

## CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr Chairman,  
Mr Secretary General of the United Nations,  
Distinguished Presidents, Prime Ministers and Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Three major perils face humankind at the start of the third millennium and the twenty-first century.

First – global terrorism, which threatens the very foundations of civilization and seeks to establish anarchy and autocracy instead of democracy and the rule of law.

Second – the fast and often uncontrolled or inadequately controlled industrial and technological development, which poses a mortal threat to our environment and plant and animal life, and thereby ultimately to the human species.

Third – the total absence of development of any kind, or absolutely inadequate development in some parts of the world, Africa and Asia in particular, which literally jeopardizes even man's survival in many countries.

We have assembled here in order to discuss sustainable development. It would be relatively easy to establish that the world's statesmen have not delivered on the promises they had made to themselves in the past – whether ten years ago, five years ago or a year ago, it really does not matter. It would also be relatively simple to detect one or another extenuating circumstance for failing to implement what had been agreed, and to agree that in the period ahead we should display greater determination in creating the conditions for development with the simultaneous preservation of nature, without which such development could not even be imagined, over the long term, let alone achieved.

It would be relatively simple, I have said – but not enough. And time is running out. The number of opportunities for makeup exams, for drawing lessons from mistakes and omissions, will decline continuously.

We must grasp the situation – now!

We must note the linkage of cause and effect between only seemingly unconnected phenomena – now, right away!

As soon as possible, we must conceive and start to implement a comprehensive common plan and program not only of development but of survival, not only for the twenty-first century but for the future in general!

Global terrorism, the negative impact of development on one hand and underdevelopment on the other are all interconnected. And must be dealt with together, in a 'package'.

And the key to all, of course, is development.

Let me use this opportunity to reiterate once again: in the era of globalization, in which we are witnessing the globalization of wealth on one side but also of poverty on the other, we must seek to turn development into a global process. In other words, development should not be merely the right of a privileged set and simultaneously denied to others.

We must first of all determine the sequence. Extreme underdevelopment breeds not only backwardness in all spheres with respect to the developing, and the developed and most developed countries. It also breeds dependence. And dependence is the origin of inequality.

Poor and dependent countries and peoples cannot satisfactorily either achieve or defend their basic, legitimate national rights, the very rights solemnly upheld so often by the developed states.

The disastrous consequences of inadequately controlled development have objectively jeopardized the maintenance of the fragile eco-system of our planet, and the brunt of this is again first felt by the poorest and the least developed, although developed countries have also begun to feel the consequences of their attitude towards nature.

Underdevelopment, economic and political dependence, inequality and, the impossibility to realize one's legitimate national rights and, in the best of cases, merely hopeless survival in an environment destroyed by the developed world – that is the setting in which global terrorism is bred, in which it thrives and from which it propagates.

If matters are regarded from such an angle, the task facing us will become obvious. We simply have to change the world in which we live if we want to go on living.

And, however paradoxical that may seem, the achievement of this goal is not so difficult as it might seem at first sight. Money is the easiest problem. The most difficult problem is political will, primarily the will of the developed countries.

Therefore, we have to agree about the need for a thorough redistribution of existing resources. That is the key. Not the creation of new wealth, but the redistribution and reallocation of existing wealth.

In the process we have to reach agreement on the necessity to establish mechanisms which will be geared exclusively to sustainable development and not be the result of a trade-off between the wish to avoid jeopardizing the profits of transnational companies and the privileged status of the most developed countries, and the need to demonstrate a degree of sympathy for the underdeveloped. As an example, let me mention the possible foundation of an international fund for sustainable energy sources.

Finally, we have to agree that the time has come when limited, particular interests must give way, without any reserves, to common interests.



The role of the developed and the most developed countries in this process is pivotal, indeed unavoidable. The division into the rich and the poor, and the destruction of the environment the sustaining of which is subordinated to development requirements, have progressed to a point where they can only be stopped by the rich and the developed countries. However, what may seem to be, at first, a sacrifice on their part, is actually nothing else but a long-term investment into the future – this time not only into their own future, but into the future of the whole world. Because development will either be a general process or there will be no development at all.

Croatia will support every action focused on promoting development and protecting the environment. It is in that context that we support this Conference. Finally, we expect conclusions which will not be only clear and concrete but also binding. We expect action, primarily, but not solely, through the United Nations.

Let me note, however, that we are faced with global, interconnected problems. They require a simultaneous, global approach and common solutions. It is high time to create a unique concept which will ensure the survival of our planet, of the human species and of our civilizations built over centuries with all its specific facets.

We can save everything, but also destroy everything.

Although we are not equally strong, and thereby equally responsible, no one can remain apart.

The future of us all is at stake. I would like to believe that all of us, truly all, also grasp this fact.

Thank you!