Marshall Islands looks forward to negotiating and signing subsequent protocols which set definite limits on emissions of greenhouse gases. We also look forward to further studies on sealevel rise.

Furthermore, our nation has adopted Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration. We embrace the principles and the planned actions contained in these two fundamental and essential documents, and recognize them as the two parts of an important charter which could change and improve the way humankind lives on Mother Earth. In particular, we look forward to the resolution of straddling stock issues at the world conference called for in the oceans chapter of Agenda 21.

The formation of the United Nations some 47 years ago, with its vision of a new era of peace, human rights and international cooperation, brought great hope and promise to the world's peoples.

Indeed, the United Nations has helped to usher in an unprecedented degree of international cooperation, mutual respect and understanding among the peoples and nations of the world.

But at the same time, it has become increasingly evident that existing institutions and mechanisms need to be greatly strengthened to ensure world peace and security and to address newly emerging global economic and environmental issues. This strengthening will necessarily entail some restraints on national sovereignty - restraints which will be indispensable if we are to deal effectively with these difficult issues.

We look forward to the strengthening of the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and other important United Nations institutions under the provisions of the historic documents negotiated at this Conference. Furthermore, the Marshall Islands supports the establishment of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands submits that the presence of all leaders here in Rio at the Earth Summit makes this the most important event in the history of humankind.

Will we, the leaders of the world, have the resolute will and courage to act in the interest of our people and our planet? Such, indeed, is our most compelling challenge.

As we deliberate in these halls, we are keenly aware that a great multitude of our fellow citizens from diverse backgrounds are simultaneously engaged in similar deliberations at the Global Forum led by non-governmental organizations.

The several thousand press representatives who are present in Rio are broadcasting the events of this Conference to millions of people around the globe. It is no exaggeration to say that the eyes of the world are intently fixed on what we do here.

Let us be worthy of the trust that our political responsibility entails. Let us seize this priceless opportunity and, as dawnbreakers of a new age, take the first steps on the path towards the establishment of a new world order, one which will ensure a hospitable environment, peace, and social and economic justice for all the world's people.

Now, let us together lift this awesome weight of responsibility from our shoulders by lifting the yoke of poverty and despair placed on most of the world by development gone astray. Let us step forward together into the light of success created by the fulfilment of that which began in Rio.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Miguel Anjos da Cunha Lisboa Trovoada,
President of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe

I would like at the outset to take this opportunity to convey to the Brazilian people the fraternal and friendly greetings sent from the other side of the Atlantic by the people of Sao Tome and Principe.

It is particularly gratifying to be able to do this in a language which your people will comprehend directly, as this is one of the things in the cultural heritage of our two countries which we have in common.

I should also like to extend these greetings to the other peoples of our planet who, represented by their distinguished leaders, are gathered here in this splendid city of Rio de Janeiro to turn their minds to a number of urgent problems, issues of central concern to us all, and together identify objectives, plan strategies, set targets and seek the resources for their attainment, in the context of a global strategy which reconciles environmental imperatives with those of development and takes into consideration the interests of all.

Mr. President, we greatly appreciate the efforts which you yourself and the Brazilian people have made to prepare for and host this important forum for the examination of environment and development issues, and I should like to place on record our most sincere thanks for those efforts.

We are also grateful to the United Nations and to all the Governments and agencies which have been actively involved in the staging of this Summit.

Today, two decades after the Stockholm Declaration, which sounded the alarm about the hazardous effects of atmospheric pollution on the ecosystem of the planet, the Rio Declaration has mapped out a new course to the attainment of the desired goals. This fact prompts me to make two observations. The first is that the state of the environment, contrary to people's hopes, has further deteriorated over the past 20 years. The second is that no country, irrespective of its level of social and cultural development, its size or population and its economic importance or potential in terms of material or human resources, can afford to ignore the fact that the protection of nature and the safeguarding of the environment are closely connected to the issue of development and therefore are of relevance to the whole of mankind.

We earnestly welcome this development in international thinking and we cherish the hope that it will take the form of effective, dynamic and close solidarity between rich and poor countries.

This solidarity should be seen not as an act of charity, inspired by feelings of generosity, but as a logical necessity, dictated by nature itself. Never before has there been such striking evidence of the indivisible and shared nature of the destiny of humanity in its entirety.

At the present time there are no sustainable and effective means of protecting countries or their inhabitants from some kinds of environmental disasters, even when these occur thousands of kilometres away. For that reason, the solidarity in question has nothing to do with philanthropic charity. In our view, it is an essential condition for the very survival of the human race. Indeed, it has been stated time and again that one of the greatest and most flagrant injustices of the twentieth century is the imbalance to be observed in the levels of development of different peoples, in respect of their standard of living and living conditions. This is a disgraceful state of affairs, and it is hard to contemplate its continued existence in the third millennium, on the threshold of which we now stand.

We view the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development as a positive and highly significant event, heralding a new era which brings with it great hopes.

The Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, which solemnly proclaims the political will of the parties concerned to strive to implement the decisions that have been taken; Agenda 21, an important document containing a range of planned measures and actions to promote sustainable development; the Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is of great importance for the preservation of the biosphere; and the Convention on Biological Diversity, which recognizes national rights and the need to safeguard the legitimate interests of countries on the basis of reciprocal advantage, are all important steps in the right direction, leading to a solution to the problems which afflict us.

We are convinced that the issues relating to forests, as well as those concerned with desertification, which poses an alarming threat to the African continent, should be properly tackled through appropriate agreements, and with as little delay as possible.

Small island countries like the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe are fragile and extremely vulnerable to environmental imbalances and therefore require heightened attention, particularly in the area of the development of forestry and fishery resources.

Within the exclusive economic zone and, on occasion, even in territorial waters, there arise serious situations which are repeated with impunity, because national authorities lack the necessary mechanisms and technical resources for effective surveillance. These situations involve oil tankers or cargo vessels dumping suspicious cargoes in the sea, or fishing boats operating clandestinely and using prohibited fishing methods of an excessively easy and indiscriminate nature: in both cases the biomass is destroyed and the ecological balance placed in jeopardy.

Rio de Janeiro has awakened in us great expectations. It is now the responsibility of us all, in our daily work, to translate them into action.

We are hopeful that the results of the efforts already undertaken, of the decisions freely entered into and of the objectives which have been set will not disappoint the expectations raised, in the interests of us all, of future generations and of the future of mankind.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Teatao Teannaki, President of the
Republic of Kiribati

I am grateful for this opportunity to speak on the occasion of this historical Earth Summit on environment and development. As the media correctly portrayed, this Conference is the first ever to involve a vast number of independent countries and other organizations outside the United Nations system. Big and small, high and low, developed and developing. First of all, Mr. President, allow me to express my heartfelt gratitude, and that of my delegation, to you, your Government and the people of Brazil for the very generous way in which we have been received and looked after since our arrival in your beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro. We could not have hoped for a better setting for this Conference.

The United Nations General Assembly must be commended for its vision and foresight, for in 1989 it passed, in particular, resolution 44/228, which authorized the convening of this Conference on Environment and Development. This is why we are here at this time. The various meetings prior to this Conference were very useful indeed; for it was from our participation in the various preparatory committees leading up to this Conference that we began to realize not only the wisdom of the United Nations in adopting a number of resolutions relating to global environmental problems, but, more important, that the unique problems of small island States were not fully appreciated. As we know, all countries are experiencing many common environmental problems, but there are those that are more vulnerable than others.

Much effort has been made in the preparations for this Conference. I wish therefore to acknowledge the hard work of the secretariat, the Bureau members of the Preparatory Committee and the two Negotiating Committees, on the Framework Convention on Climate Change and on the Biodiversity Convention.

The Conference is very significant and important for it will determine what type of environment our future generations will live in. As leaders in various capacities, we must make wise decisions for our peoples and use these decisions to guide them into the twenty-first century and beyond. We have the responsibility of ensuring that the decisions we take bring lasting benefit and development to all peoples in all lands.

Why are we all concerned about environment and people?

The state of the global environment has been deteriorating, and almost irreparable damage has been done. We realize this from the ozone layer depletion, yet we are not prepared to admit, at least some of us are not, that the climate has been changing and that its adverse consequences are being experienced today. This reluctance to take a decisive and bold step now would also have implications for biodiversity issues, so much so that we could have immense global environmental problems difficult to resolve.

These problems reflect very clearly the unfair balance in the distribution of the costs of industrialization and economic development. The major benefits of industrialization and economic development are concentrated very heavily in the developed countries. However, as we know, the costs we are now required to pay for the acquisition of these economic benefits are spread out beyond the national borders of the developed countries. It is clear, therefore, that this situation is unfair. It is even more unfair when the costs to those least able to bear them will result in their very survival being threatened.

My country consists of 33 low and flat coral atolls, surrounded by a vast area of ocean. The ocean is encroaching on land, as land retreats. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change predicts a sealevel rise at a rate that would threaten our survival during the twenty-first century. This is our share of the cost of industrialization and economic development. It is clearly unproportional to our negligible share, if any, in causing global environmental problems. Should we continue to bear this cost until we are wiped out? Should we sit on the sidelines and watch the future of our children and people being threatened? The answer, of course, is no! We therefore urge this Conference to show collective wisdom in their decision, and for follow-up action by individual States, especially the industrialized countries.

The Framework Convention on Climate Change that we are here to sign lacks any specific commitments on carbon dioxide stabilization and reduction within a set time-frame. This is very sad, especially from the point of view of small and low-lying States whose continued survival and sustainable development depend on all our spontaneous and determined political will to do something now. However, the only good thing that can be said about it is that at least it is a start. We must, therefore, make all attempts to minimize the damage and remove the threat of total destruction of small island countries and cultures like my own. We shall not wait until the next century. We must carry on the momentum of this Conference.

I am confident that from the Convention it will be possible to take more effective actions to address the causes of global warming, particularly carbon dioxide, and to increase sinks and reservoirs for greenhouse gases.

Particular vulnerability to environmental degradation, and the intent to consider appropriate actions to address the special needs of those most vulnerable, are noted in the Framework Convention. And we urge strongly that this intent be put into practice. Kiribati's continuing special need, like many others at this Conference, is that it should not be threatened by sealevel rise caused by human-induced global warming.

As for the Biodiversity Convention, my Government has the intention to accede to it. We did not participate in the negotiations and therefore we need more time to study it. Life forms on our islands may not be many. Nevertheless, we wish to participate in appropriate programmes that are developed in pursuit of the objectives of the Convention.

There are more life forms in our exclusive economic zone, which is 3.5 million square kilometres in area, than on our land, which is only 823 square kilometres in area. We have particular interests in the sea and its resources. I note with appreciation that in Agenda 21 programmes on the oceans include islands. The management of the resources of the high seas is still a problem and I urge that efforts be made towards resolving differences between the distant water fishing nations and the coastal States.

We note the rather careful reference to the protection of the ocean from contamination and pollution caused by radioactive wastes. As a member of the South Pacific Forum, Kiribati is a party to the South Pacific Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and its Protocols. We therefore object to any form of nuclear testing in the Pacific. Agenda 21 should have given more consideration to pollution from radioactive nuclear weapons and toxic substances.

The text of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, as submitted by the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee at its fifth plenary session, is acceptable to my Government. I am particularly pleased to note that recognition is given to the special needs of the least developed and those most vulnerable to environmental problems.

This Conference is a first step forward in addressing the many global environmental problems. Although it falls short of our expectations we must, with continuing determination and commitment, build upon the little achievements we have made. As a small island State, Kiribati will have little to contribute to the actions required but, like the rest of the small and low-lying atoll countries, Kiribati views the problem of global warming and sealevel rise with grave concern and urges that the problem be addressed without delay.

Very small low-lying island countries contribute very little if at all to global warming, as I said before. But I did not come here to praise our record. Rather, we came to plead our case of being extremely vulnerable and to play our part, however small, in saving the planet we all share, for the sake of future generations.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jacques Delors, President of the
Commission of the European Communities

On behalf of the Commission of the European Communities, I should like, first of all, to thank President Collor and the Brazilian authorities for their welcomes and to congratulate them on their excellent organization of this Conference. I should also like to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, and to the Conference organizers, Mr. Strong and his colleagues who, in opening the doors to the future, had to overcome a great many obstacles.

The Rio Conference invites us to witness the rebirth of the North-South dialogue in a new form. Such a rebirth was an absolutely urgent necessity. The gap between North and South has been growing steadily wider. Terms of trade have deteriorated and, for some years now, there has been a negative North-South net financial flow. Eighty per cent of resources are being consumed by 20 per cent of the population. The combination of excessive consumption in the North and poverty in the South has resulted in pollution and the depletion of natural resources. The adoption of sustainable modes of production and consumption has become a global necessity. Our fates are inextricably linked. By making the necessary connection between the war on poverty and protection of the environment, the international community as a whole shares a common, fundamental objective: the promotion of sustainable development. By first agreeing to hold a meeting to discuss how the demands of environment and development could be reconciled and then jointly adopting the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, North and South have demonstrated their willingness to work together to implement in both regions a style of development which respects natural resources and basic human needs. Let us always remember: the world is our village.

The concept of sustainable development gives us a chance to relearn the value of collective property and shared resources and to rediscover the importance of a long-term perspective. It inspires us to define a new environmental ethic - an objective which is fully compatible with growth. In fact, and this is not at all paradoxical, growth is the precondition for protection of our environment. It is growth that will provide us with the means to achieve our ambitions, but a growth which values nature, a balanced growth which combats rural desertification and urban over-expansion and whose slowly ripening fruits are not immediately swallowed up by excessive population pressures.

This alternative model of development can become a genuinely collective concern if the most industrialized countries recognize that they have special responsibilities towards the developing countries. Ignoring the facts is pointless: what does sustainable development mean to men and women whose first concern is to meet their basic food needs? We know that poverty is an enemy of the environment, in that it leads to short-term and often destructive survival strategies.

It is the economic imbalances between North and South that must be tackled, although this long-term enterprise does not relieve any country, rich or poor, from responsibility for taking as of now the measures appropriate to its particular situation. By their solidarity, the most industrialized nations can make the environmental policies of the poorest countries effective; by their inertia, they will surely ruin them.

The search for sustainable development, the shared responsibility of one and all and the special responsibilities of the most industrialized countries: these are the guidelines for the action already taken by the European Community. As you may know, the Community is working both on the environmental issues and in the area of development assistance. The Community as such provides more than 4 billion ECU annually in development assistance, of which 600 million go to projects related to the environment. In addition, with its member States, the Community is providing 70 per cent of the assistance to the countries of Eastern Europe whose economies are in transition.

In the environment area, the Community is in the process of integrating environment into its other policy areas, for instance, in agriculture with the reform of the common agricultural policy and in energy by pledging to stabilize its CO₂ emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000. That is why the Community would have preferred the Convention on Climate Change to establish more specific commitments, particularly for the industrialized nations. Similarly, the Community, which last year adopted a directive protecting endangered habitats and species, believes that the Convention on Biological Diversity does not go far enough.

The Community has nonetheless decided to sign these two texts, the potential of which should not be underestimated. You know we are anxious to see these Conventions effectively implemented and an early start made on complementary measures. In that regard, I welcome Chancellor Kohl's initiative of inviting all the signatory States to participate in the first follow-up conference to the Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Germany.

The Community regrets the absence of a convention on forests, where these are central to the concept of sustainable development and an essential aspect of its implementation. In this connection, let me recall that the pilot programme to safeguard the Amazon forest, established by the host country of this Conference with the assistance of the European Community and the World Bank, shows that sustainable forest management can be implemented without impairing the development capacities of forest countries - quite the opposite, in fact.

Lastly, I am happy, particularly for the African countries which launched the initiative, that negotiation of a convention on desertification had been approved in principle.

I said that the Rio Conference was a rare moment. Will it be a turning-point in history? That will depend on the follow-up and implementation of the conclusions reached here, and then on further action being taken. Rio must be the starting point of a necessarily long process towards a more equitable world that shows greater respect for natural balances and essential human needs.

It is up to us now to keep the flame alive, to create the spirit of Rio, to define goals and timetables, to specify the means and mobilize the resources. If the texts we have signed remain a dead letter and do not give rise to bold policies equal to the challenges that face us, our collective credibility will not be worth much.

What I sense here, a new spirit generated by the efforts of the Conference and by the non-governmental organizations of both North and South, gives me cause for optimism, but an optimism based on will rather than circumstance. In any event, the European Community welcomes the forthcoming establishment, within the United Nations system, of a commission on sustainable development.

In conjunction with its member States, the Community has just announced that it will shortly be allocating substantial resources to finance priority objectives of Agenda 21. This means that the European Community will mobilize all its expertise and political capabilities to that end.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Bikenibeu Paeniu,
Prime Minister of Tuvalu

It all started at the 1990 Second World Conference on Climate Change held in Geneva. It was at the Geneva Conference that the world learned for the first time about the fate of the inhabitants of the small low-lying atoll nations of our country, the Earth. I used to think that it was a coincidence for me to have been the only head of Government from the southern hemisphere, moreover from a small-island State, present at that Conference but it now appears I had a mission to be at that Conference to tell the world the reality of the impacts of climate change which we are already experiencing, as opposed to scientific uncertainty.

It was also at the Geneva Conference that the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) was established. To my brothers and sisters from the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean and the Pacific Ocean, thank you all for your perseverance throughout the negotiation process. We did not achieve all our objectives but we have indeed made a great impact. This is not the end, it is only the beginning of our fight.

It has taken 18 months to finalize the text of the convention on climate change. However determinedly we strived for a firm commitment from our major developed partners, the end product as we all know is a weak convention. Scientific uncertainty has been the major argument against starting firm with a pragmatic and strong convention. In addition, loss of jobs and reluctance of the affluent societies to change lifestyles were advocated strongly by a number of our leading developed nations as simple reasons to oppose a firm commitment to stop global warming. The fact is, these problems are not globally rooted. The loss of jobs and the existence of poverty in almost all the developed countries are not caused by us. Rather, these are domestic problems, for which there exist domestic solutions. There are many ways for the developed countries to eradicate poverty and ensure optimum levels of employment in their own societies, the major one being the restructuring of their own economic and social systems.

The problems we are talking about here are not domestic. They are global problems - the root of them originating from the doings of the developed world. We did not create these problems. The damage we have already encountered and will continue to encounter in the years to come as a result of global warming was imposed on us. Lives have been taken away. We are not dealing here with politics. It is too precious a subject-matter for the use

of politics. We are talking here about the lives of millions of citizens of our common heritage, the Earth, who have the God-given privilege and right to live in their respective beloved homelands. We are talking here about the disappearance of human beings. We are talking here about the disappearance of races and cultures. We are talking here about the disappearance of sovereign nations from our country, the Earth.

There should never have been a compromise on this subject; we have found this to be a weak convention on climate change. Normally, we in the Pacific are readily amendable to compromise and consensus, this is our way - "the Pacific way". Unfortunately, Tuvalu cannot compromise its very survival. It makes me wonder why there was strong resistance by a number of the developed countries in acceding to the early reduction of CO₂, when the fact is, even in these countries, people are dying from diseases and problems caused by pollution of the environment. It is very appropriate at this juncture to acknowledge the support and understanding of the many developed nations that have taken positive steps to curb global warming.

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change must meet, preferably within the next 12 months, and devise a firm programme of actions to combat global warming. It is vital that the North should be prepared to make the necessary investments and to take the necessary actions - actions conforming to global ecological imperatives and social justice and not short-term economic expedience - to meet the international objectives concerning climate change. Though the objectives of the Conventions on Biodiversity and Climate Change are different, several activities under the two Conventions could lead to similar results. Commitments by the South to conserve biodiversity in tropical forests under one Convention without commitment by the North to reduce carbon dioxide emissions in the Climate Convention would result in disproportional global environmental obligations. The North must urgently agree, therefore, to the adoption of strategies for a long-term convergence of per capita energy consumption and emissions by countries.

Tuvalu has abundant sunshine throughout the year. Thus it is already blessed with abundant renewable solar energy. We are also blessed with a vast ocean which is rich not only in fish and sea-bed minerals but also in ocean waves - a major source of renewable energy. Our problem is that we do not have the technical and financial capability to fully utilize this energy. From the polluter pays principle, therefore, the developed countries have the moral obligation to develop further the economic use of these renewable energy sources and facilitate their smooth transfer to us. This is pure common sense. The cold war has ended. The USSR has disappeared. Military funding should therefore be diverted to development that is environmentally consistent. Thanks are due to the President of France for putting a stop to that country's nuclear-testing programme at Mururoa Atoll. There will be great disappointment the world over, particularly in the Pacific region, if the testing programme at Mururoa is resumed.

One very important issue which this Conference must clear right from the start is the funding mechanisms for the Conventions. It goes without saying that there is no way at all for Tuvalu to make a direct financial contribution towards the implementation of the Conventions' action programmes. In fact, it has taken my Government three years to rehabilitate the homes of some

100 families that were devastated by Cyclone Ofa, which hit Tuvalu in February 1990. This does not include the damage to our food crops and even some housing structures over the past year resulting from unusually frequent strong westerly and gale winds. In fact, it is now some 50 years since the Second World War and nothing has been done to rehabilitate the burrow pits created by massive excavation on the island of Fogafale, the seat of the capital of Tuvalu, to build an airfield for warplanes to land on. These burrow pits comprise 35 per cent of the total land area of the capital of Tuvalu. Not only are these burrow pits a great loss to us given the fact that land is already a scarce commodity in Tuvalu, they are a major contributing factor to environmental pollution.

Our donor partners have not been easy to deal with. The Cyclone Ofa rehabilitation programme of my Government involves only some 500 people altogether. I can very well understand the problem of the Government of Western Samoa may be facing now in obtaining assistance to rehabilitate the homes of thousands of its citizens that were hit twice within one year by Cyclones Ofa and Val, respectively. It is imperative, therefore, for this Conference to establish a non-bureaucratic red-tape arrangement for the disbursement of funds to the victims of climatic changes and that the donors should respect the polluter pays principle.

May I leave you with this quotation as food for thought:

We, the leaders of the world, must not forget that we do not live for ever and ever into eternity. One day, sooner or later, we shall all return to our common destiny. You and I have the moral and spiritual obligation bestowed on us by almighty God to govern in love and respect one another, in peace, harmony and justice. The foremost commandments of any religion are to love God with all our hearts and, secondly, to love your neighbour just as you love your own self. All of us have the responsibility, though some are even more responsible, to save our country, the Earth from our own doings of degrading the environment. This is a golden opportunity to each one of us and I challenge you all to comply with God's laws of the universe. We may not be judged in this world, but God almighty will be our judge in the end.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Flavio Cotti, Federal Councillor
of the Swiss Confederation

The convening of this international Conference was prompted by the urgent situation which we face in the areas of environment and development. During the three years of preparation for the Conference, we could dream that here at Rio de Janeiro we would be able to make practical changes in our laws and behaviour so as to address immediately the problems of unequal development, environmental degradation and destruction of nature.

Reality, of course, has proved to be something quite different. The agreements that we have signed are mainly declarations of intent and general commitments which need to be further elaborated and specified.

Are we to conclude from this that, in the final analysis, the Conference has been a disappointment? Absolutely not. It should be noted for the record that the Rio Conference has revealed the interdependence between the problems of environment and development and has enabled the majority of States to demonstrate their sensitivity to these problems and express their desire to solve them. The Conference has also prompted those in economic circles including all members of the Business Council for Sustainable Development chaired by our fellow countryman Stephan Schmidheiny, to fundamentally rethink their responsibilities with regard to the problems of environment and development and to consider what practical contributions they can make towards solving them. In my view, Rio's greatest achievement lies in having instilled in States and businessmen a fundamental awareness of the fact that without environmental protection, development will not occur and that economic success will come only to those enterprises which make ecology one of the pillars of their business strategy. We are all aware that the future of our rich and vibrant planet Earth - and its ability to support all humankind - depend upon the practical implementation of these principles and commitments.

Thus, Rio should be seen as the starting point of a new ethic for States, business and labour, for all men and women, inspiring greater solidarity both among peoples and between man and nature.

That said, when it comes to actually implementing these principles, it is natural that differences should emerge among us, given our different sensibilities and the different remedies which we advocate. Indeed, we differ greatly in economic situations, in cultural heritage, even in physical size. Little Switzerland is particularly grateful for the opportunity afforded by this meeting for each State clearly and freely to state its ideas and its options. This fundamental right is especially important when it comes to questions as complex and delicate as those of development and environmental protection.

Switzerland believes that:

As the principal producers of greenhouse gases, the industrialized countries should take the first steps towards stabilizing and eventually reducing CO₂ emissions. Such steps must be practical and measurable in order to be credible. In this connection, Switzerland has established clear emissions targets and a programme of action for meeting them.

Economic measures for the protection of the environment, such as a tax on CO₂ emissions, are of crucial importance. Wherever possible, such measures should be implemented jointly and coordinated between different countries.

The implementation of Agenda 21 will entail considerable additional costs for developing countries and this will require substantial supplementary assistance from countries in a position to provide it. Switzerland has made a commitment to do its full part in this effort.

Follow-up to the Rio Conference should begin as soon as the Conference has completed its work. We must elaborate and more accurately define the terms of the agreements that we sign here in Rio de Janeiro. Switzerland would be happy to host and support financially any structures established to ensure verification and follow-up, as well as any bodies created for the prevention and limitation of environmental disasters.

For us, the Rio Conference is an essential step towards sustainable development. In time, the Conference will assume its full historical importance as long as this condition is met: that today's environmental awareness is followed by practical, shared commitments which are the product of genuine understanding between peoples who have learned to transcend what I referred to earlier as their natural differences. Indeed, it is essential that we transcend our differences and open the door together, with courage, vision and generosity, on a new society - the more responsible, interdependent and peaceful society which we all desire. In order to achieve the goals of sustainable development, we need a new social contact which will create new relationships between States, between peoples and between man and nature.

I should like to thank all those who contributed so much to the great success of this Conference. I thank Brazil and its President, Mr. Collor, for having hosted the Conference with such care and skill. I should like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who participated in the years of difficult work in preparation for the Conference. You, in particular, my dear Maurice Strong, have been the soul and the conscience behind this effort. I should also like to thank the non-governmental organizations which sent representatives here from all over the world. They played an essential role in the Conference and were key members of our own Swiss delegation. Without the direct participation of non-governmental organizations, there will be no effective international policy for sustainable development.

Never before have Governments, international agencies, economic factors, the press and the peoples of the entire world so focused their attention on the state of the planet as they have done during these momentous days at Rio de Janeiro. Let us hope that the decisions taken here will be implemented with just as much effort, commitment and good will. We must act quickly - very quickly!

Statement by H.E. Dr. Mauno Koivisto, President of the
Republic of Finland

Mr. President, I wish to thank through you the people of Brazil for the warm and genuine hospitality, and to congratulate the Brazilian Government for hosting this historic Conference in such an excellent manner.

I had the opportunity to get acquainted with the ecology of the Amazonas during the past few days. I was impressed by the concern shown by the people I met there about the ecological balance and by their strong interest in preserving the biological diversity of their unique environment. Finland's experience and dependence on forest resources demonstrate that only ecologically sound multiple use of forests opens the way to sustainable development.

For four decades, the confrontation between East and West was the main obstacle to international cooperation. The arms race produced endless new generations of weapons, and vast resources were committed to this vicious circle. At the same time, the third world countries spent a considerable portion of their meagre resources on armaments.

Now that this era of political confrontation is over, it is the proper time to focus attention on another polarization. Ways must be found to change the tendency for the industrialized countries to keep on raising the level of consumption, while the developing countries either lag behind or become ever more poor.

Poverty is a human tragedy. It is also related to serious environmental problems and leads to over-exploitation of natural resources. Deforestation promotes desertification and erosion. Use of non-renewable resources frees the land area from energy production but pollutes the atmosphere. Population growth, closely linked to poverty, is threatening the whole environmental balance.

The most significant threat to the Earth is not the poverty of the South, but rather the affluence of the North. The industrialized nations have developed patterns of production and consumption which waste natural resources and pollute the environment. There is a reason to assess critically lifestyles which are ecologically and economically unsustainable.

Man is part of nature but, in the course of history, has turned to exploiting it in order to make life easier and more secure. This exploitation has become so effective in modern times that not only nature but also the very future of mankind is at stake.

If population growth and urbanization continue, people will more and more draw away from nature and return less and less of its riches back to the cycle of nature. Various schemes, programmes and implementation mechanisms will do little except placate one's conscience.

The solution lies in respecting the carrying capacity of nature. Sustainable development is a national imperative for every individual nation and each has the responsibility of mobilizing its share of the resources needed for development. But in addition to national efforts, substantial additional external funding is required for the developing countries, as well as for countries undergoing the process of transition to a market economy.

The United Nations, its agencies and organizations and the international financial institutions were born after the catastrophic events of the Second World War, when there was a great need to start building a better future. The time is ripe for a burst of creative energy to convert these institutions into a force promoting sustainable development. They should provide an equitable forum for agreeing universally on joint policies, and serve as an efficient machinery to turn these policies into action.

The two Conventions signed here in Rio de Janeiro, on Climate Change and Biological Diversity, show the way. The next step should be negotiations on conventions on sustainable management of forests and on combating desertification. There is no time to waste. A special session of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to the follow-up of this Conference should be convened soon, preferably in 1995.

Even if the discrepancy between the easiness of accepting bold programmes and implementing them in one's own country may be wide and frustrating, the growing awareness of the urgency of the problems gives hope for the future.

Many expectations for maximum results in this Conference have been raised and many people will be disappointed. I am confident, however, that this Conference has been a success and that the emerging partnership here in Rio de Janeiro will prove to be a historic turning-point in the efforts to save our planet.

Statement by H.E. General Lansana Conté, President of the
Republic of Guinea

Allow me to congratulate you on your brilliant election as President of this world Summit. Allow me also to thank the people and Government of Brazil for their commendable efforts to ensure the success of this Conference. May we also express our gratitude to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the positive initiatives that went into its organization.

It is with great pleasure that I address you in this important forum on a subject that affects all of humankind: environment and development.

Since the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, held in June 1972 at Stockholm, there has been a constant stream of initiatives at the world, regional and national levels promoting the protection and development of the environment.

There is no doubt that the present meeting is the most important of those initiatives, bearing witness to the increasingly widespread awareness of the progressive degradation of planet Earth. The Earth no longer has the capacity to absorb the gases and other substances emitted by modern society and to render them harmless, nor can it tolerate the changes imposed on its natural environment.

The Republic of Guinea, as all developing countries, faces acute problems related to the environment and economic development. Despite the major efforts we are making to lay the foundations for sustained development, the results often remain limited because of the obstacles faced by underdeveloped countries in general and those in Africa in particular, namely, low productivity, the slump in commodity prices and the deterioration of terms of trade, the foreign debt burden, insufficient official development assistance, the complexity of financial mechanisms for gaining access to outside financing, and the difficulties our exports have in penetrating the markets of the North.

We are of course aware that our country's economic recovery and development depend, above all, on policies and measures implemented at the national level. However, no matter how much care and determination go into implementing these policies, the path to sustainable development can be found only if we are able to introduce equity into the international economic system.

I am certain that the present Summit will meet the expectations of billions of men and women throughout the world. For this to happen, the results we have achieved must ensure the security of the planet and the well-being of humankind through a judicious use of resources and an equitable distribution of wealth among all nations.

It was with great interest that we followed the preparations for this Conference, in which our country participated fully, and we greatly appreciate the results achieved by our experts, particularly the decision on the drafting of a convention to combat desertification in Africa.

We also support the Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity, as well as the Rio declaration which sets forth the principles governing the rights and obligations of States with regard to environment and development.

As for Agenda 21, I consider it urgent that the additional financial resources needed to support it be made available as of this Conference.

In signing the Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change, I feel proud to have discharged an historic duty towards present and future generations.

This Summit will, I am sure, be credited with having laid the foundations for ongoing, increased cooperation among all countries, based on international solidarity.

Statement by H.E. Reverend Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide,
President of the Republic of Haiti

I greet you in the name of the Haitian people. Our thanks and our greetings go especially to President Collor and the Brazilian people.

After 500 years of resistance, including 200 years of independence under attack from institutionalized violence, Haiti is fertilizing its soil with its own flesh and blood: the flesh of the thousands of its children who have been murdered between 30 September 1991 and the present day; the blood of its sons and daughters who have been killed for saying "yes" to democracy. Yesterday evening, yet another of our orphanages was burnt down.

A bloody coup d'état signalling political pollution and environmental distress. Seven million men and women in danger. In Haiti, land of dignity and poverty, there is toxic waste, but the political pollution is even more toxic.

In 1492, 80 per cent of the territory was covered with luxuriant vegetation. Today, a mere 7 per cent is wooded, of which only 1.5 per cent is forest.

Of our 27,750 square kilometres of land, we lose 1,350 tons of soil per square kilometre every year.

The soil is going! The "boat people" are leaving too! Forty thousand political refugees in eight months. Both the soil and its children are heading for the sea. In search of freedom, the people of the land become people of the sea before returning to that same land where they would rather die on their feet than live on their knees. Standing empty handed against the weapons of a minority who account for less than 1 per cent of the population but hold more than 45 per cent of national income.

Political pollution, environmental distress. Seven million men and women in danger in full view of the world!

The soil of Haiti can be saved only by the return of democracy to Haiti. A national undertaking, certainly, but an international challenge.

The future of the Rio Conference is linked to that of Haiti, the poorest country in the hemisphere but one of the richest in human values. To live on one's knees, no. To die standing, yes. Freedom or death. Democracy or death. Dignity or death. That is the choice.

If Rio 92 is one of the most important events of the century, Haiti 92 offers the international community an opportunity to mark the advent of the year 2000 by the celebration of a brilliant victory. The suffering of one man is the suffering of all humankind. By the year 2025, 83 per cent of the world's population, which is predicted to reach 8.5 billion by that date, will be living in the developing countries. Yet, so far, 85 per cent of the world's population has access to only 27 per cent of the planet's resources (World Bank, World Development Report 1992).

To combat the loss of biological diversity and the depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer is to fight on the side of humankind. The human species is in danger!

The cries of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty call out to us. Diogenes, in full daylight, lantern in hand, was looking for one man. By the light of Rio 1992, let us look for the people whose power springs from the heart so that we might build a civilization of love.

Statement by H.E. Dr. Luis Alberto Lacalle, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

I belong to the generation that was reaching maturity when one of the greatest qualitative changes in human history occurred, the generation which, after the historic Stockholm Conference, realized that the world was finite and that planet Earth, which had been given us to inhabit, could not be depleted and polluted indefinitely.

This change, perhaps one of the greatest in human history since, from creation until about 20 yeras ago, we believed that we could abuse our world, is a milestone in history. But this milestone must be passed. It is not enough that there is universal awareness on this subject, although that is doubtless one of the great achievements of current civilization, an achievement of Governments, non-governmental organizations, the media, schools, men and women who have embraced the cause of education and cultural change as a holy cause.

It is not enough, dear friends and delegates, to have reached this point of collective awareness. Twenty years have passed since Stockholm; I wonder whether in another 20 years, in 2012, my children will come to another conference to discuss the environment and adopt declarations. Or will we have succeeded in building a system that protects the environment today and tomorrow so that a future conference is unnecessary?

The magnitude of the problem calls for more than national or regional solutions. Today, solidarity is no longer a political option but a prerequisite for the survival of States and nations. We have a duty not to pollute, but we also have to promote among ourselves the right not to be polluted. Pollution knows no limits, it does not stop at the lines we draw to mark borders, it is global in the broadest sense and we have tackled it fundamentally from the standpoint of rights, the normal human response.

The aspect of the duties that accompany all rights must be emphasized. Whenever we speak of duties, the tendency among civilized human beings is for duty to be applied by law and to arise from law. Law between nations is called an international treaty.

It is this advance of civilization that we must begin today. We have 178 countries in the United Nations, yet there is no treaty that binds them all, not even the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which could be considered a primary law among human beings. Neither the Convention on the Law of the Sea nor the international human rights covenants, which are universal, have been able to secure the adherence of all nations.

All nations must give their assent on the subject of the environment. Beyond the important achievements of the delegates who helped draft the Conventions which are being opened here for signature, we must take a legal approach, for it is the law that organizes society and gives it balance and reason to exist, and begin to draft a treaty that describes conduct detrimental to the environment, whether by individuals, companies or nations, and establishes the corresponding penalties. If we do not take such an approach, all other efforts will lack the potential and the force needed to achieve the desired changes.

Such a treaty should have one special characteristic: it should not enter into force until it is ratified by all nations, so that we can then see exactly where responsibility lies for its lack of effect. We must raise, discuss and resolve the conflict between the concept of sovereignty and the concept of environment. This conflict does not exist because one is detrimental to the other. We believe that stewardship of the environment makes nationalities more functional by involving them in problems that are common to all. A treaty giving the international tribunal par excellence, the Court at The Hague, specialized powers to pass judgement in this area would empower nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, this in a few words is the position of Uruguay. We wish to announce that, at the next session of the United Nations General Assembly, we are going to set in motion the mechanisms to begin legislating on this subject, to decide that nations shall begin to draft a treaty which is the most supportive of and acceptable to all humankind, a treaty regulating and punishing attacks on the environment.

Only thus, through the law and its application, will we be able to move on to a stage of practical achievement in this area of concern. We have been asked to make a political commitment: here it is. We have been asked to show political will and there can be no greater political will than this: to begin drafting a treaty after the next session of the General Assembly. My country would like to offer this as its contribution to the consideration of this very

important issue. It has offered the talents of its citizens, the insight of its jurists and the skill of its diplomats to the great causes of humankind. Today once again, without false modesty, it is placing this idea and its people at the service of this Organization.

Many thanks to Brazil, vigorous and vital as always, and to Rio de Janeiro, captivating in its beauty.

Statement by H.E. Sir Ketumile Masire, President of the Republic of Botswana, speaking also on behalf of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity

On behalf of the people of Africa, of Botswana, and on my own behalf, I wish first to congratulate His Excellency President Collor of Brazil on the organization of a Conference of truly historic importance and international standard. We are particularly happy to be so cordially received in this beautiful city of Rio de Janeiro, to enjoy the warm hospitality of the Brazilian people and to deliberate on issues of global importance to ourselves and to our children and their children.

We stand here today under an international spotlight on this historic occasion of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to deliberate on the environmental crisis which faces mankind.

In 1972, when we met in Stockholm for the first international conference on the environment, many of us may not have fully appreciated the importance of the environment to man's existence and to his future well-being. Today, 20 years later, our views and attitudes have changed but much still needs to be done. Our planet is under even greater threat today because of man's irrational behaviour towards his own survival. The problems of pollution, desertification and deforestation are worse. Our habitat is now under threat from new crises brought about by ourselves in the pursuit of economic progress.

The threat from ozone depletion, global warming and desertification points to signs of global catastrophe. We have to be concerned. This concern must lead to a determined effort to change, to redress past harmful policies with action towards a better future. There must be no room for further indecision.

This Conference, the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, and the resulting international conventions are of such importance that national self-interest must subordinate itself to global priorities. Let there be no country which considers it more important to preserve positions dictated by national self-interest.

In conformity with the African common position and the rest of the developing world, we welcome the agreement on Agenda 21 but have to express our concern as Africa about its implementation. The developed nations should recognize that they continue to promote environmental policies and activities which regrettably bring about the degradation of the global environment. It is therefore self-evident that they put up new and additional resources to address problems of environmental degradation which will impact negatively on our efforts to save the globe. We believe that with the goodwill which is

prevalent at this Summit a new commitment is necessary to stimulate global action for the implementation of Agenda 21.

Africa is seriously concerned about the unfortunate lack of progress on the issues of technology transfer, resource flows, debt relief and trade imbalances.

The relationship between climate change, desertification and poverty is one of grave concern to our continent. All demand global action. The importance which Africa attaches to the global Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change is well known. Although our contribution to the courses of these problems is relatively minimal, we are prepared to bring about the necessary changes in policy which responsible action demands of us.

We appeal to those countries which continue to succumb to the temptations of political indecision which results in failure to take remedial actions to review their position. We are therefore duty bound to point here to the need for the convention on desertification which has now been agreed. Africa is now hopeful that the General Assembly, at its forty-seventh session, will take appropriate action expeditiously to implement the Rio decision on this vital issue.

This Conference has recognized that the issue of new and additional financial resources for the implementation of Agenda 21 programmes is central to the achievement of sustainable development. It is imperative that we all support the provision of new and additional resources, particularly to the developing countries, to achieve this goal.

Africa does not expect that Rio will be the end of the process. Our objective of an Earth Charter is yet to be realized. The proposal that we should work towards the conclusion of an Earth Charter to coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations deserves the most serious consideration. It should now be placed on the top agenda of the United Nations. That should be the priceless souvenir we should all take away from Rio. Indeed, that will be the most fitting gift to the citizens of the world.

Our children deserve a world which is better, not worse, than our own. Let us then together do that which the occasion demands. Let us take bold decisions with a historic commitment to posterity. We cannot afford to do otherwise. The world expects it of us, our people expect it of us. This is our moral responsibility.

Statement by H.E. Dato' Seri Dr. Mahathir bin Mohamad,
Prime Minister of Malaysia

I would like to thank our host, President Fernando Collor, and the Government of Brazil for the hospitality extended to us at this Conference.

Malaysia has come to this Conference because we are concerned about the environment. We are here to seek ways of achieving sustainable development and of establishing a solid foundation for world-wide cooperation on environment and development. We appreciate that if anything is to be done towards sustainable development, all countries everywhere must work together.

The boundaries of nations do not limit the pollution caused by them. Neighbours, both far and near, are affected by the pollutants produced by any nation.

At present, Malaysia is well able to cope with its own pollution. In a country about the size of Britain, we have a population only one third as big. We are a developing country with a per capita income one tenth that of the developed countries. Our capacity for wasteful consumption is therefore very limited - roughly one thirtieth that of the developed countries.

On the other hand, our capacity to deal with our own waste is far in excess of our needs. Our land is almost 60 per cent covered with self-regenerating tropical rain forest, with an additional 15 per cent covered by tree plantations. Any carbon dioxide we produce we can absorb.

If pollution can be contained within the boundaries of a country, then Malaysia has nothing to worry about. But Malaysia has to deal with cross-border pollution. Most developed countries have already destroyed their capacity to deal with their own waste. Not only have they clear-felled their forests but their production of waste is so great that they must rely on the poor countries to dispose of that waste.

Malaysia is prepared to do its bit. But can nothing be done to reduce the waste? It is right that the poor be forced to clean up the mess created by the rich? Should there not be some sharing of the task, the responsibility and the cost for cleaning up? These are the questions we would like answered at this Conference.

For the right answers, there must be a modicum of sincerity and honesty on the part of everyone. We talk a lot now about a new world order, human rights, democracy and justice. Let there be evidence of all these when we try to identify the causes and to resolve the problems of sustainable development.

We recognize that man in his pursuit of development is the cause of the pollution and degradation of the environment. We cannot stop development altogether but we can at least minimize the pollution caused by it.

If we are to achieve sustainable development, we must all be prepared to make the necessary adjustments. But if we begin by saying that our lifestyle is sacred and not for negotiation, it will be meaningless to talk of development and the environment.

It is claimed that one of the causes of environmental degradation is the size of the population of some developing countries. We dispute this assumption.

However, we note that rich developed communities tend to have low birth rates. If we want to reduce population growth, we must help poor communities to become developed. Yet we hear from the rich proposals that would result in stopping the development of poor countries in order to reduce pollution. You may be able to reduce pollution but you will end up with massive overpopulation in the poorest developing countries.

We know that the 25 per cent of the world population who are rich consume 85 per cent of its wealth and produce 90 per cent of its waste. Mathematically speaking, if the rich reduce their wasteful consumption by 25 per cent, world-wide pollution will be reduced by 22.5 per cent. But if the poor 75 per cent reduce consumption totally and disappear from this Earth altogether, the reduction in pollution will only be by 10 per cent.

It is what the rich do that counts, not what the poor do, however much they do it. That is why it is imperative that the rich change their lifestyles. A change in the lifestyles of the poor only, apart from being unfair, is quite unproductive environment-wise. But the rich talk of the sovereignty of the consumers and their right to their lifestyles. The rich will not accept a progressive and meaningful cut-back in their emission of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases because it will be a cost to them and retard their progress. Yet they expect the poor peoples of the developing countries to stifle even their minute growth as if it will cost them nothing.

One of the major issues we are expected to resolve is global warming. Here one of the major industrialized countries could not agree to cut back on its emission of carbon dioxide at the rate generally accepted by others. Since it is the major source of industrial pollution, its decision has rendered the agreement inequitable and meaningless.

Malaysia has for several years been cutting back on the emission of carbon dioxide. We impose a tax of 300 per cent on cars with large-capacity engines. Even small cars are heavily taxed. But in most developed countries the tax on automobiles and petrol is minimal, thus accounting for the high car/population ratio. Surely a reduction in the number of private cars and better public transport would not change the lifestyle too much. Yet it will do wonders for global warming.

The other issue before us is biodiversity. The poor countries have been told to preserve their forests and other genetic resources on the off-chance that at some future date something is discovered which might prove useful to humanity. This is the same as telling these poor countries that they must continue to be poor because their forests and other resources are more precious than themselves. Still, they are not rejecting the value of biodiversity, at least not totally.

Denying them their own resources will impoverish them and retard their development. Surely if something is discovered in their forests, they should be entitled to some return.

But now we are told that the rich will not agree to compensate the poor for their sacrifices. The rich argue that the diversity of genes stored and safeguarded by the poor are of no value until the rich, through their superior intelligence, release the potential within. It is an intellectual property and must be copyrighted and protected.

Developing countries which met in Kuala Lumpur in April have agreed on a plan to reafforest the whole world. A fund for this greening of the world was proposed. But the North are resisting this proposal. Perhaps it is considered to be yet another attempt by the developing countries to squeeze

the rich using the environmental issue. The rich North can see only the chiselling ways of the South and is determined that they will not be squeezed. Yet the North demands a forest convention.

Obviously the North wants to have a direct say in the management of forests in the poor South at next to no cost to themselves. The pittance they offer is much less than the loss of earnings by the poor countries and yet it is made out as a generous concession.

We will accept the Global Environment Facility, and we will accept that it be administered by the OECD-dominated World Bank. But can we not have a little say; can we not have more transparency in the administration of this fund? Surely this does not amount to the South squeezing the North.

The poor are not asking for charity. When the rich chopped down their own forests, built their poison-belching factories and scoured the world for cheap resources, the poor said nothing. Indeed they paid for the development of the rich. Now the rich claim a right to regulate the development of the poor countries. And yet any suggestion that the rich compensate the poor adequately is regarded as outrageous. As colonies we were exploited. Now as independent nations we are to be equally exploited.

Malaysia was disillusioned about these inequities long before we reached Rio. In a world that has been won for democracy, we find powerful nations laying down terms even for participating in a democratic process. We find scant regard for the principles of fairness and equity. We find that even the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 have been watered down at insistence of the powerful and the rich.

Notwithstanding all these factors, we still have high expectations of this Conference. We would consider the Conference on the Environment and Development a success if there emerged a better understanding of the enormity of the problems we face and the need for us to cooperate on an equitable basis. Malaysia will do what can reasonably be expected of it for the environment.

Statement by H.E. Mr. George Vassiliou, President of the
Republic of Cyprus

We have all gathered here in Rio de Janeiro in what history will recall as one of the largest and most important meetings of heads of State, non-governmental organizations and world society at large. Our presence here and the decision to allocate only seven minutes to each speaker relays the message that what is urgently required in order to tackle our problematic relationship with our environment is not mere words, but a collective commitment and concrete actions to alter our present course of ecological mismanagement.

For we must admit that in the last two centuries something went terribly wrong in man's dealings with his natural habitat. In our quest for unbridled development, we regarded the environment as a commodity ripe for exploitation. We need, I believe, to be reminded that it is man who belongs to the environment and not the environment to man.

Today we recognize that yesterday's policies threaten tomorrow's existence. We can, however, take comfort from our experience that, when faced with the most complex and intractable problems, man develops his innate creativity to the optimum level.

Today we face such a challenge. Let us seize this opportunity and use our collective knowledge and experience to explore alternative forms of technological research and economic development that will coexist with environmental protection. Given the universal aspect of the problem, the result of our efforts should be readily available and affordable to all - rich and poor, developed and developing. Only then will we be able to achieve our common objectives and safeguard our common interests.

We are all aware that the protection of the environment is inextricably linked to regionally balanced economic development, appropriate population policies and sustainable consumption patterns. What we also know, but have yet to act on, is that no country can afford to ignore what is happening in other parts of the world. Tragic experiences of recent history have clearly shown that the aftershocks of man's own policies and actions proliferate outside national boundaries.

If man's efforts are limited to the national level, we will not be able to safeguard our own local environment. This, however, should not detract from the fact that good housekeeping begins at home. In Cyprus we have recently taken measures which, though unpopular in the short term, we were duty bound to take. We have introduced a moratorium on the until now uncontrolled tourist development, even though tourism is our major source of income. We have made environmental impact studies obligatory for new development projects and even halted previously planned projects. Future developments must proceed in tandem with environmental protection and with due regard to the natural character of the area, in accordance to our new urban and regional planning legislation. Habitat and species protection is pursued through the creation of the National Park of Akamas, a Turtle Conservation Project, fishing and forestry regulations, as well as the banning of spring shooting, the latter in a country where 10 per cent of the population are holders of hunting permits. Strict measures for pollution control have been introduced, and we are proud about the widespread utilization of solar energy heaters.

Even with these measures, however, and similar measures other small countries have introduced, can we claim that our environment is protected? A mere glance at a satellite picture of this planet is proof enough to convince us that this is a small world and that without a collective effort whatever individual measures are taken will never be sufficient.

We all recognize that our action plans for the protection of the environment carry a heavy financial burden. The Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, who has gained our admiration for his dedication and commitment to making this Summit a success, has informed us that a sum of the order of \$125 billion of external financial resources per annum will be required, a figure which will no doubt increase in the future.

These funds will never readily become available in their totality unless we convince the people of the donor countries that they are in fact investing in their own survival, the survival of their children and, in the final analysis, the survival of our planet. There is, I believe, a need to mount a serious public awareness campaign to carry this message across. I would therefore like to suggest that we spend a mere half of the 1 per cent of the funds we intend to spend on the environment in order to convey the message that any expenditure towards environmental protection and sustainable development is not only a sound investment but the best investment we can make. We must convince people that this investment will lead to more and not fewer jobs, to greater profits and a better quality of life.

It is against this background that we recognize this Earth Summit and the provisions of Agenda 21 as an important milestone and the centrepiece of our collective commitment to safeguard our planet for future generations. Cyprus is committed to this and this is why we signed the conventions resulting from this Summit. Today, we herald a new beginning, which we must seek to build on through universal implementation.

Before I conclude, Mr. President, I would like to echo the sentiments expressed by all the previous speakers and to congratulate you for your stewardship of the meeting and thank your Government and the people of Rio for their warm welcome and hospitality.

Our meeting in Rio has focused on the interrelationships between development and the protection of the environment. If we begin today repaying our debt to mother Earth and to our fellow human beings, I would like to foresee a future Summit meeting where we do not talk of protection of the environment, but rather its further development and replenishment. The Earth is our home, it is in fact our only home.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Tofilau Eti Alesana, Prime Minister
of the Independent State of Western Samoa

It is an honour and pleasure for me to address this august assembly on this historic occasion.

As many leaders have stated, no one can doubt the importance of this Summit. No country can be unconcerned about the outcome of this meeting.

The road to Rio has been fraught with complexities, as may well have been expected. We all know the principles at stake, the difficulties that have arisen, as well as the scepticism that has followed us to Rio. This is all the more reason for my congratulating all those who have persevered long and hard to make this Summit a reality.

Samoa and the Pacific Island States, do not have the luxury of waiting to see what will or will not be done to combat the ecological problems the world now faces. Within the past two years we have suffered two tropical cyclones, unprecedented both in intensity and in frequency, the occurrences of which we consider are the adverse effects of induced climate change. For us, it is not just a question of reaching or maintaining sustainable levels of development. It is not just a question of eradication of hunger and poverty. For us, it is a question of pure survival.

We cannot afford to end our involvement with the signing of these documents. This Summit, historic as it is, is only the beginning of the monumental task confronting the world. The success of this meeting is not to be measured by the signing of these papers, but in their implementation and the follow-up process that must come. I therefore urge world leaders to join with us in forging ahead from Rio, and to continue to work in a spirit of cooperation and togetherness, so that we can eliminate, or at least alleviate, the dangers that threaten our environmental security, our economic development, and indeed for some of us, our very existence.

I am compelled to state that, for too long, we in the Pacific have been the dumping grounds for toxic substances and nuclear testing by developed countries. It is, therefore, only fair and just that we look to you the developed nations, to lend us not only your ears, but your resources and your goodwill to discontinue such destructive practices. Furthermore, we look to you to take the lead in restoring nature's vital balance, thereby enhancing the harmonious equilibrium that is ever desirable in our international relations.

Throughout the centuries, Samoa has been guided by the adage: "O le aso ma le filiga'afa, o le taeao foi ma le mata'ina tila", which translates into our traditional belief in destiny and that Providence will provide. This concept has been a precious safety valve in all walks of our life and has contributed in no small measure to our country maintaining its social harmony and political stability. However, I believe that in spite of our hallowed traditions and cherished customs, we cannot stand by and let destiny or nature take its present course in respect of our environment. Samoa has already legislated for the protection of the environment. Additional legislation is currently being prepared for the protection of endangered wildlife species. Furthermore, for the purpose of addressing environmental issues comprehensively, my Government is in the process of formulating a National Environmental Management Strategy.

The time has come for nations to come to grips firmly with the present crisis and to assist in shaping and preserving their own destiny. It is therefore imperative that rich and poor nations alike work in partnership to achieve the goals of sustainable development in the national and global spheres. I believe it is our divine obligation to conserve, protect and safeguard this world, of which we are not the owners, but merely the trustees, so that we can pass on this sacred heritage to our descendants. As much as it would gratify us to join with others in saying: "We told you that this would happen", if we do not act now, it may well be that some of us small island States may not be around to voice that dubious pleasure.

We in Samoa have just this month celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of our independence. It is my fervent hope that Samoa will be around 300, even 3,000 years hence, to commemorate its independence in the presence of all her family of nations.

Humankind has its responsibilities. Development has its price. We leaders of our nations have a common duty. Let us fulfil that duty, for the sake of our generation and for those to come.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Solomon Mamaloni, Prime Minister
of Solomon Islands

This Earth Summit is taking place at a time when a number of key environmental issues are still being debated. It is taking place at a time when scientific research itself is still not certain about vital environmental questions such as the trend of sea-level rise and global warming. It is also taking place at a time when new challenges and threats, many of which are the result of human activity, call earnestly for greater understanding and cooperation amongst nations of the world.

Like other Pacific neighbours, Solomon Islands looks forward to the successful outcome of this Conference. I believe this opportunity will set a pace for collaboration and cooperation in many crucial areas that at present are being ignored. In this connection, it is pleasing to learn that the series of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development Preparatory Committee meetings have done much towards setting the scene for the deliberations here. It is realized that some issues, such as the transfer of financial resources and technology necessary to implement Agenda 21, are difficult and may take longer to resolve completely.

The South Pacific where Solomon Islands is situated is both unique and has special environmental concerns. Environment is an integral part of our existence. The sea, the land, the rivers, the forests are our resources. Our villagers depend on these resources for their daily subsistence. But unplanned development or poor development planning, usually imposed from outside, and global environmental problems such as climate change and associated sealevel rise, which have their root causes from outside of our region, are becoming a threat to our resources and aspirations.

The South Pacific countries at their own collective initiative have made bold but consensus statements on regional environmental issues, including the setting up of the regional environmental institution, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). In addition, the region has put in place two complementary Conventions: the Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific and the Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region. These Conventions form the base upon which national and regional environmental programmes can be built.

I mention these regional efforts to draw your attention to the serious concerns about our environment and to show to others that the South Pacific region has demonstrated the will to pursue and cooperate in this global effort. I believe that unless there is will at the national, regional and international levels to respectively and collectively play our parts, our efforts in Rio will achieve little.

The fourth of June 1992 will go into the history books as the date when the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was opened for signature. The objective of this Convention, as I understand it, is to stabilize atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at a level that would prevent dangerous interference by human activity with the climate system.

Solomon Islands welcomes this Convention and undertakes to do its best to ensure its early ratification. It is frightening for us in the Pacific to be told by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that with the sealevel rising at the rate of 6 cm per decade, by the end of next century the sealevel will have risen between 40 and 110 cm. In practical terms, it means that by the end of the next century many of our atolls and their inhabitants will have vanished from the face of this Earth. This frightening prediction calls for the developed countries to seriously adhere to the provisions of the Convention which require them to take steps to limit emission of greenhouse gases. It also calls for the developed countries to commit themselves to providing both new and additional financial assistance to developing countries, including small island countries, to enable them to attain sustainable development programmes.

My Government, in association with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, has recently carried out a study of the costs and benefits of biodiversity conservation using guidelines provided by the United Nations Environment Programme. The study has estimated that some US\$ 6 million is currently spent each year on conservation measures and research. It has been estimated that an additional US\$ 3 million would be required each year to implement priority measures.

Benefits of biodiversity conservation, while more difficult to quantify, include the sustainable use of our forests and marine resources, the potential for ecotourism and the maintenance of the subsistence lifestyle which is so important to the people of our country.

Of major significance to Solomon Islands is the Biodiversity Convention, which my Government will sign today. We are already at an advanced stage in planning for the implementation of the Convention.

The Earth Charter and its associated Conventions are merely a set of guidelines within which development must take place. Solomon Islands, a country made up of many dispersed and scattered islands must improve its communication links. It must improve its present low literacy rate and must provide adequate health and social services to those isolated areas of the country. It is therefore inevitable that we direct our development towards addressing these important basic needs. That in part means we must tap and develop our natural resources to derive benefits from which we can pay for services and infrastructure building costs.

Solomon Islands has begun a programme of economic reforms. The programme aims at encouraging private investment activities; privatizing semi-government enterprises; encouraging aid assistance to money-generating programmes and areas of economic growth; and reducing the size of the public service. The objective ultimately is to make Solomon Islands less dependent on aid assistance and hence less dependent on others to determine its destination.

But it is important to realize that our strategies in this effort must ensure a balance between development and environmental concerns. In other words, development must be sustainable. This, however, is not easy. Sustainable development is both involved and costly. It requires a high level of understanding and cooperation between the resource owners and the resource users or between the recipient and the donor of technical know-how.

It is costly because exploitation of resources in a controlled and manageable fashion requires skill and appropriate infrastructure. In a country like Solomon Islands, where these are not readily available at present, financial assistance must be given and given in a way uncumbersome to development. It is heartening to hear developed countries committing themselves to providing new and additional financial assistance to enable developing countries to meet their obligations under the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity. When procedures for this assistance are drawn up, I sincerely hope that serious consideration will be given to ensuring its easy access to developing countries.

From the South Pacific region, where the will to move forward is already apparent, we come to Rio with one single hope - the hope for the success of this Summit. Only through our collective commitment and will can we save this planet from destruction.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, President
of the Republic of Mozambique

In addressing this magnificent assembly I feel particularly honoured for the opportunity given to me and to my delegation to convey our appreciation for the excellent initiative which has permitted the holding of this Conference. We equally would like to express our gratitude to the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil for the warm welcome accorded to us since our arrival.

I would also like to use this occasion to congratulate the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, for organizing this Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the Conference, and all those whose dedication has made this Conference possible.

Today, Mozambique is on the list of the least developed countries of the world. As a result millions of Mozambicans live in absolute poverty.

This difficult condition is not a result of historic fatality or due to lack of infrastructure or resources. The potential of Mozambique is enormous; however, most of its resources are unexplored. The difficult condition that Mozambique is experiencing today is a result of 16 years of a war of aggression which has rendered unviable every type of initiative towards progress. The war, which has been imposed on us externally, is the main cause of the environmental imbalances and problems of our country. Excessive concentration of displaced people from the countryside in peri-urban, coastal areas and transport corridors has resulted in the reduction of the carrying capacity of our ecosystems, in which these people are now compelled to live.

Because of the fragile economic condition of the country, the recent oil spill in Maputo Bay, caused by Katina P oil tanker, has assumed catastrophic proportions. Equally, the current worst drought of this century in the southern and eastern African regions has had serious environmental consequences for Mozambique.

Mozambique puts high hopes in finding global solutions and in establishing a sustainable development process. Together with other nations of the region, the Republic of Mozambique intends to implement appropriate and innovative sustainable development practices that harmonize the production of wealth on the one hand and respect for the environment on the other.

Man is the centre of all our preoccupations. Indeed, sustainable development starts with the establishment of national policies on sustainable development, policies that promote respect for social justice and eliminate poverty and misery. Likewise, the protection of the biological diversity of a given region implies the defence of cultural diversities and of human societies. As a new type of development process becomes implemented, the establishment of new forms of relationship between man and his environment and between North and South becomes urgent. The countries of the South cannot win this struggle while their economies suffer the spectrum of external debt and continuing pressures on economic relations, which in turn are widening the gap between the rich and the poor.

Poverty and environmental degradation are reciprocal. This vicious circle not only hinders the development of poor nations but also threatens the continuity of life on our planet. Poverty is absolutely incompatible with sound environmental protection and management.

I would like to express our satisfaction with the adoption of the Climate Convention, which we signed yesterday, as a result of a global consensus on global climatic changes.

This is a fundamental step from which it will be possible to establish programmes to fight against specific problems of different regions of the planet. It shows that it is necessary that this Conference take decisive steps in order to advance in the elaboration of an international convention dealing with specific problems of developing countries, especially in Africa, such as drought and desertification.

The conservation of our biological diversity is the moral responsibility of all nations, so that we can hand it over to coming generations in all its splendour and beauty.

The importance of the protection of our genetic resources should require that all nations make an effort by adopting and implementing the Biodiversity Convention. It was with this conviction in mind that we signed that Convention yesterday.

I am satisfied to note that the scope and the procedures for the Global Environment Facility are being reviewed. Special importance must be given to the process of creating other mechanisms which can strengthen the capacity of developing countries so that the decisions of Agenda 21 will be transformed into practical projects assisted by the necessary financial resources from the international community.

The election of Mozambique as a Vice-President of the Preparatory Committee, as well as of this Conference, is obviously a gesture of confidence placed upon us and has deeply moved us to honour and put all our effort into implementing the resolutions which shall derive from UNCED'92.

In Mozambique, the preparatory process for this Conference was transformed into a movement of discussions and consultations involving all structures of our society. The elaboration of our national report for UNCED'92 was not taken simply as a technical activity but as a major learning process. The Government has established the National Environment Commission, an institution with competence to assist government actions, and coordinate participation of all sectors of society, for environmental protection and management in our country.

The forthcoming peace for the country will bring about possibilities for the relaunching of the economic activity of the country; thus development progress and environmental conservation will become two poles of the same effort. A number of programmes on environment are under elaboration in the country. These involve areas of education, ecosystems management and the development of legislation for the sustainable use of resources.

Finally, I would like to express my Government's firm determination to do all in its power to implement decisions taken here and offer our collaboration in the transformation process of this planet into a real sustainable house of all living beings.

Statement by H.E. Sir Wiwa Korowi, Governor-General
of Papua New Guinea

First, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the Government and the people of Brazil for hosting this historic and important Conference at the head of State and government level, and to the organizers and delegations for the hard work which has been done to prepare for it. I would also like to thank you for giving me this opportunity, on behalf of my country, Papua New Guinea, to address this key global Conference on Environment and Development.

Papua New Guinea, located in the South Pacific, consists of the eastern half of the island of New Guinea, which is the world's second largest island, together with several hundred smaller islands of various sizes and characteristics. The land rises from deep ocean trenches to ranges of mountains which are well over 4,000 metres in height. It occupies a land area of 467,500 square kilometres, of which 77 per cent is under forest cover, and has a population of almost 4 million.

The country is extremely diverse physically, ecologically and culturally. It is a major global "hot spot" of biodiversity in terms of terrestrial, marine and freshwater life. It has, for example, major and rich coral reef systems, and is fortunate at this stage still to have extensive rain forest. While the Government is firmly committed to utilizing its renewable resources in a sustainable manner, this can only be achieved with the full consent and participation of our people, who own 97 per cent of the country's land and coastal waters. Due particularly to the dependence of at least 80 per cent of the population of these renewable resources, biological diversity has always been regarded as vitally important, and this is recognized in the National Constitution and related legislation.

Papua New Guinea is fully aware of the environmental crisis that the world faces today and, while we believe that the current level of environmental degradation has been largely caused by industrialization, we recognize our responsibility as a small member of the greater international community in contributing to the survival of this planet. In this instance, our forests currently function as a "carbon sink" for maintenance of life on our planet.

Papua New Guinea endorses the aims of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 and will sign the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Our participation in the negotiations for the Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change, the non-legally binding statement of forest principles, the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 demonstrates our continuing commitment to the objectives of the Conference. From our perspective there are some significant drawbacks to the Conventions in their present form, such as insufficient acknowledgement of indigenous people's ownership of biological diversity. We are also concerned that no real commitments were made in terms of reductions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. However, it is realized that in order to accommodate the needs of all nations, reasonable compromises have been necessary. Hopefully, once in force, the Convention can be strengthened through subsequent implementation agreements.

One of Papua New Guinea's major assets is its tropical rain forest. A recent major review of our forest industry has culminated in a new forest policy and legislation, and participation in the Tropical Forestry Action Plan coordinated by the World Bank. This has resulted in several aid-funded projects, which are coordinated through our National Forest and Conservation Action Programme. The effective implementation of the Programme will lead to major changes in the way our forests are managed, and places an increased emphasis on forest conservation, alternative forms of development and environmental assessments and monitoring.

Papua New Guinea is made up of over 600 islands and has vast areas of wetlands, all of which will be severely affected if there is an increase in sealevel and cyclonic activity. The country has therefore followed closely the negotiations which have led to the adoption of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. While my country will be a signatory to this Convention there are still areas that must be addressed, such as reduction of emissions and the provision of new and additional resources by the industrialized and major consuming countries. There is much yet to be done and we will certainly participate in further negotiations.

The main concern for our people in the rural areas is to gain greater access to the benefits of development. The demands of most people are not exorbitant, but they do seek improved social and economic opportunities.

Papua New Guinea believes in the principles of sovereignty over its natural resources and the right to development. However, we accept our global commitment and welcome appropriate international assistance, which is essential if we are to effectively manage and conserve our resources.

The consensus reached on Agenda 21, including the establishment of a Commission on Sustainable Development under the Economic and Social Council, technology transfer and financial resources, should be viewed as a significant step in the right direction.

Let me repeat that 97 per cent of natural resources in my country are owned by the traditional people. As a democratic country, our rural communities ultimately make their own decisions with regard to the utilization of their natural resources. The international programme of action on environment and development must recognize the difficulties that we will experience and adequately compensate our efforts to draw a balance between the basic needs of the resource owners, who have great spiritual and cultural associations with those resources. We therefore believe that there should be a balance between national development and the global concern about environment.

Papua New Guinea's concerns and hence the models we need to pursue may be different in detail to those that apply in other societies with different social and cultural traditions, or where the resources have already been severely depleted; however, I certainly believe that there are many issues common to all countries. We must ensure that, as we progress from this Conference, we all appreciate our own responsibilities wherever we stand in the spectrum of economic development. In the crucial years ahead we cannot afford to take entrenched positions, but must fully appreciate the needs and concerns of the other members of the global community, our children and their children's children.

I pledge my country's commitment to the global partnership started here in Rio de Janeiro for a safer world for us and for future generations.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Rafael Angel Calderón Fournier,
President of the Republic of Costa Rica

I come from Costa Rica, a land where ideals become reality, where the ideal of peace as a product of social justice - an ideal born of a democracy that is more than a hundred years old - is becoming a reality. Great ideals that have become realities and that are already a part of our history. Today, Costa Rica is working to realize yet another great ideal, that of development with a human face and in harmony with nature.

At this Summit, which marks the beginning of a new era in human history - an environmental era - Costa Rica reiterates its unshakeable faith in a world where everyone will work together to save nature. Before this meeting of nations, we Costa Ricans fervently appeal to all peoples and all Governments to show their willingness, courage, dedication, generosity and sense of duty by making this Summit a success. We Costa Ricans believe that in the struggle for sustainable development and protection of nature, only total success is good enough.

This Summit means no less than the beginning of a new era of human development and environmental conservation. From this day on, humankind must acquire increasing environmental awareness. From this day on, humankind must advance resolutely towards reconciliation with mother nature.

To save nature, to save the Earth, is the most humane and the most urgent task that we face now and that our descendants will face after us. It is the most humane task, because to save the Earth is to save the human race. It is the most urgent task, because what we do not save now will never be saved.

A policy of sustainable development must be based on respect for the life, dignity and rights of the human person. It also entails respect for the common good and for the family unit. At this global meeting, I firmly advocate the right of women to participate actively in the task of ensuring sustainable development.

Humankind is still the measure of all things, it is still the ultimate goal. The crusade for sustainable development and environmental conservation is a crusade for the salvation of humankind.

It is perfectly possible to achieve sustainable, balanced development that is in keeping with human dignity and in harmony with nature. We Costa Ricans, in a spirit of brotherly love and healthy competition, would like to share with all nations our achievements and experience in this vital task of environmental conservation. Costa Rica has a longstanding and prestigious tradition of environmental conservation. Following the dictates of its own convictions and the wishes of its citizens, our Government has placed special emphasis on accelerating progress in this area.

A year and a half ago, we presented to the world our proclamation on the environment and the building of a new international environmental order. Our administration has already taken specific steps towards building a new environmental order in Costa Rica. We can say with pride that 28 per cent of the national territory now enjoys special environmental protection. And today we note with satisfaction that the basic premises of our proclamation have been included in the Rio Declaration and in Agenda 21.

For these and other reasons, Costa Rica was recently awarded the "Canticle of All Creatures" St. Francis of Assisi International Prize for the Environment. The award announcement stated that its intelligent, courageous approach to environmental management made the Republic of Costa Rica stand out as a model among all the countries of the world. Even so, we are not satisfied.

The struggle continues, at both the national and the global level. If we are fully to achieve the ideal of development with a human face and in harmony with mother nature, we must increase our efforts and our dedication. With this Summit, we have begun to realize this ideal.

It is worth mentioning that yesterday the Government of Costa Rica and the Kingdom of the Netherlands signed a statement of intent whereby the two countries pledged themselves to a programme of cooperation for the implementation of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, with a view to achieving sustainable development in both countries. This is a beautiful example of solidarity between a developed country and a developing country.

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We want all the principles, ideas and plans of action that have emerged from this Summit to become realities. To this end, we propose the creation of an Earth council, an international agency dedicated to making the agreements reached at this historic Summit a reality.

The holding of this Summit marks the beginning of history. Today marks the beginning of the history of development and environmental protection. Today marks the beginning of a new environmental era!

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jacques Santer, Prime Minister
of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

The Rio de Janeiro Conference will be a very important milestone, indeed a point of no return, on the road that should lead us to sustainable development and hence towards a future which will guarantee future generations better living conditions for all the inhabitants of the planet.

Our task is to lay the foundations for a new model of sustainable development which entails not only better management of the environment but also, and above all, a radical change in our attitudes and values, and in the way we view the world. Any threat to the integrity of the biosphere must henceforth be seen as a threat to our own integrity. This cooperative model is intended to correct the damage inherent in our model of growth, which is founded on a belief in the unlimited availability of resources, in continuous progress and in the need for growth and on faith in science and technology as the means to solve all problems.

A new ethic of the environment stresses the priority that must be given to the notion of nature as capital, which entails a revision of growth. The objective of maintaining or increasing the stock of nature capital ensures at the same time:

Greater equity for our own generation: since poor people are generally more affected by damage to the environment, improving nature capital will tend to enhance equity;

Greater equity for future generations: the stock of nature capital is subject to irreversible changes and is a basic need; the objective of increasing nature capital will thus take precedence over that of increasing human capital;

Greater respect for nature: the greater the stock of nature capital, the more habitats will become available and the more genetic diversity will be strengthened.

As a member of the European Communities, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations, Luxembourg supports all international initiatives designed to promote sustainable development and which recognize the priority that must be given to environmental protection policy as a necessary component of other sectoral policies.

The slogan "think globally, act locally" is a fashionable concept. The fact that we have come together at the world level to set targets for improved economic and ecological management of the planet should not make us forget that such policies are really implemented on the ground, at the local level, which is why every individual should feel concerned and involved in them.

Education and consciousness-raising on environmental questions are thus the order of the day; non-governmental organizations obviously have a major role to play in this respect. We must therefore be attentive to their messages, as well as to the aspirations of local populations.

Luxembourg expects the declarations and conventions that are to be signed at this Conference to contain precise, binding provisions. The objectives to which Luxembourg is ready to subscribe must include result-oriented obligations such as, in particular, the stabilization and reduction of CO₂ emissions and must confirm the legitimate rights of States of origin, notably in respect of biological diversity.

It is true that the conventions open for signature have definite shortcomings and lack clear commitments. This is particularly true of the Convention on Climate Change. It is to be hoped that this Convention will be swiftly implemented and supplemented by successive protocols.

Luxembourg will, moreover, support all initiatives taken in this area by the European Community and the international community.

Luxembourg is aware of the role which the industrialized countries must play with respect to environment and development, given their specific responsibility for damage to the human and natural environment.

The Luxembourg Government advocates technological cooperation with developing countries in order to afford them better access to environmentally safe technologies, to increase the transfer of technologies on an equitable and advantageous basis and to reinforce the capacity of those countries to use and develop such technologies.

It is in favour of strengthening existing environmental institutions by improving coordination and optimizing their means of action.

It considers that funds for environmental management and protection should be established and appropriate investments made in that field and that new and additional financial resources should be allocated to meet costs.

With a view to fulfilling its international commitments, Luxembourg has taken two measures which deserve special attention:

Regarding development assistance, it has decided to bring the share of GNP allocated to that purpose to 0.36 per cent by 1995, as an intermediate goal, thus attaining the average for OECD countries; the ultimate target will of course remain that of achieving 0.7 per cent of GNP by the year 2000.

Regarding the fight against climate change, it has decided to stabilize its national CO₂ emissions by the year 2000 at the latest and advocates reducing emissions by at least 20 per cent by the year 2005.

The Luxembourg Government welcomes the establishment of the Global Environment Facility to help developing countries tackle global environmental problems.

Luxembourg is prepared to support the activities of the Facility within the limits of its possibilities and means of action.

In conclusion, I should like to congratulate the Brazilian authorities for their excellent organization of this Conference and to thank all the experts who devoted years of hard work to the texts we are to sign.

I should like to give special recognition to the efforts made by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) through its Executive Director, and by the secretariat of the Conference through its Secretary-General.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jorge Antonio Serrano Elías,
President of the Republic of Guatemala

Mr. President, thank you for your hospitality and the hospitality of the Brazilian people. Mr. Secretary-General, congratulations on the work done by the United Nations in organizing this meeting.

Nothing could speak more eloquently and offer more hope to the peoples of the world than to see Heads of State and Government come together in search of agreements that will make it possible to improve the quality of human life by combating poverty, promoting development and preserving that which is fundamental to the survival of the Earth. On this question with its many ramifications, more than on any other, we absolutely must act in solidarity.

All of us, rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped, educated and illiterate, have a common destiny. We must therefore overcome our ideological differences and reconcile our individual interests.

Those who have the means and the ability to do so must be prepared to cooperate in this effort and to act with generosity and wisdom so that those who, like the indigenous peoples of the American continent, have lived in harmony with nature may never reach such a point of desperation that they are forced to harm it.

The Book of Genesis in the Bible tells us that "the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it." Applying this task to our times, we would say that to work and take care of the Earth means to govern it responsibly, to use it with care, to make the most of it and enjoy it with wisdom, but never to destroy it. This responsibility applies to all of us equally. In addressing the environmental question, which has been given new impetus by this Conference, we must not repeat what happened with other global issues on which a double standard of morality was applied, creating a situation in which requirements and even conditions are

imposed on the less powerful while the failings of the more powerful are tolerated and even ignored.

Unless we think and act very clearly, environmental criteria could become another pretext for putting pressure on the developing countries. Under the guise of punishing Governments that were allegedly or genuinely guilty of violating those criteria, poor peoples would be hurt, as they were in the past, and would be denied their legitimate right of access to resources vital for their development.

I hope with all my heart that the sense of responsibility and solidarity which underlies this Conference will never be distorted by attitudes of arrogance and condemnation which, far from fostering a sound policy of development without devastation, would make progress even less accessible to the marginalized of this Earth.

It follows, therefore, that the developing countries cannot be said to have an obligation to preserve their forests unless the international community assumes unanimous responsibility, in a spirit of solidarity, for finding truly sustainable development alternatives for their peoples. Forests are not in themselves a global resource, but they can become so provided that the social cost of maintaining or promoting them is shared.

We have listened with satisfaction to the offers of financial contributions, although we realize that, given the magnitude of the problems involved, the resources offered will never be sufficient. I wish to reaffirm our view that every country has absolute sovereignty over its own resources, that agreements must be reached voluntarily and, at the same time, that such agreements must recognize clearly that the cost of preserving those resources must be shared, guaranteeing decent living standards for those who currently earn their livelihood by exploiting them unwisely.

I do not wish to appear negative or to sound a discordant note at this Conference, but I do want to be realistic and honest about our views as we come to this meeting. We are willing to do our part unselfishly and to cooperate closely in all the efforts to which we are all now pledging ourselves, but I would not feel at ease either with my conscience or with my people if I did not sound a warning about these dangers.

Guatemala is a country immensely rich in natural resources; as part of the Central American isthmus, we form a natural bridge between the continental shelves of North and South America, our biodiversity is one of the richest in the world and we have one of the largest forest areas on the continent, occupying one third of our territory.

As Chairman of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, a body created by agreement between the Central American Presidents, I wish to stress that, in addition to the efforts being made by individual countries, our region as a whole has been working for a number of years to achieve some very positive results, such as the creation of a Central American system of protected areas, the signing of a regional agreement prohibiting the transboundary movement of toxic wastes, and the Central American agreement on biodiversity, signed recently at Managua, Nicaragua.

It is also worth mentioning the agreements reached in regard to indigenous peoples and their development, and the programme on women, environment and development put forward at the regional and national levels by the First Ladies of Central America.

The task we face as a country, as a region and as a community of nations is to create a new lifestyle that is in harmony with the nature that God has given us. Let us henceforth pursue this noble objective and take up this greatest of challenges to humankind on the threshold of the twenty-first century.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Hugh Desmond Hoyt, President of
the Republic of Guyana

We, the peoples of the world, have arrived at the crossroad which Rio and the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development represent. The journey to Rio has brought us to the end of the preparatory road. That journey must now proceed beyond Rio along a path which holds the prospect of a regenerated world. Such a world requires a new approach to international relations, rooted in a global partnership. This is the only realistic route to sustainable development.

The preparatory process has established and consolidated the inextricable linkage between environment and development. Solutions to environmental problems are therefore inseparable from solutions to problems of development. No country or region can isolate itself from the consequences that flow from this self-evident truth.

Anyone who stands aside endangers his own survival and puts at risk that of others, for the world in which we live is inescapably interlinked. We are all involved. I am here reminded of some lines by the renowned Guyanese poet, Martin Carter:

You are involved
This I have learnt
Today a speck
Tomorrow a hero
Hero or monster
You are consumed
Like a jig
Shakes the loom
Like a web
Is spun the pattern
All are involved
All are consumed.

The realization of this essential interlocking relationship has sustained us through the difficult, complex and wide-ranging negotiations, the results of which are the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity, the statement of principles on forests and the Rio Declaration, with the accompanying programmes of action.

These are historic documents: they are the outcome of our efforts. Guyana has signed both Conventions and will act in the spirit of their provisions.

I am convinced, however, that worthy as these agreements are, they fall short of the expectations of the peoples of the world. None the less, together we can build on the foundation which they provide. I believe that the gains would be immeasurably increased if we were to proceed on the basis of a global partnership that demands from each according to capability and shares equitably the benefits derived from a development that would then be sustainable.

It was in pursuance of this objective that the States of the Caribbean Community have contributed to the preparatory process. We did so in many constructive ways. We have participated fully in the debate and influenced the unfolding of solutions to the environmental and developmental challenges of climate change, oceans, atmosphere, forests, terrestrial and marine biodiversity. Our participation secured recognition of the vulnerability of, and the unique problems and difficulties faced by, small island and low-lying coastal developing States. The measure of success achieved in addressing these concerns is a source of satisfaction to the Caribbean Community.

My own country has demonstrated its commitment to a global partnership for sustainable development. Illustrative of this commitment is the association which Guyana has established with the Commonwealth and other international partners to develop a project for the sustainable utilization of forests and conservation of species. This project, the Iwokrama Rainforest Programme, embraces an area of about one million acres of pristine forests. Its development is proceeding in a climate of heightened international interest. The benefits from this Programme will augment Guyana's ongoing efforts to conserve and utilize sustainably her rich biological diversity.

Guyana is a poor developing country. I can confirm, therefore, that the tree of sustainable development cannot flourish in the infertile soil of poverty. But I also know that the growth of this tree would be stunted under the burden of excessive lifestyles.

Social scientists have frequently argued that differences between individuals and between groups tend to be artificial ones imposed by privilege. The environment issue essentially raises a similar consideration - that lack of development opportunity lies at the root of the current inequalities in attainment. Addressing those concerns, however, is not enough. Attitudes of superiority, based on levels of achievement derived from unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, must also be eliminated.

The persistence of mass poverty and the continuation of overconsumption pose a grave threat to global environment security. The response to that threat has to be collective. It requires mechanisms which can guarantee sustainable development.

Our responsibility as leaders is clear. We have a duty to the peoples of the world: it is to ensure that Rio is no mere media event, but rather a significant milestone on the road to a better, more sustainable future. For make no mistake: this Conference is about people and their future on this planet, Earth.

A tree has been planted in Rio in commemoration of the Conference. It is a Tree of Life - a symbol of growth and renewal. The leaves on that tree represent pledges from the peoples of the world to take the necessary action to ensure survival. Those leaves must not be allowed to wither, fall and die. They must perennially green the world and be a constant reminder of the historic decisions we took here at Rio to cooperate in saving our planet for this and succeeding generations through sustainable development of its resources.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan,
President of the Republic of Suriname

At this truly historic event I would like to express my gratitude to all those who, years ago, laid the foundation for this Conference.

It gives great satisfaction to witness the realization of this Earth Summit, as the final result of the often extensive negotiations that have taken place during the past two years in preparation of the main objective, which is aimed at promoting sustainable development in all countries.

Although each country will seek the realization of this objective in its own manner, we have come together here and have laid very important foundations by means of the Rio Declaration, Agenda 21, the Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, which have come to this Summit after lengthy and difficult negotiations, undoubtedly represent an important step in fostering the new global partnership.

The comprehensive and integrated set of programmes of Agenda 21, which has been defined for a wide area of issues in the field of environment and development, will surely serve as a basic reference in designing our national strategies with regard to our environmental policies.

Sustainable development for our peoples can be accomplished through committed national policies within a global context of environment and development by providing, inter alia, the necessary means, such as the financial resources agreed upon at this Conference or those planned for the future in the implementation of the programmes and activities of Agenda 21.

The new spirit of global partnership which has evolved here in Rio de Janeiro is a condition necessary to bring forth solutions for diminishing the adverse effects on the environment since these - especially in developing countries - are rooted mainly in critical economic conditions.

It is important that firm action be taken in all countries in order to reduce atmospheric pollution caused, among other things, by the emission of the greenhouse gases, in particular in the fields of energy consumption, transportation and industry.

The negotiations to arrive at the Convention on Biological Diversity and for a set of principles for the sustainable management of all forests have not been easy either, with the negotiating parties adhering to their points of view.

As a significant first step for Suriname, I signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity this morning.

My country is richly endowed with a wide variety of ecosystems and an abundance of natural resources, which are largely intact. Almost 90 per cent of our total land area of about 164,000 square kilometres is classified as forest land and encompasses a number of tropical ecosystems with a moderate degree of endemism.

Our national commitment to the conservation of biological diversity has been proven by our protected areas network, which was established almost 40 years ago and which safeguards representative ecosystems present within the boundaries of the country.

Our national objective is to increase the protected areas network from the current 5 per cent to 7 per cent of the country's land surface area, which enhances the potential for ecotourism as well as the protection of biodiversity.

I am pleased to inform you that Suriname has carried out an extensive research programme concerning the management and regeneration of the tropical rain forest. This programme, the Celos-Silvicultural System, serves as a blueprint for the sustainable management of our rain forest, and was pioneered and developed in Suriname as part of a joint project between Suriname and the Netherlands in the 1970s. In the more or less 30 years of its development and its application during the last 10 years, the preliminary results have already encouraged some countries with a tropical rain forest cover to apply this system, which is primarily based on an understanding of the ecological principles of the tropical rain forest.

For the proper implementation of Agenda 21 at the national and international levels, my Government has already initiated the process which should bring about the necessary institutional reforms. These reforms entail, among other measures, the establishment of a national focal point which will deal with matters pertaining to environment and development at the regional and international levels in order to guarantee Suriname's active participation in preparing and implementing international agreements, conventions and protocols.

In order to achieve a coordinated policy which will guide, instruct and direct activities on environment and development issues, a national council will be established.

In the framework of the cross-sectoral approach, we will continue to give due attention to environmental aspects in development planning. At the same time, new legislation will be developed in order to comply with the principles and provisions which have been agreed upon in the field of environment and development.

Even though not all the targets envisaged by developed and developing countries have been achieved during the negotiations, I am convinced that the Rio Summit has offered us a forum to commit ourselves to the objectives as enshrined in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21.

The time has come to act decisively and in unison. Hesitance should now make way for firm action to mitigate and prevent adverse effects which could result in an environmental catastrophe.

On behalf of the people of the Republic of Suriname, I reaffirm our commitment as a partner in the universal search for solutions for a sustainable use of the life support systems of our planet Earth.

Statement by H.E. Mr. Lévon Ter-Petrosian,
President of the Republic of Armenia

It is a pleasure for me to address this Conference, which has the task of drawing up an environmental code of conduct for nations and devising the strategy and tactics to be followed for solving global problems, in order to eliminate the threat of environmental disasters on Earth. I should like briefly to describe the environmental situation in Armenia.

The Republic of Armenia is in a situation of fairly high environmental risk as a result of a number of geopolitical, natural and socio-economic factors, the main ones being climatic and geographical conditions combined with population density and the intensive, unbalanced promotion of industrial and agricultural production.

This situation was aggravated when, in the heyday of scientific and technological progress, the Republic was plunged into crisis by problems which had their roots in the country's history as well as in contemporary events. This forced us to promote economic growth at all costs. While the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was implementing a unified economic policy under which priority was given to the interests of the centre at the expense of the periphery, Armenia was applying a development strategy that devastated its natural resources. Energy production was carried on with no regard for the actual capacity of resources, without effective purification equipment and without a system for processing and utilizing waste materials. Extremely environmentally hazardous means were used and extensive methods of economic and agricultural management were applied.

As a result, in the cities of the Republic, particularly Yerevan, rivers with a weak rate of flow were affected by inadequate sewage treatment and by soil erosion. Landslides were not uncommon and swamps formed.

Lake Sevan, the only source of drinking water, was used for energy production, with the result that over a 45-year period, its water level dropped by 18.5 metres and its volume decreased by 42 per cent. As a result, the only basin was undergoing intensive atrophy. The pressure of human activity on nature had a negative effect on the health of the population of the Republic, as well as on flora and fauna.

The situation was further aggravated after the 1988 earthquake and by the economic and energy blockade of recent years. In order to survive, Armenia once more turned to Lake Sevan as a source of energy. Over the past two years, despite the energy crisis, the Government has refrained from operating the nuclear power station in order to protect the environment. By rationing the power supply, we have avoided the felling of trees.

I must stress that continuation of the blockade will have serious environmental consequences: the loss of Lake Sevan, which would alter the climate and the water system in the region, and the reopening of the nuclear power station in a seismic zone are very real dangers.

Armenia's natural resources are unique in their variety and their beauty. There are over 3,200 plant species, 200 of which are endemic, and the wildlife is also very diverse. Unfortunately, many plant species are disappearing and action must be taken protect them.

The Government of Armenia is enacting laws and developing economic and legal mechanisms for promoting the rational use of natural resources. It is also looking for financial resources to improve the environment.

The Republic of Armenia is not a large country. While it is not heavily industrialized, it does have great scientific potential. In 1984, the Government of Armenia and the Soviet Academy of Sciences decided to conduct environmental experiments in the region with a view to developing a mechanism for improving the environment and updating the Soviet Union's ecological data. An environmental research centre was created, but its activities were discontinued because of the economic and political crisis. The projects that had been envisaged were not carried out.

Armenia, which is situated at the social, cultural and geographical crossroads of Europe and Asia, is well aware of the need to ensure that human activities are ecologically sound and recognizes that, where environmental protection is concerned, it is accountable to the whole world and to future generations.

I should like to propose to this Conference that an experimental programme be set up, with the assistance of international organizations, to enable our data to be used in other regions of the world. I propose the creation of a special commission to study local environments and help draw up a plan of activities. I guarantee the support of the Government and people of Armenia.

In putting forward this proposal, we are taking into consideration the fact that Armenia is one of the main sources of drinking water in the Middle East.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, and the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, Mr. Collor, for the magnificent organization of this Conference, which will surely contribute towards preserving not only the environment of the Earth but also the health of the international political climate.

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