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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**COORDINATING UNIT FOR OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

FIRST REGIONAL FORUM ON YOUTH:  
“SECURITY, OPPORTUNITY AND PROSPERITY”

Geneva, 26-28 August 2002

**STATE-OF-AFFAIRS OF CONTEMPORARY GLOBAL RECESSION  
AND EMPLOYMENT CRISIS – NEED FOR NEW ACCOUNTABILITY  
AS THE ETHICS OF NEW RESPONSIBILITY**

(Prepared by Mr. Ognjen Bojadziski,  
Croatia)

Let me first to congratulate our hosts, colleagues from the Coordinating Unit for Operational Activities of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and friends and colleagues from the collaborating institutions – United Nations Department for Social and Economic Affairs, International Labour Organization, United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children’s Fund, United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, Organizations for Security and Cooperation in Europe – for the excellent job of organizing this Forum.

Various crucial Youth problems, seen from the proposed aspects of security, opportunity and prosperity and discussed in details and with expertise here, are most assuredly the fundamental problems of the whole world - the world in which we live in for many years, and seem to understand it less and less every day. Our “good old World” undergoes rapid and radical changes, but the key question is whether we are following it consequently and whether we are fully prepared, personally and institutionally, to understand it and adapt to these changes adequately? This and other related quintessential questions of the ontological discontinuity of our physical continuity will of course stay unresolved for the time being, but discussing them will forever be the ultimate task for human intellectual spirit, so it is our ultimate civilized obligation to discuss them here on this Forum as well.

At this point, we have to remember the words of one of the greatest minds of traditional European culture, the great Voltaire, who had spent most of his life writing ashore of this magnificent Swiss lake here in Geneva, and who had wisely and dialectically said that every epoch produces its own unique spirit which cannot be surpassed before it fulfills its true mission, be it good or bad. Speaking from the perspective of an experienced security and prevention expert, we live at the very end of a significant era in human history, and at the same time at the beginning of another, new and intriguing one.

For generation which is approaching the end of its active working age, the fundamental question today is: do we have the historic right not to finish the job we were given mandate for and therefore let unprepared young people in without doing our very best to secure for them the best possible sustainable socio-economic environment? I think that the answer is rather clear, and this is most assuredly the leading idea of the organizers of this Forum or, in my opinion it should be – we, who are a bit more experienced than our dear young friends here and around the Globe, have to prepare this World to become the decent, happy and secure livelihood for the oncoming generations.

Over one point we will most assuredly all agree here and now – open questions of today’s World do not need answers and recommendations only, they urgently require solutions and road-maps for their practical, every-day implementation.

For that reason the current *global crisis of generational accountability* (not without deeper reasons, the top priority question of contemporary business ethics are corporate frauds and accounting malpractices) will have to be turned into the *Ethics of New Responsibility* in a sustained and civilized manner. This may probably represent the quantum leap for human sustainable existence on this planet – a new understanding that outer physical space and inner human worlds are, in theory and in practice, the one and only human world, non-divisible and unique in the time and space known to human beings. When we develop the sustainable socio-economic environment for the implementation of this New Reality, there will be no more rich and poor, fed-up and hungry, decent and non-decent, masters and slaves

counterparts, but only some of us who want to Learn and to Know and those who do not. I sincerely hope that we will help our young friends to develop the world in which those who do not Know and do not want to Learn will not have any possibility to prevail over those who do. This eventual quantum “step ahead” could be rightfully called *the ultimate human leap* and the “real turning point” for the whole human history – but, are we all really ready and willing to accept New Reality?

Future generations do not expect mercy or redemption from us because we are not Gods or super-human beings, they expect that we willingly and responsibly prepare for them a sustainable, non-exclusive environment for decent life and healthy working conditions, not only for some of them but for them all!

At this point, I would like to remind you of the fundamental international document adopted on June 26, 1946 in San Francisco, USA, the Charter of United Nations, which is too often being put aside, but clearly and loudly states: “We, the Peoples of the United Nations, determined ... to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom ... and for these ends ... to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples ... have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish these aims”.

As you all very well know, my homeland Republic of Croatia is a full member of United Nations from May 22, 1993 and in past nine years of its active membership it had adopted and put into various implementation procedures most of UN resolutions, declarations, recommendations, etc. Our Croatian diplomatic representative presides United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC) for this year and our broad institutional support for UN secretary-General and ILO & World Bank Presidents recommendations and High-level panel on Youth Employment (creation of global Youth Employment Network through various national and regional initiatives and programmes) will be devoted, sincere and proactive. As for this Forum, we hope that experiences related to various Youth problems from Europe and Asia gathered here will be extremely valuable to UN ECOSOC, UN Youth Unit and other UN-ILO-WB related institutions and agencies.

I also hope that vast potentials of Direct Youth Investment concept, promoted here by the World Youth Bank Organizing Committee, will be recognized as a possible and acceptable implementation of the Recommendations and High-level panel on Youth Employment.

I am absolutely sure that we will all agree to put ourselves entirely at the free disposal to Global Youth and their more than obvious quest for a much better World than this one we are living in today!