



# **WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**Statement by H.E. Mr. José Manuel Durão Barroso  
Prime Minister of Portugal**

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Mr. President

It is particularly gratifying for me to start this intervention saluting the host of this important Summit, South Africa, a country with whom Portugal maintains a solid friendship and that lies, very appropriately, in Humanity's birthplace: Africa.

Indeed, Mr. President, the challenge we face is one of global proportions affecting the whole of the Human Family. Portugal shares with our European partners a strong commitment to a sustainable world, indeed one in which no longer over 300 million people live in abject poverty, or an excess of 2 million people die each year from the lack of basic sanitation. Poverty is our common enemy. Fighting it must be our utmost priority.

Still we share President Thabo Mbeki's view that this is "a moment of hope, not despair". We believe the Johannesburg Summit must chart a new course in international co-operation at the dawn of this new century. Today, ours is a world of complex interdependences, where challenges and opportunities are increasingly shared across physical and political boundaries. A world where our neighbour's plight is our own. A world where we must continuously look for common answers to increasingly common problems.

As stated in Agenda 21, no country alone can assure the protection of the planet and a more prosperous future for all. However, we can do it together!

In this vein, I would like to underline the role of the United Nations as a key framework for concerted efforts over many of the present challenges facing the international community.

Mr. President,

Ten years after the Rio Summit, we cannot help but recognise that the results of our efforts on the path to sustainable development have fallen short of our collective expectations. Surely, at Rio we underestimated the sheer magnitude of the task facing us. Sustainable development will require continued and sustained commitments and efforts from us all.

It is therefore no coincidence that Johannesburg takes place at a juncture where we have all realised that agendas which have up until now been looked at separately need to be brought together as one.

Indeed, Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals, the Doha Agenda for Development and the Monterrey consensus on financing for development, are today's building blocks to address in an integrated and balanced fashion the economic, social and environmental pillars of development.

We further welcome the UN Secretary General's effort of grouping a renewed and integrated sustainable development agenda around 5 crucial themes.

Mr. President,

At this Summit we have the historic opportunity to make headway in ensuring that all reap the fruits of Globalisation. We must not miss this opportunity! On the contrary, we must increasingly include all countries and regions into the world economy, for that *is* the path to sustainable development. Further, we must all share in the benefits of development while working determinedly towards collective responsibility in the management of our planet. Exclusion, or self-exclusion, will lead us nowhere. We must, as a result, be determined to ensure that all relevant commitments in force are decisively implemented.



Portugal believes that the Summit's success can be measured by credible and concrete targets, goals and timetables, which will now mobilise our efforts and means. The targets we have agreed upon on access to water and sanitation, renewable energies and ecosystems protection, as well as the balance between these targets and partnerships, put us on the right path.

Mr. President,

Our collective engagement and responsibility begins at home. It is ever more clear how crucial it is for sustainability to be rooted on good governance and open societies that benefit from the potential of all of their citizens and resources. We will continue to do our part in this regard.

Portugal recently put forward its draft strategy for sustainable development, on the basis of an ongoing wide public debate. This process will continue through mid 2003, when we will adopt a National Sustainable Development Plan. This Plan will be the starting point for the continued and integrated implementation of clear, society driven priorities backed by effective means and indicators to assess progress.

But let me also mention Portugal's on-going efforts with regard to bilateral cooperation. Our development cooperation is demand driven and focuses on areas such as social services, health, education, agriculture and environmental protection. Our overseas development aid (ODA) has already increased by one-third over the last few years. We are fully committed with the Monterrey Consensus, after which we have pledged to reach by 2006, in conjunction with our EU partners, the target of 0.39% of our Gross Domestic Product disbursed on ODA.

In addition, jointly with our European partners, we are actively involved in the EU's initiatives on Water and Energy. If we want to avoid the dire predicament of having by 2025 two-thirds of the world population living in water stressed areas, we must act now, and we must act decisively. Water basin management projects can play a key role in preventing and avoiding future calamities. We also believe that a sustainable future is one where renewable energy sources play far more than just a token role.

Allow me, Mr. President, to make a special reference to the World's Oceans, as an issue impacting heavily on our future, and one that is close to the heart of my country, and indeed my own.

Oceans are a major component of the planet's life support system, a key element for its balance, a driving force of the climate and the hydrological cycle, and a reality not yet completely mapped. Oceans sustain the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people, provide vital resources for eradicating poverty, ensure food security and allow for economic prosperity for present and future generations. Oceans are also an avenue of communication and trade among people, as well as a basis for one of the most promising industries of our times - tourism.

To recognize the increasingly important role of the Oceans for sustainable development is essential for all nations and in particular for coastal countries like Portugal.

Oceans' eco-systems and resources continue to be depleted at an alarming rate. And yet, by 2025 it is estimated that 6,3 billion people, 75% of the World's population, will live in coastal zones. It is therefore unavoidable not to pay due attention to a reality which has such a crucial influence in our future and on the future of the planet. Effective action to improve oceans and coastal management is urgently needed. We advocate an inter-sectorial and integrated management of the Oceans, islands and coastal areas imbued by the principles of responsibility, ordering and precaution. Let us have the political will to deliver concrete efforts and be in line with the aspirations of sustainable development. Portugal will maintain her commitment to enhance public awareness and to help construct an international conscience in this important area.

Mr. President, I will finalise my remarks going back to the beginning, that is, to the continent where we are now meeting. I am certain that the Johannesburg Summit will raise the world's awareness to the special conditions experienced by Africa and the sacrifices its people still have to face on a daily basis.

As it happened with the Millennium Declaration, we are very pleased to note that the Johannesburg Summit has deepened the level of commitment dedicated to this continent, in particular by the inclusion in the Plan of Implementation of a special chapter on Africa. This is the right thing to do.

Portugal is honoured to host next year the Second Summit between the European Union and Africa. I will depart from Johannesburg with a renewed hope that Africa, too, will increasingly embark on the road to sustainability. In Lisbon, next year, we are hopeful that we will follow-up on the results of Johannesburg.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.