For a better World order:
The message from Kuala Lumpur

Nicole Rosensohn
Bertrand Schneider

The Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Foundation was born from an initiative by the BBV Group to widen its capacity for dealing with present-day social and cultural demands. Its activity is directed towards promoting areas for reflection and debate on the main challenges and problems facing contemporanean society. It has, within this framework, the preferential vocation of dealing with the fields of science and culture which, due to their social importance, deserve the special dedication of effort.

The BBV Foundation organizes its activity along the following important lines: the creation of ideal conditions for **Meetings**, the development of analysis and assessment activities for new innovation opportunities in specific areas through **Permanent Reflection Centres**, presence in the most significant areas of university and research activity in the form of the **BBV Foundation Cathedra**, the development of a line of **Collaboration Activities** and the creation of permanent communication channels with society by means of **Documenta**, the information and publications centre of the Banco Bilbao Vizcaya Foundation.

On this occasion, the BBV Foundation is collaborating with the Club de Roma in the presentation of **"The message from Kuala Lumpur "** with an end to holding a debate about the role of South East Asia in the layout of the new world order. Subjects such as cooperation, the principle of convergence, and the demand for global ethics, are the object of analysis by leaders and intellectuals from this region of the world and constitute the essential content of this book.

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FOREWORD

by José Angel Sánchez Asiaín

President of the BBV Foundation

*T*he Kuala Lumpur Conference held in November 1992 is another demonstration of the Club of Rome's renewed efforts to promote improved understanding among the world's peoples through open, mutually enriching and constructive dialogue.

In the ever more complex future in which human survival will be decided, the influence of these Conferences as catalysts for concern and hope, and their success in drawing world attention to the most crucial issues inherent in the challenges humanity sets for itself, will no doubt have a worldwide impact. Stirred by its own social concerns and resposibilities, the BBV Foundation feels honored to take part in these gatherings.

More than eighty highly qualified experts, representing thirty countries and travelling from five continents, met in Kuala Lumpur from November 15th to 19th of last year. There, they put forward their concerns, exchanged views and suggested alternatives to Southeast Asia's new conditions of globalization and cultural pluralism. The result can be summed up in the title of this publication which the BBV Foundation has the privilege of offering to readers specializing in these topics. This book will be particularly relevant to decision-makers, analysts and all persons whose responsibilities compel them to probe deeper into the problems and challenges facing the world today.

Asia is destined to play an increasingly important role in future human affairs, as can be seen by its present dynamism and the world attention it attracts. While the peoples of Europe and the Americas find themselves trying to resolve a predictable, though nonetheless disturbing, structural crisis, and the African continent still struggles to recover from its colonial ills and assorted woes,

Asia is emerging with force, hiding its fears, softening past cruelties, and assuming world responsibilities which would have met with disbelief just a few years ago.

Asian cultures are succeeding in smoothly integrating western science and technology, political concepts and structures, the west's contradictory sense of freedom and democracy, and labor, educational, and social structures, with a distinctive understanding of survival and human dependence relations. This integration, however, has not produced a predominance of occidental ways over oriental ways, contrary to what might be held by some who view these matters through our Europe-coloured lens. For the westernization of Asia's peoples is quite possibly due more to the application of adaptive techniques aimed at better maintaining the conditions of their survival, than to the consequence of any submission to processes of cultural westernization.

This report points to the clear and urgent need for bringing heightened attention, respect and knowledge to our contemplation of the development of a new globalizing culture in Asia; a culture perhaps imbued with a greater transcendence than our western cultures, and better equipped to assume more risks in facing up to the looming challenges of the future.

We must learn how to live on equal terms with these renascent cultures of Asia if we wish to attain a more equitable world order. Such a world order cannot be imposed by anyone, but instead be the inevitable consequence of accepting the viewpoint of others as an increasingly important part of our own viewpoints.

OPENING REMARKS

by Ricardo Diez-Hochleitner
President of the Club of Rome

TOWARDS A MORE EQUITABLE WORLD ORDER

The reason for holding the annual conferences of the Club of Rome in different regions of the world is to provoke debate on global issues in order to contribute towards guiding regional and local action. This occasion is also, however, an exceptional opportunity for us to deepen our dialogue with intellectuals and leaders of Eastern Asia, and more specially Malaysia, to discuss their role and potential future strategies, faced with a world filled with uncertainties; a world in need of wisdom, solidarity and leadership.

Next year the Club of Rome will celebrate its first 25 years of existence. Much has changed since those days, when it was rare to study and debate the world problematic on a long-term basis, transcending the borders of sovereign states, relating economic development to available natural resources for the first time. The difficult first toddling steps of the Club of Rome's work have now been largely forgotten, since the ideas of complexity, interdependence and uncertainty have become far more widespread, at least in words if not in deeds.

We members of the Club of Rome come from a wide variety of professional fields, countries, cultures and beliefs, which enrich our views and provide them with objectivity. We are of course also part of the great global human society of our times, a society with ideals and grandeur and plagued with misery.

A quick look back over the history of mankind shows an upward curve tracing the undeniable immense material and cultural achievements made over a long and difficult march through millennia. However, it also shows how often historical trends have been seriously crippled by ignorance, selfishness and base

instincts. Today, as before, a vision of the future must be inspired by the values of liberty, social justice and solidarity and based on knowledge, for politics cease to be human and effective if not inspired by an ethical and moral vision. However, such morals must make haste in overcoming the widespread schematic, simplistic vision of a world divided between "us good guys" and "them bad guys". Such thinking only hides our own private interests, fanaticisms and prejudices of all types. That is why it is now urgent to create feedback inside democratic thinking by means of debate among the great cultures of the world, starting from the convergent values of such essential aspects as respect for individual and group freedom, cooperation and solidarity between the rich and the poor of the world, and social justice and tolerance among different ethnic groups and cultures.

Cooperation is possible among all countries, thanks to convergence and cohesion. The sovereignty of nation-states (that authority which defends the survival, cohesion and development of national identities) requires weightier supra-national concessions in view of the inexorably growing interdependency of all countries. These concessions should start by strengthening regional community structures aimed at an international (universal) approach through a renovated and truly operational United Nations. Such a principle of sovereignty limited or shared in many fields implies, however, a parallel increase in individual sovereignty and the inviolability of each ever-unique, inimitable person, which is in turn progressively developed thanks to education and culture.

The principle of convergence is also indispensable because it means a kind of cooperation that runs against centripetal trends: it means supporting and developing cultural identities within each state, as well as within and among regional communities, instead of creating protectionist blocs. Such a principle is even more valid and urgent in view of the indiscriminate, uncontrolled territorial impact of environmental effects, in addition to the urgent need for subsequent sustainable development. Moreover, contrary to the conclusions of the recent Earth Summit (which was too limited by partial approaches), sustainable development requires a radical comprehensive approach and mechanisms vested with universal authority. In fact under present circumstances, no country nor even any regional community can or should try to achieve sustainable development in isolation from a broader world context.

Finally, a more equitable world order requires as soon as possible the adoption of the principle of world cohesion: that is, providing adequate compensation for less favoured countries, within the realm of a profoundly renewed United Nations. Such a principle means not simply monetary transfers or transfers in kind, including information and technology, but rather an overall approach of solidarity inspired by ethical values as well as long-term self-interest.

Consequently, a more equitable world order also needs better, entirely new modalities of governance in both public and private business, in order to achieve a fruitful dialogue, agreement and cooperation among all social agents within each country, as well as the regional and world community, in order to harmonize policies, projects, financing, information, knowledge, technologies, etc. This implies a global ethic and a new spirit of partnership, a new alliance, between the public and private sector in every field.

Economists, environmentalists and sociologists are urgently required to harmonize their views in order to take fully into account the increasingly limited ecological carrying capacity without jeopardizing progress within a genuine eco-socio-economy. From this perspective, present approaches continue to be superficial and wilful. We are acting essentially in response to the symptoms of causes which have yet to be diagnosed, acting as soon as we perceive events and threats instead of attacking the root of long-term problems. The fact is that we search in vain for answers through a vast amount of heterogeneous information while turning a deaf ear to the wisdom of traditional societies.

Inspiration, vision, leadership, based on a brotherly encounter between very different cultures, experiences and knowledge, is what men and women of good will should offer.

TO MAKE POSSIBLE A CREATIVE AND MUTUALLY ENRICHING ENCOUNTER BETWEEN CULTURES

by Anwar Ibrahim
Minister of Finance, Malaysia

It was some twenty years ago that I had my first encounter with the ideas of the Club of Rome. Together with a small group of young intellectuals, activists and poets in Southeast Asia, I had the privilege to participate in a series of informal discussions where we examined issues of concern in our fragile civil societies. On one occasion, the late Soedjatmoko of Indonesia gave an engaging discourse on the "Limits to Growth". It was the time of development and growth mania, growth as a panacea, devoid of concern for its social, cultural and environmental consequences. "The Limits to Growth" was a devastating critique of that conventional wisdom. We were aware, and even critical, of the limitations of the report's applicability to developing economies. For while the industrialized countries suffered from excessive growth, we in the developing world bore the burden of insufficient growth or even stagnating economies.

Although we, being young idealists, lacked sophistication and rigour in the articulation of our views, nevertheless I think we did grasp the fundamental issues and problems confronting our societies. We sensed and witnessed the rampant corruption and moral decadence within the established order, and the profound disillusionment among the youth that the system engendered. Economic inequities and social disparities were everywhere evident, but the discourse on these problems lacked profundity due to the strangulating intellectual malaise. We discerned that the revolution of rising expectations accompanying the lopsided emphasis on material development had given rise to a state of affairs we characterized as "the revolution of increasing frustration".

We became aware that too exclusive a preoccupation with growth *per se* would lead to a rapid increase in social disparities. Especially in ethnically and culturally pluralistic societies, this could easily undermine social cohesion. Tremendous social and political tensions threatening the viability of the nation would be inevitable. We became convinced of the necessity to integrate the need for social justice, equitable distribution of income, as well as balanced development, within the overall strategy. Indeed, it is a matter of great satisfaction on my part to have been able to incorporate these ideals in formulating Malaysia's Annual Budget for two years now. Sustainability has become the focal point of our economic management, and the idea of development has taken on a wide meaning to encompass moral and cultural values. While we give great emphasis to the role of the private sector and to privatizing our state enterprises, we lay stress on the principle of profitability linked to social responsibility.

To my mind, the strength of the Club of Rome is its ability to articulate with freshness and vigour the enduring problems of our times. Thus I could do no better to express my convictions on the manifold problems of humanity during my inaugural speech as president of the general conference of UNESCO two years ago than to make direct reference to "The First Global Revolution". This particular report has been able to transcend the inadequacies of its predecessors. For us in Malaysia, the strong moral voice and multicultural approach are particularly relevant because of the parallel with Vision 2020.

As you rightly put it, "History is unlikely to provide another opportunity as open and promising as today's and it is essential for humanity to find the wisdom to exploit it." History has not come to an end, but neither has the past disappeared from our consciousness. As we embark on the task of shaping the 21st century, the predicament in which we find ourselves today is, in many respects, unprecedented.

The historic voyages across the Atlantic in 1492 did not merely "discover" the New World, but became the point of departure for the dominant world view of modernity. According to that world view, all the world that was not Europe has had only a passive role in the development of the modern world. The non-Western world had first to be discovered by the West, before it could benefit from being put under the Western scheme of things. Otherwise it could be conveniently forgotten or relegated to the discipline of anthropology. We all suffer today from the limitation of possibilities arising from this constructive ignorance. This version of History must undergo fundamental reconcept-ualization.

Our agenda must be to make possible a creative and mutually enriching encounter between cultures. That is precisely what did not happen in 1492. That possibility was never to be realized because right from the beginning globalization proceeded with hatred and the brutal extermination of other cultures. The economic system that later emerged thrived on monopoly over vital resources, and trade controlled and restricted to serve the overriding interests of the dominant nations.

A genuine plural encounter between cultures does not begin with polite condescension. Genuine plurality means honestly embracing differences and diversity within a broad framework of shared universal values. We are not asking for the kind of eclectic multi-culturalism that post-modernism is making fashionable. It offers multi-culturalism as a self-indulgence, a leisure activity for the over-affluent. Nor do we mean the tokenism that makes multi-culturalism a benign indifference, the tokenism of letting the rest do their own thing while the status quo carries on regardless.

For a plural future, benign indifference to multi-culturalism is no better than intolerance. Genuine multi-culturalism is a profound new world we have to discover. It is a new moral universe we have to navigate, a new ethic we all have to acquire.

The global trading system brought about by the Columbian enterprise is disintegrating. In the last decade or so, East Asia, while very much integrated into the global network, has at the same time managed to transform itself into a viable and autonomous centre. The deepening of intra-regional trade and economic cooperation has spurred growth in the region. Three decades ago, the combined GDP of all Northeast and Southeast Asia was one third the size of Western Europe. Today, East Asia is half the size of Western Europe. If we all continue to perform as well as we did in the 1980s, East Asia's regional GDP will overtake that of Western Europe by the year 2005; and the combined GDP of the region will exceed that of the NAFTA (North American Free Trade Area) bloc by the year 2022. However, if the performance of the last five years alone is projected, these rapid changes in global economic weights will occur even sooner.

We in East Asia believe in open regionalism, not in trade or economic blocs. This was precisely the system in Malacca before it was swept away under the wave of European expansionism.

In the area of economics as well as in other areas, we do not want the Columbian legacy to be repeated under new garbs. For example, the quantitative burden for environmental degradation lies with the West and we should not be compelled to bear the guilt.

Similarly, aid to developing nations should not be trivialized by the enforcement of pre-defined human rights, when pervasive racism and the violation of minority rights is on the rise in the West. In the name of freedom and democracy, we should not merely be expected to conform to the dominant order. It is in fact distressing to note that even the new liberal democracies, freed from the clutches of communism, have not been able to attain the professed cherished ideals. Together with a growing number of countries, they exhibit an excessive restraint or even timidity apparently pleasing to their new masters. These contradictions can be attributed to their dependence in military and economic matters, but more blatant are the excesses within their own societies. A country plagued by poverty, illiteracy, corruption, human rights violations, and intellectual malaise cannot be expected to have the courage to speak out without restraint. Those of us who choose to value the genuine essence of freedom must not be inhibited by the culture of fear. We must accept it as the moral imperative and the voice of freedom.

Global affairs must be conducted in a more human and ethical manner. This is needed by the mere fact that political expediency and narrow economic interests continue to override broader human concerns. A comparative look at recent events, for instance, reveals stark contradictions in our behaviour. While we have liberated Kuwait, to this day we remain unable to assume the same moral responsibility for the victims of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and for the suffering of millions in Africa.

In a world torn by domination, conflicts, and conflicting loyalties, our best hopes lie in the liberating power of truth and moral ideals. We must relearn to cherish the idea, that power of truth, the power of a truthful word, the strength of a free spirit, conscience and responsibility, can actually transform the world. This is not a naive idea but rooted, though often forgotten, in the deepest core of human nature.

A REGIONAL IDENTITY BEGINS TO EMERGE FROM GREAT DIVERSITY

Asia, the largest and the most densely populated continent, is made up of six quite different geographical regions, which do not always coincide with its historical and political divisions:

- The Middle East, from Turkey to Afghanistan in the east and to Yemen in the south.
  Although this region is indeed part of Asia, it is nevertheless a meeting place for Asia and Europe, with all the advantages and disadvantages that brings.

- The Indian subcontinent (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka).
  Its label fits it well: because of its vast land area and its population, which in 30 years will rival that of China (1.9 billion), the region has a very special position within Asia.

- Central Asia (Mongolia, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao).
  "When China awakes, the world will tremble", Napoleon said. Whether China has awakened or whether it is still dreaming, it is certain that its slightest movement is followed closely by the rest of the world. After several starts and stops, the development of China seems now to be under way, and it is also opening up economically to the outside world. China is probably the only country where full-blown capitalism (in the Special Economic Zones) exists side by side with a form of socialism - though it must be pointed out that the present Chinese leadership makes it clear that the market economy is an integral part of Chinese socialism.

- Northeast Asia (Japan, North and South Korea).
  Japan, politically isolated in Asia and having to maintain vital links with the West, cannot by itself hope to become an Asian superpower. The financial and industrial strength of Japan is felt throughout Asia, but this is not translated into regional economic integration. In any case, moves towards integration are watched over and even sometimes hindered by the United States.

- The Asian part of the former Soviet Union, which were tied to Europe whether or nor they wished to be and which exploded into several autonomous republics when the Soviet empire collapsed. They are likely now to find their future in Asia.

- Southeast Asia (Indochina and the member countries of ASEAN, the Association of South East Asian Nations), which culturally has been linked more to India, whereas Northeast Asia has been under Chinese cultural influence. Some countries of the region - long torn between the two major world ideologies, communism and capitalism - have been the arena for bloody conflicts that will leave lasting traces for many years to come.

Almost the whole of the continent has been, at different times and to differing degrees, under colonial domination; freedom from colonial rule has been achieved in varying ways and with diverse results.

Southeast Asia is of course not the only area where the contradictory forces of East and West have confronted one another. In general, one may say that the land fell into the hands of the communists, whereas the sea (defended by the U.S. Navy) provided shelter for the capitalist economies. But Asia did not emerge well from the division of the world between East and West, and it now appears to have exploded, with the forces of dispersion acting more strongly than the forces of cohesion.

Asia is also where all the world's religions are to be found: Buddhism, Islam, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Christianity, Judaism...

Furthermore, the continent is home to the world's largest number of ethnic minorities (several hundred in India alone, and around a hundred in Indonesia).

Finally, Asia has a very varied record of development: from Japan at one end of the spectrum, with one of the most highly educated and technologically sophisticated populations in the

world, to the tribes still living in very primitive conditions, for example in Irian Jaya.

In the face of such disparities, which probably rule out any possibility of European-style integration, it is impossible to treat the continent as a single entity, except to produce an extremely general overview, which is consequently far too superficial to be useful. We have therefore decided to focus on the Southeast, i.e. the member countries of ASEAN plus those of Indochina.

Within that region, we had to choose one country as representative. Malaysia was selected because it exemplifies the area as a whole - thanks to the great range of peoples and religions found there - and also, after many adjustments, compromises, concessions on all sides, because it has managed to create a mode of coexistence through pursuit of a shared goal.

The example of Malaysia and the project Vision 2020, which will be discussed below, offers valuable lessons —not merely for Asian development, but for development everywhere— on the way a whole population can be mobilized to work towards shared goals.

In the following pages we shall examine the main factors in the problematic of Southeast Asia —particularly economic, demographic, and human development— and, in the light of its strengths, we shall analyze the role that the region could play in the new world order which must be created.

Two factors in particular have radically changed the relations between Earth and its people: the population explosion and the scientific and technological revolution; in both these areas, Asia is in a key position.

With its present population of 437 million (i.e. more than the European Community or the United States), and thanks to the economic success of some Southeast Asian countries, as well as to the trade and cooperation agreements already in existence between most of the countries concerned, there is no doubt that the region can make its voice heard in the international community. Those nations that are not yet members of ASEAN (because of their political stance and the conflicts in which they were involved at the time when ASEAN was created) will doubtless be able to join in due course.

There are calls from all sides for a more equitable new world order and the Club of Rome made this the main theme of its Conference in Kuala Lumpur. Several of the chapters in this book are based on the contributions made at the Conference and the ensuing discussions.

The new values that must be found in order to achieve a new and more equitable world order, the essential role of culture and education, the impossibility of transferring culture, democratic principles or notions of human rights in the same way as technology is transferred —all these give rise to reflection on a new vision of development.

The Conference has, for example, challenged the Western model of development and industrialization, and the following pages will explore, among other things, the two new ways forward that were proposed instead:

• to share universal values, while acknowledging and respecting the differences (to understand, tolerate and learn about other cultures).
• to help the developing world to find its own way, and its own values.

Rarely centre stage

The world events that hit the headlines in 1992 were usually concerned with Europe or the former Soviet Union.

Africa, which had been somewhat forgotten because of interest in Eastern Europe, attracted world attention again because of the dramatic life-and-death problems of its people.

In Latin America, the Indians took advantage of the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the "discovery" of America to make their views heard.

North America was in the limelight around the time of the elections in the United States.

But Asia was rarely in the news, except for three countries in the region we are considering. Cambodia seems still to be finding its feet and the efforts of the United Nations to restore normal political life have made little difference. The Philippines held elections which appear to have passed off reasonably well, without too many people being killed. Thailand, which on the surface had been peaceful enough even if trouble had been brewing for at least a year, suddenly exploded in May 1992, and the violence with which the protests were repressed was an ugly reminder of what had happened in Rangoon in 1988 or in Tienanmen Square in 1989.

Even these events, however, did not hold the world's attention for very long. Is this low profile a sign that, after a turbulent

past, Asia is maturing steadily, away from the upheavals of the rest of the world, in particular in the economic field? Or are there still smouldering embers beneath the ashes, just waiting to burst into flames again?

We shall examine the progress in economic terms of these ten countries, but we shall also look at whether or not this has been accompanied by real progress in human development, as defined by UNDP (the United Nations Development Programme). We shall then be able to gain an idea of where these countries stand in relation to the major issues to be resolved if a more equitable world order is to be achieved. But first we shall look more closely at the political stability of the region, since stability is the main prerequisite for real development.

From war to peace

The division between Northeast and Southeast Asia corresponds almost exactly to the zones of Chinese and Indian influence. The only country where this categorization is arguable is Vietnam: culturally, it is essentially Chinese, but in its recent past it has been very strongly linked to two countries that belong unambiguously to the Indian sphere of influence, Laos and Cambodia.

Is this division from the distant past still at all relevant today? Yes, because it partly explains the present political divisions.

The legacy of the Chinese and Indian cultural backgrounds have in fact undeniable consequences for the modern international situation. The Chinese political tradition offers a global and exclusive attitude to authority that allows no room at all for individuality. It is striking that, in the recent history of the Far East, the divided nations belonged to the Chinese sphere of influence, like Korea and Vietnam, and none opted to be neutral in the Cold War. In the Indian sphere of influence, by contrast, even though there have been and are violent antagonisms, there are no divided nations and all have been attracted by the non-aligned movement.

In 1945, the whole region was under colonial rule. Since then, its foreign relations experience has been dominated by both the withdrawal of the European colonizers and the power struggle between the United States and Soviet Union, in some countries paralleled by rivalries between the two communist giants, China and the USSR. The countries under discussion can be divided into two groups. The first group covers those on the Asian continent proper, in particular the Indochinese peninsula, which started

fighting for their independence immediately after the Second World War and then became involved in the Vietnam war. This means that they have been through almost 40 years of war, bombardment, migration, with the destruction of villages, herds and even the earth itself.

The second group covers the islands and archipelagos, where ideological conflicts never went beyond political battles or were limited to guerilla movements operating with varying degrees of intensity and violence. It should be noted that, unlike most of the countries elsewhere that preached Marxist doctrines and then abandoned them when the Soviet empire collapsed, the countries of the region that opted for Marxism have remained quite faithful to its principles. This is true of Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia.

The upheavals in Indochina over the last half-century were caused in part by external forces, such as the tensions between East and West, the Sino-Soviet conflict or the general process of decolonization. But they also had internal causes, which did not reemerge until conflicts began within the region, for example between Vietnam and Cambodia. Traditional quarrels rose again to the surface, relating partly to the power hierarchy within Indochina (including Thailand) and partly to their claims to territorial sovereignty.

Prior to colonization by the French, the Vietnamese empire grew at the expense of neighbouring Cambodia, while Laos hardly existed as a united country —all that remained of it were a few fiefs attached to the principality of Luang-Prabang, Bangkok or Hué. France intervened in the midst of this process and put a stop to the vietnamization of what survived of the Khmer empire, while at the same time confirming the annexation of the former Cambodian areas by what was to become Vietnam. The French also reorganized the old Laotian kingdom by adding to it areas that had become Vietnamese.

These administrative divisions, which became actual frontiers at the time of independence, do not necessarily match the wishes of the people of these areas or their sense of history.

There is currently a border dispute between Khmers and Vietnamese that cannot be considered without taking into account the wider conflict between China and Vietnam over the future of Indochina. This involves disagreements about both the land and the sea frontiers between the two states.

From this general background, let us move on to examine the situation country by country.

Burma, which took the official name the Union of Myanmar in 1989, is home to 60 different ethnic groups, of whom the Burmese are the most numerous. Communist guerilla movements, revolts by ethnic minorities, military takeovers, riots, bombings, confrontations between students and police... have been typical of Burmese life for the past 40 years.

At present Myanmar is ruled by the generals of SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) since a coup d'état by the military in 1988. They refused to hand over power even though the National League for Democracy (NLD), the main opposition party, won 80% of the votes in the elections in 1990.

Without attracting much attention (foreign journalists are denied any access to the country), Myanmar is harbouring one of the most oppressive and barbaric dictatorships in the world.

More than 3000 people were killed during the riots at the time of the coup d'état. The leader of the NLD, Aung San Suu Kyi, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, has been under house arrest since 1989.

In the areas where armed opposition groups operate, the army is a threat to the whole population. The military may, for example, order whole regions to be cleared, thereby causing thousands to become homeless or to be housed in military camps.

Throughout the country, even in areas where there is no armed opposition to the government, people are being arrested, tortured and killed. Tens of thousands of people are forced to work for the army, either as porters in the areas where fighting is going on, or else as labourers. No ethnic group is spared, and all the religious communities are affected. In 1992, more than a quarter of a million Moslems fled from the State of Rakhin to escape the cruelty of the military authorities. They took refuge in Bangladesh, where they are currently living in camps.

In Cambodia there have been constant upheavals ever since 1965, when diplomatic relations with the United States were broken off.

The removal of Prince Norodom Sihanouk in 1970 signalled the start of a power struggle between rival factions. The situation reached rock bottom in 1975, after the fall of Phnom Penh and the massacres by the Khmer Rouge: it is estimated that between 2 and 3 million people may have been killed. One of the Khmer Rouge leaders, Pol Pot, reckoned that post-revolution Cambodia needed to have a population of only a million, so he proposed killing the other 5 million.

Subsequently Cambodia was ruled by Vietnam under a regime of "occupation-liberation" until 1989. Since then, despite the signing of the Paris Accords by the four rival factions in October 1991, the situation has still not been clarified and the country seems again to be on the brink of chaos as a result of the renewed power struggle.

The UN Security Council voted Resolution 745 in February 1992, which set up UNTAC, the provisional authority charged with organizing elections. These were later postponed until 1993.

The first contingent of UN peacekeeping troops, supplied mainly by France, arrived in April 1992, but they were immediately forcibly prevented from entering the areas held by the Khmer Rouge. Insufficient funds have been assembled to carry out a coordinated UN operation (to separate the factions, hold elections, as well as to put the economy into working order and clear the millions of landmines which constantly kill and maim the peasants). Of the $3 billion required, $880 million have been provided through international aid. But even this money has created serious economic upheavals, exacerbating the existing imbalances between town and country, and has excited a revival of xenophobia directed against the Vietnamese, Chinese and Thai merchants who benefit most from the international aid. All of this works to the advantage of the Khmer Rouge, who use their considerable reserves of foreign currency to send their soldiers into the villages and pay for the community's needs. They thus become the dispensers of social justice, a curious position given their mistreatment of those living in the areas under their full control.

China, which might be expected to use its influence on the Khmer Rouge to bring about a solution to the problem, seems disinclined to help the international community in its efforts.

Officially there is no longer a war in Cambodia, but there is certainly no peace either —indeed far from it.

Like other countries in Indochina, Laos erupted into violence in the 1970s, dragged into the conflict between North and South Vietnam and the major powers in East and West. The current prime minister has been in office since 1975, in other words since the royal family abdicated and a people's democratic republic was declared. The first elections since then were held in 1989, but without bringing about any change of government. The Vietnamese army still occupied the country in 1989.

In Vietnam, after the long war which caused about 1.5 million Vietnamese to flee, and after the reunification of North and South Vietnam, a civilian government has been in power since 1976.

Nevertheless there has never been real peace. Vietnam intervened in Cambodia and there have been a number of frontier skirmishes with China.

On the domestic front, political strife did not suddenly come to an end, and the thousands of political prisoners have been released only very gradually. About 80 opponents of the communist regime are still in prison.

Thailand managed to escape the conflict that threw its neighbours into turmoil, except that it received half a million refugees who are causing the country serious problems.

Between 1932, when a coup d'état brought an end to the period of absolute monarchy, and 1991 Thailand went through frequent military takeovers and no less than 13 constitutions. From 1966 to 1992, it was ruled entirely by openly military governments.

BEWARE, MINES!

In the suburbs of Phnom Penh there is a state clinic for rehabilitating the handicapped. Under the broiling sun, the victims of anti-personnel mines —young soldiers and also many civilians— learn to walk again using artificial limbs and a single crutch. The patients expected to receive their artificial limbs and their treatment free of charge. No such luck. The technicians at the clinic are paid about $10 per month, not enough to keep their families, so they make their patients pay extra in order to make a little more money. Some have to beg in the streets to pay for the care they need. One of the major worries in Cambodia today is the huge number of landmines still undetonated that continue to claim victims. The mines caused more deaths and injuries during the war than any other type of weapon, apart from the genocide carried out by Pol Pot and his followers. The recent UN Peace Plan includes arrangements for the return of the 350,000 Cambodians who have spent years in camps in Thailand, as well as the resettlement of about 190,000 people forcibly moved within Cambodia. However, the aid workers fear that unless the land is cleared of mines, they will be unable to carry out their mission of rebuilding the country, resettling the people and reviving the economy.

One of those responsible for the coup d'état of 13 February 1991, General Suchinda Khraprayun, visited Myanmar in the company of another general just beforehand. They met members of the military junta and it appears that they learned useful lessons about dealing effectively with demonstrators. Indeed, the Thai army did not hesitate to kill almost a thousand people in the streets of Bangkok in May 1992 in the course of putting down a demonstration in favour of greater democracy.

The Thai press, even though it was tightly controlled during these events, nevertheless played a key role in persuading the king to disown his prime minister and call on a civilian to take his place. The situation is still not completely resolved because of the country's economic problems, in particular the disparities between country and town, which will be discussed further in a later chapter.

The islands

Apparently protected by the ocean, the various states that occupy the islands have escaped the turmoil suffered by their continental neighbours. Nonetheless they have not avoided guerilla movements (mainly communist) and racial or religious tensions.

Malaysia struggled against supporters of communism from 1948 until 1960, and it was not until 1989 that the last armed group gave up its weapons. In addition, Indonesia (which had not been well disposed to the creation of Malaysia) gave support to the guerillas for a while. Malaysia's main problem, however, was numerous religious and ethnic conflicts. The country now seems well set on following the democratic route, which is beneficial to its economic development; nonetheless there are still instances of human rights abuses.

In Indonesia, after tens of thousands of deaths and hundreds of thousands of arrests in the early 1960s in reprisals against the communist, pro-Chinese plot to overthrow the dictator Soekarno, political life has settled down. Elections have been held regularly since 1973, each time confirming General Soeharto as both president and prime minister, posts that he was given by Soekarno in 1968.

Former communist leaders, in prison since 1965/67, continue to be executed.

Indonesia has not revived its claims to the Malaysian part of Borneo, which led to a number of incidents, but instead has invaded East Timor, which was independent. In this conflict it has adopted a scorched earth policy (100,000 people died between

1975 and 1979 as a result of war or famine). Guerillas continue to operate in the island, and the army has shown itself ready to fire on peaceful demonstrators, as happened in 1991, causing about a hundred deaths.

In the Philippines, where the largest American military bases outside the United States were located until 1991, the main tensions have been internal. First, communist and Islamic Liberation Front guerillas have killed 20,000 people since 1979 and are in control of 20% of the villages.

Secondly, the extreme nepotism of President Marcos exploited the country and ruined an economy that might otherwise have been very prosperous. Since Marcos was removed in 1986, his former henchmen have tried to seize back power via a number of attempted coup d'états. None of the subsequent elections has been held without resulting in killings.

Nevertheless, the situation seems to be stabilizing, with a commitment to democratic methods. The new president has decided to legalize the Communist Party, now that the guerilla threat has receded.

Both the tiny state of Brunei and Singapore (which for a short while belonged to the Malaysian Federation) have managed to remain remarkably untouched by the turmoil in the region, and have pursued economic progress which now puts them among the richest countries in the world. Brunei owes its wealth to oil, while Singapore has concentrated on building up exports and services, becoming one of the world's major financial centres.

Whereas there is abundant information about Singapore, providing a good idea of its position in terms of economic and human development, few data exist for Brunei, which is under the absolute rule of its Sultan. Its per capita GNP is known to be very high, but nobody knows how far the population as a whole benefits from the oil revenues which make the Sultan one of the world's richest men.

Still limits to human rights

East-West tensions are still taking their toll in the region. Opponents of the regimes in power, whether pro- or anti-communist, rarely enjoy freedom to express their opinions. In the name of internal security, many states have implemented laws and decrees that allow them to detain suspects without charge or trial, for unlimited periods.

This is true in Laos, Brunei, Malaysia and Singapore. These countries nevertheless do not have the largest numbers of political prisoners, nor do they mete out the worst treatment to their prisoners.

In Thailand, in 1991, refugees from Burma were arrested and maltreated in detention centres before being repatriated to Myanmar. Lèse-majesté is still a crime, and a university professor, Sulak Sivaroksa, risked being put in prison for saying that the king, the heir to the throne and the princesses are ordinary human beings like anyone else.

Laotian students who had been studying in Central Europe and Ukraine were forcibly repatriated to Laos at the end of 1992 because they were accused of being opponents of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. Like Thailand, Laos sends home refugees who are supposed to be protected by the UN High Commission for Refugees.

In Malaysia, too, 200 asylum seekers from Indonesia have been threatened with forcible repatriation. People convicted for breaking the drug laws have been mistreated and tortured before being executed.

In Indonesia, the situation is particularly serious for those living in East Timor, where several hundred political prisoners, accused of advocating independence, have been mistreated and sometimes actually tortured.

In the Philippines, there are several hundred political prisoners, some of whom have been mistreated and tortured. The country has also been criticized for summary executions, especially of priests, human rights lawyers and trade unionists. Members of the army have also raped women who were thought to oppose the government.

Lastly, in Myanmar, martial law is still in operation and Amnesty International estimates that there are more than 1600 political prisoners. Many of the detainees have been tortured in the 20 torture centres that Amnesty has been able to identify. Summary executions occur, and the wives of opponents or suspected opponents of the regime have been arrested and raped as a way of putting pressure on their husbands.

Political opinions are not the only reason for human rights violations in Southeast Asia, any more than anywhere else in the world. Religious intolerance is probably as old as religion; it is expressed in different ways, depending on the country, either forbidding or enjoining the practice of a particular faith. In Indonesia, for example, freedom of religion, although guaranteed by the constitution, is entirely fictitious. In fact there are four official reli-

gions and every citizen must belong to one of them; atheism is not allowed, nor are any beliefs besides the four recognized ones. Since 1989, membership of forbidden sects is punishable by imprisonment in Indonesia.

In Vietnam, where 60% of the population is Buddhist, only one community has been accepted by the state since 1981. Anyone who contests the single religion is put in prison and some have even been sentenced to death, even if this was later commuted to 20 years "reeducation".

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TOWARDS A BETTER WORLD ORDER

The general objective of the Club of Rome is essentially how to create a new type of world. This means developing some guidelines towards a new approach to eradicating or at least alleviating poverty, reducing the very large gaps between the rich and poor within and outside countries, and creating a society which will allow a modest prosperity and a sense of dignity to all inhabitants of the planet. This is a far cry from present realities. Three major problems currently seem paramount. The first is the disparity between North and South.

In its 1992 **World Development Report**, the World Bank states that the number of people living below the poverty line (i.e. less than $1 per day) has again risen, to 1.1 billion. 1.7 billion people have no access to health care, 1 billion are without clean drinking water. The figures published in the last United Nations annual **Human Development Report** give an even more dramatic picture. The report shows that people in the 20 richest nations (i.e. the industrialized countries) enjoy an income 60 times higher than those of the 20 poorest countries. In 1960, when the international policy on development began, this difference was half as great. We worked hard in the last three decades, in fact since the Second World War, to try to reduce these disparities, but obviously without much success. The second problem is the population explosion which slows down development in many parts of the world, increases the demands for resources, materials and energy. It also has serious repercussions in many other directions, including the likelihood of migratory waves.

The third question is employment, as the chances of having work promise to vary enormously in different parts of the world.

In many countries of the South, and exacerbated by population growth, levels of unemployment and under-employment are extremely high, adding to the pressures towards emigration.

These are the priority problems, of course. But the Club of Rome does not really consider problems in terms of priority at all. Its first concept, the "world problematic", means recognizing that all the problems of the world are like an untidy ball of string: when one piece is pulled, it pulls out others and the whole ball turns out to be connected. In other words, the problems of the world are so complex, they cannot be approached one-by-one, in a sequential manner. This fact has increasingly come to be recognized in recent decades.

What is the problematic at present in the countries which we are examining? To answer this question, we shall now look at a range of economic indicators.

Relative poverty

According to the World Bank's classification of countries by their per capita GNP, five of the ten countries under discussion are in the lowest category, Low Income. These are Laos, with $200, Indonesia with $570, then Cambodia, Myanmar and Vietnam, where the exact figure is not known but is thought to be around $600.

Next come the medium income economies: the Philippines just above the previous group, with $730, Thailand ($1420) and Malaysia ($2320, three times that of the Philippines).

Lastly, in the high income group, are Singapore ($11,160) and Brunei (estimated at $15,390).

The region thus has an extremely uneven distribution of wealth, from country to country but above all in terms of income per head. The two richest states, Singapore and Brunei, together have a population of just over 3 million, whereas the poorest countries have a total population a hundred times greater.

If we look at the location of these countries, the poorest are mostly on the mainland whereas the richer and more advanced ones are on the islands. The exceptions in each group are Indonesia and Thailand.

This difference can largely be explained by the long term conflicts that the continental countries have been through.

No data is available on inflation in the countries of Indochina or for Myanmar.

For the rest, inflation is low everywhere except in the Philippines, where the rate is in double figures but is relatively well under control (the average during the 1980s was 14.9%, as against 11.4% in the 1970s).

Elsewhere (insofar as figures are available) inflation has decreased, though in fact it had never been a major problem. In Thailand the rate fell from 6.2% to 3.4%, in Malaysia from 4.9% to 1.6%, in Singapore from 6.5% to 5.1%, and in Indonesia —the one country where inflation was a problem— from an average annual rate of 35.5% between 1965 and 1980 to 8.4% during the 1980s. Brunei, like some other oil-exporting countries, has been in the peculiar position of falling price levels (-6.9% p.a.).

Two major debtors

The total foreign debt of the members of ASEAN is about $143.73 billion. If the known debt of some of the other countries of the region is added, the total rises to about $150 billion — which is about a third of the Latin American debt, although the total population is about the same.

Even so, for each individual country the foreign debt is a major burden and it has significantly increased in the last ten years. Some have nevertheless managed to offset the debt by expanding exports, as can be seen by measuring the debt service charge as a percentage of export earnings (Table 1).

Two of the world's major debtor countries are in Southeast Asia: Indonesia (4th) and the Philippines (13th).

TABLE 1

	Total foreign debt as a percentage of GNP		the debt service as a percentage of export earnings	
	1990	*1980*	*1990*	*1980*
Indonesia	66.4	28.0	30.9	13.9
Laos	123.3	-	12.1	-
Malaysia	48.0	28.0	11.7	6.3
Philippines	69.3	53.8	21.2	26.6
Thailand	32.6	26.0	17.2	18.9

Table 1 shows that the Philippines and Thailand have substantially reduced the burden of debt service compared with export earnings. Indonesia, too, has done so to a somewhat lesser extent (the cost of servicing the debt has risen less than the rate of increase of the debt itself). By contrast, Malaysia uses a larger proportion of its export earnings to pay off its debt service charges.

The cost of servicing the debt requires considerable sacrifices from these countries, and the worst of the burden falls on the poorest people. In the Philippines, for example, this means half the population.

EXAMPLE FROM THE PHILIPPINES OF THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF DEBT

Because of the huge amount of money that the government has to allocate for debt servicing, very little is left to provide for the needs of the poor. Working on the basis of the 1989 budget figures (43.9% for debt service versus 37.7% for economic and social services), one source claims "each family loses about $400 worth of government services simply because of the foreign debt". The poor use government schools and government hospitals if they can, because they cannot afford to pay fees for private educational and medical services. And the government makes drastic cuts in these areas in order to cope with the debt. According to a leading national newspaper*, not repaying the debt could save the life of one Filipino child every hour. This could be achieved by limiting the debt service to 20% of export earnings and allocating health its rightful share from the saving realized in the national budget. As a result of the conditions imposed by the IMF, the Department of Health even expects to achieve a sizeable reduction in the number of its beneficiaries. This reduction means "leaving 399,120 children denied milk and vitamins, 27,565 deprived of treatment, 102,262 tuberculosis patients untreated and 16,100 schistosomiasis cases denied medicines". Education, which in 1987 accounted for the biggest slice of the national budget, has also been cut. The low budget for education means less money for teachers' salaries, school facilities, supplies and textbooks, and generally a deterioration in the quality of instruction. Free secondary education, also provided for by the 1987 Constitution, will be even more difficult to sustain. The debt problem also directly contributes to unemployment by preventing the government from carrying out properly one of its vital functions as a creator of jobs and a pump primer for the economy while reduced government spending on social services and infrastructure depresses national consumption.

* Philippine Daily Inquirer (30 March 1989)

The Club of Rome has often pointed out[1] that one of the reasons for the heavy debts of Third World countries is their involvement in costly, often useless and even dangerous projects, often undertaken largely for reasons of prestige, and often with the agreement and sometimes the active encouragement of certain economic and financial interests in the North, who stand to gain by them.

Yet another example is provided by the Philippines.

The Philippines started repaying the PNPP loans in 1981 at the rate of $355,000 a day in interest alone, which adds up to $130 million a year.

The PNPP is the Philippines Nuclear Power Plant, a huge white elephant, vulnerable to earthquake and volcanic hazards, not to mention the open sea (tsunamis). The Philippine Nuclear Power Plant at Napot Point, Morong, Bataan, is the costliest and largest monument to human folly in the Philippines. It was mothballed in 1986 because of perceived dangers to public health and safety, after costing $2.2 billion. In 1974 the estimated cost of PNPP was $500 million for two nuclear plants. By 1975, when the Philippines formally applied for a loan, the cost for one reactor had shot up to $1.1 billion!

It is now clear that this project was an extremely profitable one for ex-President Marcos, several foreign banks and the contractor. A loan was taken out to cover it, but it bore little relationship to the actual costs of construction. In spite of this, the people of the Philippines now have to bear the whole cost, because President Corazon Aquino decided that the loan should be repaid "if only for honour's sake". The main protagonists in the affair have not made known how they would define "honour"...

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[1] See specially **"The Barefoot Revolution, The First Global Revolution, Latin America facing Hopes and Contradictions".**

Table 2. Average annual growth of GDP (%) (in brackets: absolute figure for GDP in billions of dollars).

TABLE 2				
	1965 / 80		1980 / 90	
Indonesia	7.0	(5.98)	5.5	(107.29)
Malaysia	7.4	(3.13)	5.2	(42.40)
Philippines	5.7	(6.01)	0.9	(43.86)
Singapore	10.0	(97)	6.4	(34.60)
Thailand	7.3	(4.39)	7.6	(80.17)

Table 3. Breakdown by sector of GDP (as percentage of the total).

TABLE 3	Agriculture		Industry		Services	
	1965	1990	1965	1990	1965	1990
Indonesia	51	22	13	40	36	38
Malaysia	28	-	25	-	47	-
Philippines	26	22	27	35	47	43
Singapore	3	0	24	37	74	63
Thailand	32	12	23	39	45	48

The share of agriculture in the economy of these countries has fallen sharply in the last 25 years, to be replaced mainly by manufacturing, with services holding roughly steady. By contrast, food production has increased, except in Myanmar and the Philippines (Table 4).

In Asia, land reforms have made it possible to give land to the peasants, raise agricultural yields and diversify crops more rapidly than the pace of population growth, and without significantly increasing the area under cultivation. One of the most striking examples of a successful agricultural policy is that of Indonesia. Unlike most densely populated oil-producing countries in the Third World, Indonesia has chosen to make agricultural development its top priority. The country has now become self-sufficient in rice.

Success in moving from a traditional farming society to a modern industrial society depends to a great extent on the manner and pace of modernization of agriculture, so as both on reducing dependency on imported food and also on limiting the exodus from the rural areas to a scale where the towns can absorb the additional people and the migrants can find work.

Table 4. *Index of per capita food production in 1988/90 compared with the previous decade (= 100).*

TABLE 4			
Cambodia	165	Thailand	106
Malaysia	147	Myanmar	93
Vietnam	127	Philippines	84
Indonesia	123	Singapore	69
Laos	114		

As Table 4 shows, per capita food production has fallen in the Philippines, Myanmar and Singapore. Although Singapore has the income to buy abroad the food that it needs —agriculture is obviously not one of the strengths of this city state— this is clearly not true of Myanmar or the Philippines.

We shall see further on that Myanmar uses its land for crops that are far from nourishing.

In the early 1990s a major agricultural crisis began in the Philippines. Agrarian reform, the cornerstone of "Marcos' New Society" and afterwards the centrepiece of Aquino's democratic restoration, is in disarray. In rice production, the Philippines — once hailed as the success story of Asia— is once again a major importer. The drought that started in the last quarter of 1989 and sizzled throughout the first half of 1990 was aggravated by the wretched state of irrigation infrastructures, thus causing widespread crop losses and consternation among farmers.

The foreign debt is a major factor in the increase in mass poverty in the countryside. Because of the huge budget deficit arising from its debt-servicing burden, the government cannot provide for the rehabilitation and expansion of vital infrastructure, the maintenance of price stabilization programmes needed by small farmers, and the extension of cheaper credit and inputs.

Industrial and agricultural policies inspired by the IMF and the World Bank have also failed to generate the jobs needed by the

growing rural population. The rural modernization programme
and the expansion of export-led agriculture have led not only to
the growth of big agribusiness but also to the marginalization and
even eviction of small farmers and tribal peoples from their lands.

Table 5. Per capita energy consumption and energy imports as a percentage of exports of goods.

TABLE 5				
	Consumption per head Kg/oil-equivalent		**Imports as a % of exports of goods**	
	1965	*1990*	*1965*	*1990*
Cambodia	19	59	-	-
Indonesia	91	272	3.0	6.0
Laos	24	39	-	-
Malaysia	313	974	11.0	4.0
Myanmar	39	82	4.0	4.0
Philippines	158	215	12.0	17.0
Singapore	2214	5685	17.0	15.0
Thailand	82	352	11.0	10.0
Vietnam	97	100	-	1.0

Energy consumption has doubled, tripled and even, in some
cases, quadrupled, but the imports required have been offset by
the growth of exports. As we shall see, the dynamic countries of
Southeast Asia have imported energy in order to transform it into
income-earning exports.

Table 6. Consumption and investment (%).

TABLE 6				
	Private consumption		**Gross domestic investment**	
	1965/80	*1980/90*	*1965/80*	*1980/90*
Indonesia	5.2	4.5	16.1	7.1
Malaysia	6.2	4.2	10.4	2.9
Philippines	5.2	2.4	7.6	-2.4
Singapore	7.8	5.9	13.3	3.6
Thailand	6.4	6.5	8.0	8.7

Consumption has grown very strongly in this region, as in the rest of the world, up until the last decade; domestic investment has grown far more than elsewhere. Both trends have now dipped slightly, though less than in other regions. It should be noted that Thailand is the only country in Southeast Asia to have increased both consumption and investment (very few countries anywhere in the world have managed to do so).

Table 7. Growth of imports and exports.

TABLE 7								
A. 1965 (% of total imports and exports)								
	1		**2**		**3**		**4**	
	Imp.	*Exp.*	*Imp.*	*Exp.*	*Imp.*	*Exp.*	*Imp.*	*Exp.*
Indonesia	8	53	3	43	39	3	50	1
Malaysia	35	60	12	34	22	2	32	4
Myanmar	20	94	4	5	18	0	58	0
Philippines	27	84	10	11	33	0	30	6
Singapore	42	44	13	21	14	10	30	24
Thailand	12	86	9	11	31	0	49	3
B. 1990 (% of total imports and exports)								
Indonesia	14	16	9	48	43	1	35	34
Malaysia	17	37	5	19	45	27	33	17
Myanmar	11	93	3	4	40	-	46	3
Philippines	17	26	13	12	20	10	50	52
Singapore	10	8	16	19	42	48	32	25
Thailand	13	34	9	2	41	20	37	44

1. *Food and other primary products*
2. *Fuel, exports of minerals and metals*
3. *Machinery and equipment*
4. *Other manufactured products*

In general, in 1965, Southeast Asian countries exported mainly raw materials and very few value-added products. Raw materials accounted for between 94 and 99% of most countries' exports, except in Singapore, where the figure was still relatively high (65%).

By contrast, they used to import large amounts of machinery, transport materials and other manufactured products, and they exported very little — again apart from Singapore, where 30% of exports were in these categories.

By 1990, there had been a marked change in most countries: exports of manufactured goods had expanded sharply, whereas exports of raw materials had decreased substantially.

Nevertheless, the trend has not been uniform. The switch holds true for the Philippines, Thailand and Singapore; it is less marked for Malaysia and Indonesia, while it has barely begun in Myanmar.

In addition, these countries have continued to import large quantities of manufactured goods — often far more in 1990 than they did in 1965, suggesting that they have tended to specialize in the manufacture of certain export goods.

After the Second World War and independence from colonial rule, most Asian countries adopted nationalist economic policies. They were able to finance this strategy for a while thanks to large reserves of natural resources, as in Indonesia. However, a state like Singapore, with very few natural resources, had to abandon this policy very rapidly. The rest had to do so in the mid 1980s, followed by the countries of Indochina. Only Myanmar still adheres to this choice.

Southeast Asia, thanks to its rich natural resources, remained in a classic neo-colonial situation, with substantial development of basic industries in Malaysia and Thailand, for example — industrialization was limited to a few sectors, but was sometimes ambitious in scope, such as the automobile industry in Malaysia and the aircraft industry in Indonesia. This approach proved both costly and inefficient. The collapse of prices of primary products in the early 1980s showed up the vulnerability of these countries and thoroughly discredited this development strategy. The leaders of these countries then decided to follow the model of the new industrialized countries (NICs), which had been far more successful.

The new strategy adopted was export-led industrialization, which Hong Kong had tried out after the Second World War. It was quickly realized that such a strategy made it possible to create large numbers of jobs and at the same time to raise living standards very rapidly, thanks to laws allowing total freedom to import and export at will. Hong Kong was soon followed by others, in particular Singapore. This largely Chinese city-state surrounded by Malaysia set out to develop export-oriented industry to complement its activities as a port for international trade, oil refining and naval dockyards. Success swiftly followed.

Singapore has also become a major international financial centre, and its ambition is to attract the headquarters of all the multinational companies operating in Asia.

In the interval of a decade, the countries with a rich endowment of natural resources have also become major exporters of manufactured goods.

PROSPERITY ALONGSIDE POVERTY

We have just seen how, as the countries of Southeast Asia changed economic strategy and opened up to the outside world, they became richer. But how fair is the distribution of the new prosperity?

Clearly we are dealing with two quite distinct groups of countries: first, the members of ASEAN, who were able to make good use of the years that their continental neighbours, the second group, lost in waging wars from which they are only just emerging.

There is, however, a second division within ASEAN, between the less populous countries (Brunei, Singapore and Malaysia), which are in a good or excellent position economically, and those with large populations (Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines), which are certainly on the right road but are not yet quite out of the woods, the weakest being Indonesia, with its very large population. The Thai economy has indeed had a good growth record in recent years, especially in exports, but the per capita GNP is still low.

But economic performance gives a less accurate picture of the real state of development in these countries than statistics on health, education and the distribution of wealth. In Asia, as virtually all over the world, there are often growing disparities between the position of those living in towns and in the rural areas. In Thailand's development position, for example, the weak points are the persistent poverty of rural communities (less than $460 per capita annual income in the provinces of the northeast, compared with a national average of $1420) and the low status of teachers, doctors and civil servants working far from a town.

In other countries, too, there are wide disparities between urban and rural populations, with many more of the latter living below the poverty line.

Table 8. Percentage of the population living below the poverty line.

TABLE 8		
	total	rural
Indonesia	39	44
Malaysia	27	38
Myanmar	40	40
Philippines	58	64
Thailand	30	34

Note: Data are not available for the other countries.

Major differences in life expectancy

People in Laos and Cambodia can expect to live one third less than those of Brunei: there is a difference of 27 years between the life expectancy at birth of a Laotian and a subject of the Sultan of Brunei, and 26 years' difference for a Cambodian. The first explanation that comes to mind is, of course, the wars that have ravaged Indochina. Yet the Vietnamese, who have also experienced and indeed been in the centre of the war in Indochina, have a far higher life expectancy than Cambodians and Laotians; the figure for Vietnam is similar to that for the Philippines or Indonesia (Table 9).

Which other indicators might provide an explanation?

The most obvious are those relating to health.

Table 9. Some health indicators.

TABLE 9	Life expectancy.	Infant mortality per 1000.		Medically supervised births. %	Low birth weight. %
		1965	*1990*		
Brunei	76	?	9	?	?
Cambodia	50	134	123	47	?
Indonesia	62	128	71	49	14
Laos	49	148	104	?	39
Malaysia	70	55	22	82	10
Myanmar	61	122	65	57	16
Philippines	64	72	43	57	18
Singapore	74	26	8	100	6
Thailand	66	88	26	71	12
Vietnam	63	134	49	95	17

Table 9 shows that in the 1960s infant mortality rates were high or very high in all the countries of the region except Singapore.

By 1990, these rates had been substantially reduced: halved in Indonesia, Myanmar and the Philippines; cut to a third in Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore (which has reached a level similar to that of Western countries). There are just two exceptions, Laos and Cambodia, where the rates remain very high.

A useful insight is provided by the statistics on medically supervised births, complemented by those on infants with low birth weights. The first figure is unfortunately not available for Laos, but the second figure is very high (one child in three has a low birth weight). No figures are available on birth weights for Cambodia; fewer than half the births there are medically supervised.

Table 10. *Some indicators of health care provision.*

TABLE 10					
	Population per doctor		Population per nurse		Perinatal deaths of mothers
	1965	*1984*	*1965*	*1984*	*per 100,000*
Brunei	?	?	?	?	?
Cambodia	22,410	?	3,670	?	800
Indonesia	31,700	9,460	9,490	1,230	300
Laos	24,320	1,360	4,880	530	750
Malaysia	6,200	1,930	1,320	1,010	120
Myanmar	11,860	3,740	11,370	900	600
Philippines	?	6,700	1,140	2,740	250
Singapore	1,900	1,310	600	?	14
Thailand	7,160	6,290	4,970	710	180
Vietnam	?	1000	14,250	620	400

Where health statistics are available, they show that the provision of medical and paramedical personnel does not explain the high infant mortality rates. Table 10 also shows that health care provision has improved enormously in 20 years.

Particularly large numbers of mothers die during or soon after giving birth in Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar. In these cases, even if the child lives, its chances of survival, without the mother, are reduced.

In 1984, the number of persons per doctor in Laos was lower than in Singapore, where infant mortality is low and life expectancy high. Similarly, the numbers of paramedics in Laos would appear adequate. Nevertheless, even if the total quantity of health care provided appears to be acceptable, there is no guarantee that everyone has equal access to it.

Data is available on this topic, just as there are estimates on access to clean drinking water, which is well known to be a key factor in promoting good health.

Table 11. *Access to basic amenities.*   43

TABLE 11			
	Access to drinking water %	Access to health care %	Access to sanitation %
Brunei	96	?	99
Cambodia	?	53	?
Indonesia	28	80	43
Laos	29	67	12
Malaysia	?	?	?
Myanmar	32	33	35
Philippines	86	?	91
Singapore	100	100	97
Thailand	81	70	86
Vietnam	46	80	53

Most of these statistics are still not available for Malaysia, and some are lacking for Brunei, but the fact that these countries have a good average life expectancy (over 70 years) makes it reasonable to suppose that their populations have adequate access to health care, drinking water and sanitation.

By contrast, there is still a long way to go in Laos, Indonesia, Myanmar (and doubtless Cambodia, although no figures are available), where only a third of the population has access to clean drinking water. In absolute terms, this means that about 130 million people in Indonesia have no clean water.

The figures on sanitation provide a similar picture, with all the risks for the spread of disease that poor provision entails.

Lastly, it should be noted that provision of health care or sanitation is not always well distributed within each country. Most of the population still lives in rural areas, and they tend to have the poorest provision. This is not, however, the case in Indonesia (where 69% live in the countryside) or Thailand (77% rural), where the rural populations have better provision than town dwellers. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that neither rural nor urban populations in Indonesia are in an enviable position.

Data is lacking for Cambodia, except with regard to access to drinking water. Only 10% of the urban population (less numerous than the rural) has access to clean drinking water.

AN EXAMPLE OF UNEQUAL ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Malaria is making a strong comeback in Vietnam, after having been wiped out in the 1980s thanks to a programme financed by the former Soviet Union and other donors. In 1991 more than a million Vietnamese had contracted the disease and 4500 died of it. Malaria is currently a serious health threat, especially for people living in remote mountainous regions. The highest incidence of deaths is indeed found in remote villages, because the health services are inadequate and malnutrition is rife. Many villages have no dispensary or health care professionals, and help from outside is often limited because of difficulties of access. The district of Que Phong, in the central mountains, has suffered in this way. After an epidemic of malaria flared up in June 1991, it took more than a month for help to arrive, by which time many people had died. Lack of money is a major problem in coping with the disease, because a single dose of an effective remedy costs $6, which makes it too expensive for many sufferers.

THE IMPACT OF AIDS ON DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA

A study of the impact of AIDS on Asian development has recently been published in New Delhi by the UN Development Programme. It provides some idea of the potential consequences of the disease. In India and Thailand alone (the two Asian countries most affected), AIDS could mean losses to the economy of $30 billion. Unless real efforts are made to combat AIDS in Asia, more than 10 million people could soon be infected. Studies in India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Laos and the Philippines show that AIDS spreads among the poorest sections of the population and therefore worsens the existing disparities. The main aim of the UNDP report is to attract the attention of the appropriate public authorities to the economic dimensions of the epidemic — in addition, naturally, to the dramatic consequences for health.

A better understanding of the health care provision available can be gained from examining the breakdown of public expenditure between different items (Table 12).

Table 12. Breakdown of public expenditure.

TABLE 12	Defence		Health		Social provis.		Education	
	1972	1990	1972	1990	1972	1990	1972	1990
Brunei	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Cambodia	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Indonesia	18.6	8	1.4	2	0.9	1.5	7.4	8.4
Laos	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Malaysia	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
Myanmar	31.6	24.7	6.1	4.6	7.5	15.4	15	16.8
Philippines	10.9	11	3.2	4.1	4.3	2.3	16.3	16.9
Singapore	35.3	21.6	7.8	4.7	3.9	11.7	15.7	18.1
Thailand	20.2	17.3	3.7	6.8	7.0	5.8	19.9	20.1
Vietnam	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

It is particularly regrettable that no figures are available for the countries of Indochina. However, it is clear that a country like Indonesia, which has a poor showing as regards life expectancy or health care provision, spends only 3.5% of its budget on these items. Singapore, by contrast, spends over 16%.

Singapore has invested heavily in its people. The combined primary and secondary enrolment ratio is now 87% and the proportion of students now graduated from tertiary education (one-third of them in science) is among the highest in the developing world. People have benefited considerably from Singapore's social expenditure. The economy has also benefited. The well-educated workforce attracts large amounts of foreign investment.

Education, training and culture

Statistics on education, training and culture provide another angle on the differences between countries and the disparities within each state.

If public spending on education is compared with that on health, it appears that the amount is still quite low, except in countries like Singapore, Thailand and Myanmar, where the percentages are on a par with those of Western countries. However, given the size of the lag in both health and education (except in Singapore), spending ought to be very much higher.

Table 13. *Educational provision and achievement.*

TABLE 13

	Illiterates		Proportion of age group		
	adult women %	total adults %	primary school %	second. school %	higher education %
Brunei	?	?	?	?	?
Cambodia	78	65	?	?	?
Indonesia	32	23	99	47	?
Laos	?	?	70	27	2
Malaysia	30	22	96	59	7
Myanmar	28	19	?	24	5
Philippines	11	10	99	73	28
Singapore	?	?	100	69	8
Thailand	10	7	85	28	16
Vietnam	16	12	88	42	2

Improving literacy rates is not always easy, as Indonesia well knows. Take, for example, the Riau Islands: 3140 tiny islands, many of them uninhabited or with just a few families per island. The islanders have no settled homes and move constantly from one island to another. They live off the sea, which provides their food and their only source of income. Some even live permanently on their boats. If they wanted to send their children to school, they would have to sail to an island with a large enough population to support a school — the result is the children do not go to school. They grow up and become sailors and fishermen. Some 3600 people are estimated to live in this way. The Indonesian government has set up a programme to encourage the sea

people to settle on one of the more populous islands, offering them floating homes and health care services. Although the sailing folk are reluctant to give up their way of life, it is likely that these last sea nomads will gradually be forced to settle down.

Finally, if figures on life expectancy and female illiteracy are compared for each country (Tables 9 and 13), a clear correlation emerges: the greater the proportion of illiterate women (and if this is not offset by better living standards represented by higher per capita GNP, access to clean water, etc.), the higher the levels of infant mortality.

DISTANCE EDUCATION IN THAILAND

In more than 50,000 classrooms throughout Thailand, the radio has become a standard piece of equipment in primary, secondary and adult education. The Thais have learned to teach in this way thanks to technical assistance from Unesco, financed by the UN Development Programme. In primary schools, radio programmes are used for all subjects in the syllabus, while in secondary schools, the radio is used mainly for language courses, music and mathematics. In 1975, 45% of secondary pupils studied in Bangkok, even though only 10% of the population lived there. In 1982, more than 10% of teachers had no teaching qualification and a quarter did not have the diploma for secondary school teachers. The radio is an excellent way to reduce the difference in quality between the instruction available in urban schools and in the remote areas of the country, which do not attract many good teachers. With a view to keeping up with technical progress, Thailand is beginning to explore the use of television, but for the moment the impact is minimal.

The black economy

Employment of children

One in four of the world's children between the ages of 10 and 14 has to work instead of attending school. In Asia, 16% of this age group works, mainly in factories.

Countries like the Philippines or Thailand have made considerable efforts to improve educational provision for children, but we have seen earlier that the foreign debt of the Philippines has led to cutbacks in this area. Like most Southeast Asian countries, both these countries are predominantly rural, and children are expected to take part in farm work from an early age. But there are far more worrying kinds of work for children in Thailand and the Philippines.

For the Philippines, the Bureau of Women and Young Workers estimates the total number of child workers at somewhere between 5 and 7 million. Children from 5 to 14 years old are forced to work because of extreme poverty. Often, children are the sole wage-earners in their family. They accept all kinds of odd jobs, some of which are physically very hazardous, like mines, cement works, sugar-plantations.... A number even sell their bodies to paedophiles from the West.

In Vietnam, given the economic situation and the poverty of households, more and more children are being taken out of school to do small jobs or help the family survive.

This despite the fact that the only hope for such people is to get a better education, acquire a skill that will allow them to find a better job. But, as always, poverty limits peoples' choices and ultimately breeds more poverty.

Prostitution

It is already an established fact that Manila is now one of the "flesh capitals" of Asia. The total number of prostitutes in the country may be anything from 300,000 to 1 million, of which an increasing number are children. The trade is doubtless "suffering" from the closure of the U.S. military bases (Clark and Subic Bay), and this should be a cause for rejoicing, were it not that in a town like Olongapo, half the population of 200,000 lived directly or indirectly from the proceeds. Now that they can no longer make a living in the area, many of the prostitutes are moving to swell the numbers in Manila.

Recently, the mayor of Manila has instituted very strict measures to crack down on both child and adult prostitutes. The bars of Ermita, the red light district of Manila, are patrolled regularly and many have been closed. The immediate result, predictably, is not to stop prostitution but to drive it out of the bars and onto the streets. Prostitution has to be dealt with by eliminating poverty rather than closing down the places where the trade operates. It would appear in any case that the city authorities were not motivated purely by moral or social concerns; rather, the closing of the bars may have been the prelude to a huge redevelopment project aimed to benefit people other than the present inhabitants of the district.

In Thailand, the equivalent area of Bangkok (Patpong) has been treated rather differently. The authorities apparently prefer to keep prostitution in one place in order to make it easier to supervise, for example from the point of view of health. Prostitution is of course one of the main agents in the spread of AIDS, and at least 150,000 residents are HIV-positive, even if there are relatively few cases of full-blown AIDS.

In 1988, with the support of the World Health Organization, the UNDP and many non-governmental organizations, the Thai government launched a multi-million dollar programme to combat and prevent AIDS. 200,000 health workers were given special training to deal with the disease and a programme of testing was put in place.

The drug trade is, of course, another important source of the disease, and Thailand has not escaped the problem.

Thailand, like two other Southeast Asian countries, is a major producer or narcotics, making up the famous Golden Triangle.

Drugs

The Golden Triangle, extending across Burma, Thailand and Laos, produces every year about 1500 tons of opium, or roughly 150 tons of heroin. Myanmar is most deeply involved in the trade, which accounts for 40% of its GNP. Many of the political (communist) or ethnic groups (Karens, Mongs, Kachins and Shans) rebelling against the government finance their guerilla operations from drug trafficking. It is extremely difficult to combat the traffickers across the whole region, partly for reasons of geography which make it impossible for governments to mount surprise attacks. In addition, the traffickers are so well armed that they even manage to shoot down aircraft. Those who actually

grow the opium do not gain much financially, and they are the virtual slaves of the dealers.

The United Nations has made enormous efforts in recent years to arrange a coordinated international attack on the drug problem. A conference was held under UN auspices in Vienna in 1987, and led to better coordinated and energetic action.

A year after the conference, the UN General Assembly adopted a new convention against trade in narcotics which sets out to encourage not only greater international harmonization of laws, but also cooperation in tracking down and extraditing drug dealers, and uncovering the laundering of drug money.

The UN Programme for International Drug Control brings together several existing agencies. It has five main aims. First, to strengthen international supervision of drugs authorized for medical and scientific use. Second, to help reduce the demand for illegal drugs, especially through education. Third, encourage treatment and social rehabilitation of drug users. Fourth, stop the supply of drugs from illegal sources. Fifth, strengthen efforts to stop the illicit trade in drugs.

In the difficult task of implementing this strategy, UNPIDC aims to make itself the principal international source of information and expertise in this field. Other UN agencies are also involved, such as the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, etc.

The first priority is to fund schemes to encourage farmers to switch from cultivating coca or opium poppies to growing legal crops. There are, however, considerable doubts as to the efficacy of such initiatives. The basic problem is that peasants do not make enough from growing legal crops to live, because they are not paid a proper price for what they produce. As long as high demand allows the drug barons to make huge profits, the result will be merely to shift production to other places. There must also be greater willingness to recognize that the drug barons do not let their ill-gotten gains sit idle. Large areas of the world economy are based on the proceeds of the drug trade, which is laundered and invested with the complicity of certain banks and financial interests. If this "dirty" money were withdrawn, it would lead to many bankruptcies of "honest" companies and the loss of thousands of jobs.

OBJECTIVES FOR A BETTER WORLD ORDER

The issues

The ending of the Cold War is leading to radical changes in the world order. The fundamental challenge of mankind now is to devise new concepts, constructs and processes to address a host of old and new issues in a transitional world where old concepts, constructs and processes by and large still hold sway.

Several major issues in particular warrant urgent attention and need creative solutions or management. One is **the North/South divide** with its steadily widening disparities. While the gap between the rich and the poor will continue to be a major factor in international relations, it has become too simplistic a notion to describe prevailing realities and is no longer very helpful as a conceptual framework. It is perhaps more accurate and useful to think in terms of a world characterized by a zone of turbulence, stretching across Eurasia and including the Middle East and Africa, plus part of Latin America, and surrounded by pockets of relative stability. Managing this turbulence is likely to be a central preoccupation for the next decade or two.

Regionalism is another way of describing the problem. It accords better with present political and economic realities and trends, but regionalism would not be a good basis for a new world order because no uniform regional order yet exists.

The difficulty of **sustaining employment** and the problem of underemployment are also important issues which need to be addressed. However, while these are growing concerns in developed societies, in Africa and some other parts of the world, mankind is faced with an even more fundamental and urgent problem: **survival** itself.

The concept of **sustainable development** has become much misunderstood and distorted. Although at the outset sustainability was meant in terms of global concerns, it is now seen largely in national terms, which could prove harmful to the global good in certain circumstances. Sustainability has also been confined essentially to the economic dimension, whereas in fact it should go beyond that to include elements such as culture. In this regard, there could also be a new concept of wealth, one based on the genuine needs of the people rather than the whims of the market.

The institution of the nation-state and the concept of **national sovereignty** is also an area of debate. Some feel that the nation-state is already declining and new paradigms are emerging, while others point out that the demise of the nation-state has been predicted for some time now, but the systems refuse to die; in some parts of the world nation-states are in fact just emerging. The heyday of the nation-state system, however, is now probably over.

Another point which should not be forgotten is the need for balance between national sovereignty on the one hand and **global interdependence** on the other. Sovereignty should not be radically undermined, but acceptable rules and laws governing and legitimizing international interventions under exceptional circumstances, such as gross violation of human rights, must be devised. The European Community can be cited as an example of a balance between sovereignty and interdependence which is not harmful to the interests of individual states, particularly small ones.

Again with regard to institutions, the United Nations and several other international bodies are in need of reform if a better world order is to be realized. Some suggestions include the expansion of the permanent membership in the Security Council, the replacement of the veto with a weighted voting system and the wider involvement of NGOs in the deliberative though not voting processes of the UN.

Another factor in the new world order that must be borne in mind is **demographic trends**, taking account of the religious and cultural dimensions involved. This issue is discussed at greater length in Chapter V.

A world governed by hope rather than threats

The end of the Cold War has brought about a desire, and indeed a need, to change the international patterns of behaviour which prevailed in the situation of the old East-West conflict.

The main policy doctrine that underpinned interaction in the bipolar world for the last 40 years was one of "deterrence". All types of nations (developing and developed, minor and superpowers) were directly or indirectly affected by deterrence, either through the policy itself or through the various strategies that were devised in pursuit of this policy.

The danger of using deterrence as the basis for global international behaviour for so many years lay not so much in the material requirements for sustaining a deterrent bipolar military posture (weapons and manpower) as in the non-material elements used to reinforce this posture. Because "deterrence" as a policy is simultaneously aggressive and defensive, the obvious alternative - that of "cooperation"- was downplayed and often ridiculed as being impractical. The challenge of the 1990s is to manage a reversal of this policy: deterrence must turn into cooperation. Real security and progress lie in cooperation not in threats. It is time that we learned to base our international policy not on our fears but on our hopes.

If we make full use of the advances in science and information technology, the 1990s must see a change in the parameters of what constitutes acceptability and unacceptability for international well-being and progress. In the past, nations were mostly affected by issues such as direct military interventions, the threat of nuclear war, unjust economic decisions and ideological upheaval; now they face even more varied threats to their security. Among the new issues facing mankind are sustainable and equitable development, environmental protection, weapons proliferation, control/transfer of high technology, intellectual property rights and scientific development in the Third World, protection/creation of ethnic identities within states, a surge in inter-ethnic, religious and social violence, growing intolerance, and the problems related to foreign intervention to control or attack such groups as international terrorists, drug-traffickers and international criminal organizations.

Development and security are linked in the post-Cold War world: threats to security and conflicts are most intense in those Third World countries where development lags behind.

The hope that the end of the East-West confrontation would make the world more peaceful was illusory. In the past many conflicts in the Third World became particularly acute because of East-West opposition. The end of the Cold War unfortunately does not mean that these conflicts are therefore over. We now have bloody internal conflicts in many countries which destroy both the economic base and any governmental framework.

Often, these countries are trapped in a suicidal vicious circle, degenerating into chaos. Even if currently there are no acute conflicts between states, this by no means suggests stable relations because manifold contradictions and rivalries still exist, which, in a climate of mutual distrust, with corresponding arms escalation, can lead to a hot war at any time. Moreover, the potential for conflicts is heightened by the fact that the adversaries command an ever more dangerous arsenal of weapons of all sorts. Capabilities for <ABC weapons and the willingness to deploy them are increasing. So far, the United Nations has been able to carry out only "soft" operations; it must, however, also be able to conduct "hard" actions if it is to act as an effective peace-keeper.

Decision-making by all for all

Today, world technological, economic and scientific resources, international policy-making, economic determination, accepted patterns of behaviour, information and communication mechanisms are all seen as stemming from a handful of nations which also happen to be the seven or eight major powers in the present world order. Global conflict and peace are seen as a result of variations in the will of a few nations. Thus developing nations often view international political trends with more than a touch of irony, as if saying "it is the whim of a handful to go one way or the other, but it is not a permanent trend in the evolution of humanity".

Therefore, when developed nations make much of global disarmament after the Cold War, developing nations perceive in such policies a wish to prevent them from acquiring effective means of defence. Likewise, when international organizations are empowered to act multilaterally by developed nations, nations in the South perceive this as a suspicious move. Finally, when much is made of a "new world order", nations see no change in barometers of such an order, as represented for example in the configuration of permanent membership of the Security Council of the United Nations or in the inequalities in the way foreign debt is serviced. The media in the developing world amplify these feelings and add to the rift between North and South.

The tragedy is that where confidence-building measures are vital for the correction of misperceptions at North-South level, these measures are not forthcoming. Developing nations still perceive the world order as obeying the old system determined by a bipolar world of competing superpowers and their immediate

allies, and by the influence that both exert over the global community: a world of "haves" and "have-nots".

New rules of the game

In the bipolar world, developing nations and Southeast Asia in particular had to learn to use the weakness of the system in order to survive. When international organizations proved ineffectual, developing nations allied with one or both superpowers to achieve their objectives. Similarly, when one or both of the superpowers created regional organizations, these were generally ineffectual and led to the formation of ad-hoc regional groupings to tackle issues that would otherwise flounder in the more powerful regional fora.

Developing nations must learn not to play on a situation of superpower antagonism that no longer exists.

The beginning of the 1990s is marked by a double system: the remnants of the old power balance and doctrines mingle with emerging elements of a new international order. Deterrence interacts with cooperation; bipolarity has been replaced by multipolarity, with a single superpower (the United States) but considerable financial power centred on Japan in Asia; unilateral action interacts with international mechanisms for action; old definitions of security threat interact with new ones, much as old definitions of the role of the military interact with new roles required to face non-military threats to security.

The last three years have seen an increasing tendency for several nations to act collectively on any given security issue. This more imaginative use of collective action as an instrument to either prevent or resolve conflict situations has not yet been institutionalized as a new mode of international behaviour. Rather it has come about as a result of the ineffectiveness of existing mechanisms and the impotence of any one nation acting alone.

The problem is that the present international institutions and fora were created under the old bipolar order and reflect its value systems. Since today we need mechanisms and structures for cooperation more than ever before, the first priority must be to give greater credibility to existing groupings or create new ones.

We must seek ways of constructing confidence-building measures that can serve to restore trust among nations and inculcate ethical behaviour among individuals. The problem is not just systemic or institutional change, but change in values and lifestyles, which in turn would involve changing our comprehension of the

world. Pluralism and multiculturalism should also be a distinguishing feature of a world order based on genuine freedom, equality, democracy and mutual respect. In this regard the Malaysian experience is extremely instructive.

The need for new polarizing forces in democracies previously sustained by opposing ideologies will perhaps be satisfied by the appearance of new opposing camps, such as "conservationists" versus "exploiters" or those advocating a long-term approach to problem-solving versus those seeking short-term solutions driven by vested interests.

Alternatively, the present adversarial system may be influenced by the more consensual approach preferred in Asia.

Fresh approaches to development

A more equitable world economic order requires greater emphasis on the distribution objective: setting minimum standards in the poor countries and maximum standards in the rich countries.

Minimum and maximum standards mean that the aim of achieving basic subsistence levels in terms of food, clothing, accommodation and education in the developing countries must be primarily an economic and not just a political objective, while introduction of maximum standards in the industrialized countries are, quite apart from any moral considerations, desirable for ecological reasons. The implementation of maximum standards, which should in the first instance be attempted through taxes on the consumption of resources, will need to enjoy general consensus in democratic societies. To this end a wide-ranging transformation of attitudes must be set in train. If only 0.7% of the global GNP were to be effectively redistributed, no human being would need to live below the poverty line any more.

One key idea that emerged at the Conference in Kuala Lumpur is that the new order should tolerate and accommodate more than one model for development because of the diversity of the global situation.

Until now, development has been understood as being the process of bringing developing countries up to the standards of the industrialized countries. Moreover, these standards imply a conception of the world as a single cultural identity. From there to thinking that "westernization" of values and of social and economic structures was indispensable for development is but a single step that many took. The result has been not only a cultural loss, but an economic one.

The fear of a dominant culture should be removed, and the rich diversity of cultures in the world should be allowed to bloom, because everyone gains from it. In the new world order, too, a fresh strategy for dialogue between cultures freed from Cold War ideological manipulations should be devised.

One model of development has emerged victorious in the ongoing debate: the neo-classic market-economy model, based on a liberal democratic political system. Centralized planning has been rejected, its failure having been demonstrated to almost everybody's satisfaction. The logic of the market-economy model is undeniable and the empirical evidence in its favour is impressive. We should not, however, repeat the errors of the past and accept the principle that there is and can only be one model for development. The search for the only correct development doctrine has led political leaders and entire nations astray and caused great damage to individuals, nations and the world economy. One of the imperative tasks in the development debate of the 1990s is to recognize the diversity of situations and to seek the development models suitable for each category of countries or regions.

In East Asia, for instance, the dynamic economies of certain countries perhaps provide an alternative model for the rest of the world. They have challenged the view that endemic poverty was generally insurmountable, that democracy was necessary for growth, and that government policy had to play a major role in economic progress.

The need to take into account the diversity of development experience is particularly evident when one looks back at the decade of efforts on structural adjustment. Malaysia, for example, managed its adjustment without asking the IMF for help, whereas some African countries are floundering despite massive intervention, and the poorest segments of their populations are the hardest hit.

The same is true of the debt problem, and the Latin American solution may not be generally applicable. The diversity of solutions and degrees of success in Southeast Asia show how each country can discover its own set of answers, compatible with its history, culture and priorities.

A more equitable world economic order must go hand-in-hand with a culturally based diversity of types of economy, and make possible, in addition to global economic networks, the development of national economies centred on the domestic market. Since it has become clear that industrialization of the whole world on Western lines must be ruled out, if only for ecological reasons, other courses must not be disparaged as being

inferior or "uneconomic". Relinquishing the development paradigm opens up the possibility of looking for new and unconventional ways out of poverty.

The New Order could also be based on a redefinition of the scope of North-South cooperation legitimized in the post-Cold War scenario by the interdependence of North and South to manage common problems through a new agenda.

Some common problems are now well known, such as global environmental issues or major epidemics like AIDS. But other problems still tend to be viewed as lying uniquely within the competence of individual countries, for example migration or resolving regional conflicts, or the fight against crime or drug-trafficking. In fact they can only be resolved by cooperation between the North and the South, and they all require massive concessional funding. The established dialogue on economic co-operation for development, on trade, investment, energy, human development, etc. forms the backdrop for dealing with these problems.

A fresh definition of development and a fresh approach to cooperation for development are required. Developing countries should be fully integrated into the multilateral trading system and become full members of GATT. Their present preferential status in fact discriminates against them and is harmful to their interests.

Since the beginning of the Uruguay Round, many developing countries have joined the GATT and in so doing, adopted market-oriented policies to be in line with the underlying aspirations of what GATT represents. Together with these countries, other developing countries are also moving towards liberalization of their trade regimes following the example of the more successful East Asian economies. The effects would be bigger markets for other countries, provided the exports of these developing countries are allowed access into the developed world. Empirical evidence has shown that developing countries who have been successful exporters become dynamic importers as well. For example, in 1991 Malaysia was ranked the 24th top exporting nation and the 23rd top importing nation in the 1991-92 GATT international trade report.

North-South cooperation, including items such as those enumerated above, raises questions about the kind of institutions we need in order to achieve the goals we have set ourselves. As already mentioned, reform of the United Nations system and a critical look at other existing global institutions seems to be urgently called for in this context. The realization that interdependence, which for so long was nothing but rhetoric, is turning into a rather frightening reality could provide a new legitimacy to North-South cooperation.

Finally, the new order should promote equity, not only between nations but also within nations. This means defining good governance and redefining the meaning of success for nations and economies. This equitable redistribution of wealth within countries also implies a return to a concern with values and a certain ethical stance. The widespread hypocrisy surrounding the actions of government and business with regard to sustainable development (whatever that means), the environment, liberalization of trade and so on, should no longer be tolerated.

The state should play a larger role in development. This was the gathering consensus in recent thinking, and it contrasts with the previous trend towards laissez-faire and substantial privatization. As market forces are so critical in the economic system, the state's role should be to go along with them rather than fight them, while at the same time seeking to control their negative aspects. Governments could play a crucial role in determining economic success or failure. A government committed to the advancement of the welfare of its people could spell success for the economy, whether or not it is a democracy; alternatively, anarchy or a wayward government could spell disaster.

However, protectionism and closed economies are negative economic practices. Opening up the economy is an important growth factor, for, besides promoting free trade, it permits the inflow of new technologies and ideas. The international community should provide a safety net to developing countries which are undergoing the painful process of restructuring and liberalization by underwriting the process.

Capital is becoming scarce in the emerging international situation, and the competition for it is becoming increasingly fierce. Under such circumstances new ways must be discovered to enable the developing countries to gain access to capital. Multilateral rules would emphasize equitable and non-discriminatory treatment of trading partners, with the involvement of countries drawn from a broader spectrum, i.e. representative of the whole international trading community.

In conclusion we can say that a new world economic order does not necessarily mean a total change from the past. Rather, it is the culmination of circumstances that necessitates changes to the present order. What is important is to acknowledge that trade has expanded based on certain multilateral principles which have stood the test of time. However, the facets of international trade have changed over the years and therefore conditions to cater for these changes must move with the times. In order to ensure that trade and investment will expand for the good of the

global economy, and for individuals in each country, the participation of all countries is essential. As long as growth occurs in a nation or in regions, other countries must support rather than suppress it. Decision-making must be broad-based to ensure that the decisions are fair and equitable to all in the New Order.

This conclusion may seem obvious and simplistic, but merely to raise questions about the impact of possible measures is in itself a major step forward from the current situation, where such concerns are completely lacking. And raising such questions must ultimately elicit responses.

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Western model is no longer applicable

Sustainable development has recently become a provocative slogan of political jargon aimed to indicate willingness of government and international agencies to counteract the prevailing predicaments of developing countries and the environmental threats encountered by the humankind. With increasing importance being accorded to sustainibility considerations, doubts are cast on the validity of western models of industrial development.

Science and technology both have done and are doing much to improve standards of living and the quality of life, but at the same time they have widened the gap between the developed and the developing countries, and they are also partly responsible for damage to the environment. In this century, two factors have drastically changed the relationship between the Earth and humankind: the population explosion and the revolution in science and technology. Both will lead to serious consequences for the global environment and as a result, human activities will certainly outstrip the ecosystem's capacity for recycling in the near future.

It is clear that the future development of science and technology should have a strong concern for the environment, aiming for at least zero environmental impact, less use of energy or greater energy savings, and within the carrying capacity of the ecosystem.

Rapid progress of science and technology are also transforming the structure of the world economy and international relationships. In particular, the significant development of computer and communication technologies is extending global cross-border flows of information and money, and is likewise changing production and marketing patterns worldwide, making societies increasingly interdependent.

Until now the direction of technological advance has been guided almost entirely by the values and economic signals in the advanced economies. It is clear that the present direction of Northern societies —based on high levels of material consumption, with growing inequities and environmental damage— are unsustainable, as well as being at variance with higher ethical values. Western models of industrialization are being challenged and replaced by a growing awareness of the need for continuous and critical assessment of development paths.

Unless we start reconsidering the key issues involved, we are likely to remain trapped by the prevailing false paradigms and views of development. One of these takes economic growth and material wealth as the main indicator of development, while neglecting the significance of socio-political and cultural-spiritual values. Another paradigm, called technology fix, on no good grounds states that new technologies will always emerge in due time and will remedy any problem encountered. Human development is then reduced to nothing but development of technology. These two paradigms are interlinked, the technology fix supporting economic growth and vice versa. But even taken together they are inadequate and give misleading guides for development policy in a more essentially human context.

A more equitable sharing of science and technology

In a better world order, science and technology should be more effectively utilized for the public good and be made more readily accessible to the world as a whole, in particular to the poorer countries.

To achieve equitable and sustainable growth throughout the world, there is an urgent need to set up an institutional mechanism at the international level, so as to assist developing countries in facilitating dynamic transfer, acquisition and application of advanced technologies.

Some key fields of science and technology are emerging on which the future economic wealth of nations will be based. Such fields —for example, biotechnology, materials science, computer and communications, energy-related technologies— are clearly of vital importance for the future of individual nations and the structure of the world economy. Disparities in access to information and the ability to make use of science and technology must be overcome if we are to attain an equitable development of the world. The central issue for the world community is therefore

how to increase the capacity of the developing countries to benefit in their development from the vast potential of human knowledge and technology.

At present, for example, a critical mismatch concerns biotechnology, where the spectacular advances in genetic engineering (genetic mapping, transfer of genes across species boundaries, site-specific mutagenesis, new drugs and diagnostic tools) tend to increase rather than diminish the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

Various efforts are being made to bridge this gap, both by providing high-level training for scientists from developing countries and by stimulating entre-preneurship and indigenous creativity in those areas.

The new biotechnology applications are increasingly proprietary, owned primarily by private sector corporations in industrial countries. The benefits of this technology are generally not accessible to most developing countries, due to institutional, political and infrastructural constraints and a lack of investments.

Paradoxically, the applications of agricultural biotechnology offer promising means to achieve a more sustainable agriculture, for example through reduced pesticide use, which is critically needed today in developing countries.

The problem of financing is of course considerable at the present time, hence the support for the idea of "science & technology-for-debt-swaps" given, for instance, by the President of the African Academy of Sciences, Thomas Odhiambo[2].

Another problem is the massive brain drain from developing countries because of poor remuneration, lack of support for science, and lack of avenues for the input of science into policy. The brain drain is also symptomatic of profoundly disturbing developments in society.

Better use of science and technology

The world community must also rethink the aims and directions of economic and social development in the North in order to reduce the pressure on the world system and create more possibilities for the South to develop. But parallel efforts must be undertaken in the South to seek out new paths of development which can improve real standards of living without destroying the environmental base - locally, nationally or internationally.

Science and technology have a key role here: scientific and technological progress must be redirected to meet the needs of

[2] Bebt for science, letters to the editor by R. Odhiambo, J. Goldenberg, H. Arechiga, J.K. Amazy and L.A. Tyler, in "Issues in Science and Technology" Spring 1992.

humanity on a sustainable basis. Now that it is no longer generally believed that technology will always find a fix for the many serious problems that it can create, the challenge for science and technology is to respond to the changing needs and priorities of society.

Even technology is not a panacea. It will continue to influence human society economically, socially and politically. It will continue to have major impacts on basic needs, quality of life, wealth creation and governance, but every effort must be made to ensure that it brings improvements and not the opposite.

Efforts must be made to stimulate and fully develop indigenous capacity in developing countries and to help the "unreachable", that is the landless, the unemployed and other disadvantaged groups in the villages. External assistance to help develop local technology should also be considered.

The East Asian experience in science and technology development could provide useful lessons for developing countries. For the less developed countries, too, the technology of higher echelon developing countries could be more useful and relevant than the technology of developed countries. If access to technology from the North is being limited, South-South technology transfer should be encouraged.

Improve the transfer of science and technology

Technology development remains critical, urgent and challenging: critical because it is a crucial component of the struggle for well-being and self-determination; urgent because decades of technology evolution must be telescoped into years; challenging because new paradigms must be explored. But there are impediments to achieving these important goals. Because mastery of technology allows nations to attain a competitive edge, it is hardly surprising that there are pressures driven by national interests which hinder efficient technology transfer. Knowledge is hoarded, new advances are held secret until they can be utilized for maximum gain. Technology, it is claimed, is a strategic resource, and serious inroads are made into the status of science as open knowledge.

Quite simply, the process of technology transfer is not working well; in some cases it has perhaps been abused in cynical fashion by international corporations. This is why we must scrutinize carefully the regime for international transfers of technology. We must uphold the legitimate rights of their owners, but never

at the expense of the legitimate requirements of the needy. We must seek measures to ensure that the international transfers of technology are guided more by the spirit of cooperation for the common good than the promise of profit through commercial transactions to serve narrow short-term interests.

Our international institutions must move decisively to address such problems. But their constitutions and structures may prevent them from doing all that needs to be done. Supra-national organizations can develop only through consensus at the level of national governments; in practice they have shown themselves to be slow to acquire authority and unresponsive in the face of urgency. The momentum of events is liable to be too great for them to operate in a fully effective way.

There may be a significant role for international networking, particularly in the area of science and technology management. Network organizations can largely bypass the formal interfaces between governments and other human organizations which in practice cause so much difficulty and delay. They possess virtually no intrinsic power or resources, but can be formidably effective by virtue of the position which their members hold in formal organizations.

Other avenues of cooperative effort must be sought and expanded. The North must forge a true partnership with the South. In addition, links between the countries of the South themselves must be strengthened to ensure meaningful flows of knowledge and information between them.

In addition, transfer of technology should focus on the transfer of the appropriate types of technology, not of technology inapplicable or harmful to the culture of Third World societies. The key is to identify which technologies are most needed and most appropriate.

The following is a good example of technology transfer appropriate to the South. The project was initiated by an international non-profit organization. A virus-coat protein technology, developed by a company in the USA, for conferring resistance to viruses in the potato is being transferred to Mexico, where the potato crops suffered serious losses from viruses, despite the application of insecticide sprays. A significant increase in potato production through the technology incorporated in the seed will demonstrate the comparative advantage and impact of biotechnology on developing countries' agriculture. The near-term environmental impact of decreasing the need for the insecticide sprays will be an important contribution to a more sustainable agriculture.

The experience of Southeast Asia

The considerable success of the Southeast Asian economies in fostering the growth of manufacturing has so far been based almost entirely on imported technologies, rather than on locally generated innovation and expertise. In this they have emulated the example of Japan (which for a long time simply copied Western-designed products, and only relatively recently started to be itself a major producer of innovative technologies) and the newly industrialized Asian "tigers", which acquired the necessary technologies through the multinational companies that established manufacturing and assembly plants in the region.

Nobody could deny that the approach has worked extremely well for Japan, which was able to build up a skilled workforce, a training system and management methods adapted to its own culture during the period of reliance on imported technologies. For the countries of Southeast Asia now following a similar path, the situation is less favourable in that they have to face fierce competition from many others hoping to achieve the same success, and they have a far shorter time in which to develop a sound science and technology base (Japan had almost a century to do so).

The ASEAN countries are all well aware of the need to invest heavily in basic and continuing education so as to ensure that the workforce is numerate, multiskilled and sufficiently familiar with science and technology to be able to cope with the demands of a modern economy. The prime concern is that their people should be able to receive and benefit from science and technology. It is interesting that the discussions on Malaysia's Vision 2020 project stress the vital importance of competent blue-collar workers in a science and technology-based society, and not just the white-coated research scientists with PhDs.

For the moment the members of ASEAN accept that the most realistic policy on technology acquisition is "buy some and make some". This means, first, negotiating the best possible deals with the main suppliers of technology, the multinationals —a delicate business because too stringent demands (e.g. on joint ventures or licensing) may drive companies elsewhere.

It also means assessing the areas where the country's real strengths lie and choosing to concentrate on a few sectors that are likely to yield good results. The Malaysian government, for example, has set up a committee on "Intensification of Research Priority Areas" which has selected five key technological sectors where the country already has some expertise that could be

expanded fairly rapidly: automatied manufacturing technologies,
advanced materials, biotechnologies, electronics and information technologies. It is hoped that the huge gene stock provided by the tropical environment, as well as considerable experience in agricultural research, will be a good basis for the expansion of biotechnologies; research and development in advanced materials (e.g. Ceramics, superconductors) could also be linked to Malaysia's rich endowment in natural resources.

Expenditure on research and development (R&D) is at present very low (in Malaysia only 0.8% of GNP in 1989), compared with 2.8% in Japan in 1982). Most R&D is currently undertaken by the public sector and is focused on agriculture and basic research. The amount of investment must therefore be increased, and there must be a greater emphasis on downstream, applied research to meet the requirements of industry.

Agriculture will nevertheless remain extremely important. Science has of course made an enormous contribution to agriculture in Southeast Asia in recent decades. Much of the research related to the "green revolution" was carried out in the region, notably at the International Rice Research Institute in the Philippines. Some of the methods adopted are now being called into question because of environmental considerations, but the training and expertise acquired by scientists and technicians in the course of the last 30 years are of long-term value in the efforts to expand the region's science and technology base.

TO RECAPITULATE THE POINTS MADE:

Firstly, in the quest for social and economic advance, technology is a key. It can only be earned through hard work and serious effort, and it must entail the contributions of scientists, government and business. Technology development is a process which needs continual reworking and demands vigilance. Secondly, we must enhance our cooperative efforts in science and technology. We must remove unreasonable impediments to technology transfer and engage in constructive exchanges to globalize flows of knowledge and know how. And thirdly, we must respond to new opportunities which technological progress is creating. We must rise above narrow self-interest, undistracted by the temptations of short-term gain. We must find the courage to identify our true priorities in a better world order, driven by the long-term collective need of humankind.

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V

THE POPULATION EXPLOSION

Global trends

The survival of mankind is threatened by the effects of both population growth and economic development. One of the consequences of these effects —the destruction of the natural environment— for good reason attracts considerable attention internationally, indeed far more than the other threat, the steady growth of population.

Yet population is the main factor putting pressure on the environment, and it strains to the limit the resources available for development. The pressures come partly from migration to towns and the movement of people from rural to industrial areas which has accompanied the development process for centuries. But the main pressure comes from global population growth, which has been relentless and rising at an ever-accelerating rate.

The figures convey a terrifying message. In 1971 the world population was estimated at about 3.7 billion people and was increasing at that time at an annual rate of about 2%, which meant an increment of nearly 74 million per annum. In 1991, the world population had already reached 5.4 billion and it continues to increase at an average annual rate of about 1.7%, which implies a net addition of more than 90 million per year. Thus it will take only 25 years to reach the level of 8 billion, which is now considered to be the upper limit of what the global ecological system can stand, even if experts on food have stated that a population of 15 billion can ultimately be properly fed.

Most of this growth is occurring in the developing countries. Over the last 100 years, the population of the industrialized world has levelled off at about 1 billion, a phenomenon labelled "the demographic transition".

Studies of population growth conducted by demographers are based on scenarios worked out for regions, which are then added together to provide global population figures.

By projecting these trends into the future we can gain an idea of what we can expect in the next generation or two. The latest results on global population trends have been obtained at the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Laxenburg, Austria, and similar studies have recently been completed by the Population Division of the United Nations.

Figure 1. Forecasts of global population.

Population billions.
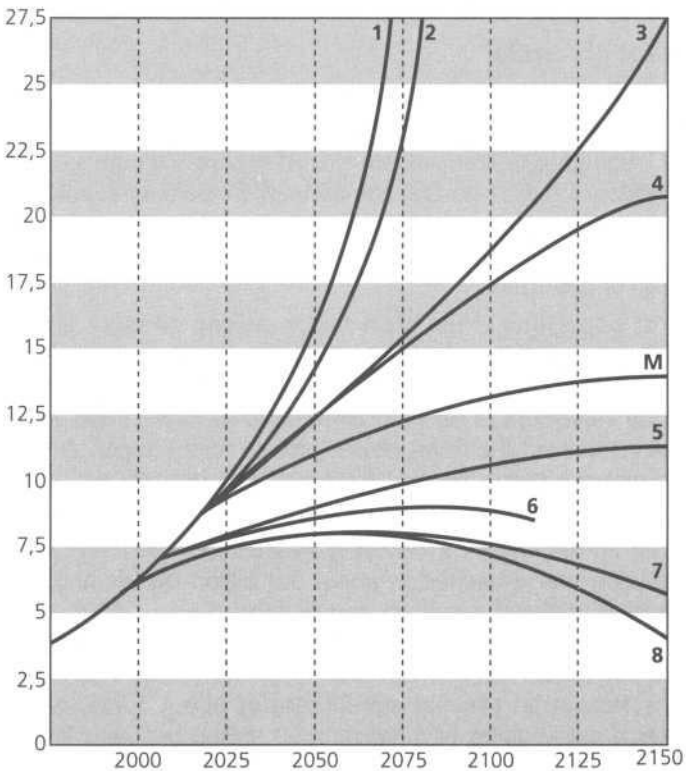
1. *Constant fertility (IIASA)*
2. *Constant rates (IIASA)*
3. *High variant (UN)*
4. *Medium high variant (UN)*
5. *Medium fertility decline (IIASA, UN)*
6. *Slow mortality decline (IIASA)*
7. *Medium low variant (UN)*
8. *Low variant (UN)*
M. *Variant produced by non-linear model*

Of the different scenarios of human reproductive behaviour, the most probable one is that of medium declining fertility (No. 5 in Figure 1). In the near future, the demographic transition, which has already occurred in the developed countries, is likely to bring drastic changes to the lifestyles of millions of people worldwide. The numbers of children, the very basis of family life and values, are going to be radically challenged. These changes are now being observed in some developing countries, such as Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Costa Rica.

Lutz and Prinz of IIASA state the dilemma facing humanity as follows: "The comparison of the consequences of various scenarios on total population size and the age structure of the population makes clear the fundamental dilemma of future population trends under low mortality conditions. All scenarios that limit population growth even to a level two or three times today's world population will result in extreme ageing of the population. Only further exponential growth of the population will keep the population young. Put in simple words, either the population explodes in size or it ages to an unprecedented extent. The explosion will sooner or later result in higher mortality levels because it cannot go on for ever, the ageing makes painful social adjustment processes necessary and a complete remodelling of both family and state support systems for the elderly. Probably the future will bring a combination of both undesirable phenomena."

The variety of options shown in Figure 1 illustrates the critical nature of our situation today. The choices made now will define future population trends, with all the attendant consequences for the environment and development.

It is clear that the first manifestations of disaster are bound to hit the poorest countries of the world, which are making little progress in raising the living standards of their inhabitants and face the most acute overpopulation.

It is clear, too, that mankind has already reached a stage in which family planning is not a matter for individuals to decide on the basis of subjective ideas and moral values, but needs a universalist, agreed-upon approach, which would overcome the differences of religion and ideology. It is still very difficult to reach any agreement on these issues. But it should not be difficult to answer the question "What is better: to use contraceptives or let the excessive numbers of children and adults die of hunger, in wars, of AIDS and other, perhaps yet unknown afflictions?"

The demographic consequences of development are the result of very profound and basic processes that should be seen on a larger time-scale than it is usually considered. An attempt to find

the general laws describing these processes may help in understanding the transformation through which we are now passing.

Arguably the world population and its growth can be treated like any interactive system in the process of development, and the general laws describing systemic growth can be applied. This approach is similar to that practised in physics and chemical kinetics. Its analytical power lies in the general principles invoked, but it does not provide immediately obvious insights into elementary processes, in our case the human condition, so that some criticize this approach as too formal and mechanistic.

Neither simple linear nor exponential models of world population growth generate satisfactory descriptions of the past, let alone future trends. A model that does work on a remarkably wide time-scale is a nonlinear one, where the relative growth rate increases with time[3]. Intuitively this is what we might expect —the more we develop, the faster in relative terms does the rate of progress become. In this model, we assume that the further back we go into the past, the slower was the growth rate —a concept that is also easy to imagine and that expresses the general idea that in the past things changed much more slowly than they do today.

In the mathematical model, this idea is expressed by assuming that the rate of change at any given moment is equal to the temporal distance into the past, reckoning time from a given date. If $T_1 = 2010$, then 200 years ago things changed twice as slowly as they do now, and so on into the past. Mathematically, the rate of growth increases by $e = 2.72$ times, and the period required to double the population is 0.7 times shorter each time. This is equivalent to assuming that the growth rate is proportional to the second power of the number of people, N^2, and not to the first power, N, as in the case of exponential growth. As a non-linear model it is the simplest way to describe population growth over a long period, taking into account their collective interaction, unlike either linear or exponential growth models.

This simple model is remarkably successful in describing the growth of mankind, not only over the last decades and centuries, but even over the last two million years.

As to the future, the simple model without constraints would in theory suggest population shooting off to infinity, faster than exponential growth. In fact a limit is imposed by the human capacity to reproduce - we cannot double our numbers in less than 20-40 years. If this constraint is introduced, the model confirms the hypothesis that total population will reach 7.5 billion in 2010 and stabilize around 15 billion in the foreseeable future (M in Figure 1).

[3] S. Kapitza, "A mathematical model for global population growth", *Mathematical Modelling* (in press).

A simple model cannot take into account wars and epidemics, revolutions and social disruption. (The First World War, for example, caused a 10% drop in world population, but this loss was soon regained. What it does indicate, however, is that we are now passing through a very decisive moment. Rapid growth followed by the expected transition and slowing down is a highly unusual event in the whole of human history.

This model also indicates how remarkably rapidly —in terms of 2 million years of history— the demographic transition happens: it takes less than 100 years, and we are now right in its middle.

Its most significant feature is indeed the rapid speed of change, unlike major environmental changes, which take place over centuries rather than decades. Systems analysis techniques show that during such periods of change, systems may become unstable and break up. This may happen because different subsystems develop at different rates, and during a period of rapid change they get out of step with each other. Consider, for example, the pace of industrial and social change: in the past, people lived in conditions that did not normally change markedly during their lifetime. Today this is no longer the case, leading to much of the strain of modern life. The whole stability of our fragile, interconnected world is thus at stake.

The demography of Southeast Asia

Most of the Southeast Asian countries have managed to make substantial reductions in their population growth rates since the early 1980s. The most spectacular change has occurred in Thailand, which brought its annual average rate down from 2.9% (1965-1980) to 1.8% (1980-1990). Currently the rate is 1.4%, which means that, by 1995, Thailand will reach theoretical replacement level.

Another country that has made considerable progress in curbing population growth is Indonesia, where the rate has fallen from 2.4% (1965-1980) to 1.8% (1980-1990), and the current level is 1.6%. If this trend continues, Indonesia will reach replacement level in 2005.

The other countries with large populations (Vietnam, the Philippines and Myanmar) also show a downward trend, albeit less spectacular than in Thailand or Indonesia. They should reach theoretical replacement level in 2010.

By contrast, in the countries with small populations, the trend in the 1980s has been rising.

Cambodia recorded the highest growth, with an annual increase of 2.6% in the 1980s compared with 0.3% in 1965-1980; the rate has now dropped back to 1.9%. Malaysia's population, after increasing from 2.5 to 2.6%, is now growing at 2.3%. Both should reach replacement level in 2015.

Singapore was expected to reach replacement level in 2030. The rate of increase rose from 1.6% (1965-1980) to 2.2% (1980-1990) and then dipped to 1.2%. The population at present has stabilized at 3 million, but the full consequences of the increase in the last decade will not be felt until 2025, when the total will reach and then level out at 4 million.

Lastly (since no data is available for Brunei), the population of Laos continues to soar: 1.9% in 1965-1980, 2.7% in the 1980s, and currently 3.2%. The present small population is thus growing very rapidly, causing an increase in density per square kilometre in the next half-century from the current low 17 persons to 88, though this density will still be well behind that of its neighbour, Vietnam (currently 201 persons per square kilometre). The total population is forecast to be 21 million in 50 years' time.

Despite efforts to bring down the birth rate in some of the most populous countries (roughly half the married women in these countries use contraception, 66% in Thailand), the population density will continue to grow.

By 2025, Vietnam and the Philippines will reach figures of 336 and 352 persons per km^2 respectively (compared with 258 in India today). When their populations finally stabilize (i.e. reach theoretical replacement level), the densities are forecast to be staggering: 456 per km^2 in the Philippines and 482 in Vietnam. The other countries will reach high but more reasonable densities. The same projections suggest India will then have 600 persons per km^2, whereas China will have fewer than 200.

Table 14. Actual and projected population densities (numbers per km²).

TABLE 14	actual	2025	stabilized population
Singapore	4795	6400	6400
Philippines	205	336	456
Vietnam	201	352	482
Thailand	108	163	204
Indonesia	93	144	189
Myanmar	61	103	142
Malaysia	54	97	133
Cambodia	47	77	110
Laos	17	42	88

This population growth, and concomitant increase in population density, will add to the already considerable pressures on the environment. It will also fuel the existing migration flows.

Migration within countries

As elsewhere, there are two kinds of migration: internal (from the rural areas to the towns) and external (to neighbouring or distant countries).

With the obvious exception of Singapore, most of the countries of Southeast Asia are still largely rural. The most highly urbanized are the Philippines and Malaysia, where 43% of the population lives in towns and cities. All the others have an urban population of between 12 and 30%.

In Laos, Cambodia and Thailand, urban growth mainly affects the capital city, where more than half the city dwellers live (almost all in the case of Cambodia).

In the other countries, urbanization has been more evenly spread, with the result that the towns are better able to accommodate rural migrants. In most, the urban population has roughly doubled in 30 years, and the bulk of the population still lives in the countryside.

The drift to the cities continues in Laos, Indonesia, Cambodia and Malaysia, where average annual rates of urban growth have

been higher in the 1980s than in the 1970s. The other countries have seen a slight fall in the rate of growth of their towns. (In this regard, it should be noted that the urban population of Cambodia in fact fell by 0.4% between 1965 and 1980, for the reasons mentioned earlier.)

Nevertheless, towns everywhere are growing twice as fast as the total population.

This upward trend is understandable in view of the better standard of living generally enjoyed in the towns, as we have seen above.

Nevertheless, if too many people move to the towns, it obviously becomes harder to accommodate the new arrivals properly. Shantytowns then grow up, with all their attendant problems.

Nobody knows how many squatters there are in the cities of the Philippines, but everyone knows their number is multiplying. An official source, the Presidential Commission on the Urban Poor, claims that there were 4 million at the end of 1988, 1.7 million of this number in Metro Manila alone. Another official source, the National Housing Authority (NHA), claims that 406,000 households are "squatters" or slum dwellers. If this figure is multiplied by six (which is the average family size) the estimated total squatter population adds up to 2.43 million, more than a third of Metro Manila's 7 million inhabitants. According to organizations representing the urban poor in 1987, they congregate in some 600 squatter colonies.

In the Philippines, as in other countries, the urban poor inhabit the small pockets of unoccupied land at the periphery of subdivisions, along railway lines, estuaries, dumps, sidewalks, marshlands, cemeteries, marketplaces, bridges... and other dangerous sites. They have unstable sources of income, irregular employment and are lacking in the most basic facilities such as health, education and other services. They live in extremely congested and unhealthy neighbourhoods with inadequate water and sanitation facilities. Being poor, their children have very limited educational opportunities. Malnutrition and diseases are prevalent and commonly a cause of high rates of child mortality[4].

In Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) is a great hive of activity, swarming with scooters and bicycles, that is trying to make up for lost time. With 5 million residents, the city is severely overcrowded. Estimates suggest that half a million people, most of them from the poor central mountains, are homeless. As throughout the country, the labour market is saturated. Vietna-

[4] Angelita Y. Gregorio Medel, "The Urban Poor and the Housing Problem"; 1989

mese are returning in droves from Eastern Europe. Nearly half a million employees were laid off by the state, and another half million demobilized soldiers are looking for work. In addition, 1 million young people arrive on the job market every year.

Millions of Vietnamese survive thanks to low-paid jobs or other commercial activities for a few hours a day. In the countryside, the peasants live and work as they have always done, their farming practices have barely changed, and they still cultivate their rice paddies with nothing but their buffaloes and their own physical strength. The paddies are still irrigated largely by hand, with two people scooping water out of irrigation canals with bowls. Living in such conditions, it is hardly surprising if they end up abandoning everything to try their luck in the towns.

Seeking a better life abroad

Most migrants leave their homes intending to return one day. They set off to look for a job, to escape from the appalling conditions that are their normal lot or that come about after some natural disaster, or else to flee from a political regime or an advancing army. But often the temporary stay becomes permanent, either because they find life agreeable in the new country, or else because the conditions that pushed them to leave their homeland have not improved.

The East-West conflict contributed to the militarization of the Third World, the accumulation of weapons, and consequently the frequency of armed conflicts. Southeast Asia had more than its fair share of these horrors. Thousands of migrants fled from Vietnam and Cambodia by land and sea — in all perhaps more than 3 million people. Many drowned or were massacred by pirates on the Khmer-Thai border. Everyone recalls the dramas surrounding the boat people, initially acclaimed for their heroism, then turned back when humanitarian concerns were overwhelmed by economic considerations. Some found refuge in neighbouring countries, destitute and in haste. Others managed to arrange to leave in family groups, to set up home properly elsewhere.

Whatever the motives and the circumstances of their departure, there are now millions across the world trying to make a new life for themselves.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has 15 million refugees registered. The number of "internally displaced persons" is many times that number. Laos and Cambodia in particular practised wholesale "transfers of

THE CHINESE DIASPORA FACES A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

Insecurity is a constant preoccupation of the Chinese communities throughout Southeast Asia. As a minority, they are regarded with jealousy and often accused of being reluctant to integrate. The new nations of the region are seeking a national identity which the Chinese do not always accept. They play a crucial role in the region's economy: although they represent only about 6% of the population of ASEAN, their contribution to the economy is far greater. For example, they control the largest banks and private firms. It is naturally difficult to measure exactly the real economic power of the Chinese diaspora, because there are no reliable data: the Southeast Asian governments refuse to acknowledge the strength of the Chinese communities and the Chinese themselves are extremely reticent. It is thought that the Chinese control 70% of the private capital of Indonesia, between 60 and 70% of the private sector and half the financial interests in Malaysia, 90% of industrial capital in Thailand and 100% in Singapore. The Chinese make up 76% of the population of Singapore, 30% in Malaysia, 10% in Thailand, 4% in Indonesia and 1% in the Philippines. After they achieved their independence, the nations of Southeast Asia put an end to further Chinese immigration.

population": 200,000 in Laos in the 1970s, most of the population of Phnom Penh during the same decade... But these migrations also happened for other reasons. Natural and environmental catastrophes are turning into famines, which produce a growing stream of refugees fleeing from poverty and environmental disasters. UNEP estimates that by the turn of the millennium 1 billion environmental refugees will have been displaced from their homelands because their basic means of survival have been destroyed.

The stream of migrants, who are called "economic refugees" or "illegal aliens" in political parlance, has also increased. The International Labour Organization estimates that there are approximately 100 million legal and illegal immigrants and refugees.

Ethnic, racial and religious conflicts have also contributed to migration. As economic conditions become increasingly difficult, other tensions come to the surface and economic reasons are used to justify expelling people who have sometimes lived in a country for many generations.

In recent years, the Indians and the Chinese in particular have suffered from such attitudes (70,000 Chinese were expelled from Laos in 1978, Indians were forced to leave East Africa, etc.).

Out of the 3 million who fled from Indochina after 1975, the neighbouring countries took in just over a million (over 600,000 in Thailand, 200,000 in Malaysia, almost 100,000 in Indonesia, around 30,000 in the Philippines, 25,000 in Singapore, 100,000 in Hong Kong and several thousand in Macao and Japan). China accepted about 275,000 Vietnamese refugees of Chinese origin. Some refugees are still living in camps.

LIFE IN A THAI REFUGEE CAMP

Thousands of Khmer refugees are waiting to go home. At Site 2, on the Cambodian frontier, their camp is a town of 190,000 people. Life is not easy, but families have managed to organize themselves and find work, and the health care arrangements are good enough that the infant mortality rate in the camp is one of the lowest in Asia. The families earn on average about $80 per month, which is not much but far more than Cambodian rural families are able to earn on the other side of the frontier, a few miles away. The services and standard of living in the camp are higher than many regions in Cambodia are likely to have for many years. The weekly ration of 4 kg of rice per person is far more than most Cambodians can hope to have in their homeland. In these refugee camps which are beginning to look like towns, there are schools, shops, discotheques and social centres. Trade flourishes. Health and sewerage services are provided by non-governmental organizations and the United Nations, which also offers education through its agencies working in collaboration with the Thai authorities. The camp is far from being paradise, however, and crime is rampant in certain neighbourhoods, with theft, rapes and killings. The large numbers of firearms and grenades (on sale at less than 50 cents each) add to the insecurity in such areas, which look increasingly like some of the ghettos elsewhere in the world.

Sometimes the migrants are temporary —perhaps just the head of the family or individuals, who leave for a few months or a few years, or even shuttle between their home country and the place where they have found work.

This is especially true of the Filipinos, both men and women, who are now to be found spread throughout the world. The women work as servants, cleaners in private homes or in hotels, look after children, etc.

As to the men, Filipinos make up a very high proportion of the crews of the merchant fleet of many countries. The shipowners hire the crew as a whole, from the captain to the kitchen help, for a single or several voyages. The crews earn a half or a third of the wages of sailors of other nationalities. They have no job security, and they are the first victims if a shipowner goes into bankruptcy, as happened recently when an oil tanker broke down in the French port of Fos sur Mer. The crew stayed on the ship, 3 km from the coast, for six months without being paid and living off the ship's stocks of food. They were forbidden to land by the French authorities, and local people were so moved by the Filipinos' fate that they brought them food and water. Eventually the ship was sold at auction, for a ridiculously small sum, in any case too little to pay the crew's wages. The new owners agreed merely to pay their passage back to the Philippines. The sailors wept as they left the ship because they would be returning home without any money at all to support their families.

Many Filipinos also work in the Gulf States as cheap labour. They are the first to be laid off when oil prices fall.

This new form of slavery, which is accepted by the Filipinos because for many of them it is the only way to survive, is even more appalling for the women. There are agencies in a number of European countries that "propose" Filipino women to European men who want to get married. They make an initial selection from a catalogue, then a trip to the Philippines is arranged for the future husband, or the couple meets somewhere in Europe. Sometimes these "mail order" engagements do not work out and the girl is sent home, to be replaced by another "piece of goods"...

In all these instances, whether those concerned are employees, sailors or "wives", the people who make the most money are the intermediaries, since they are paid by both sides.

THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND EDUCATION

The cultural dimension in international relations is always important, because it underlies all political and economic activities, all the time. To quote Akira Greye, a Harvard professor of Japanese origin, "International relations is actually interpower and intercultural relations."

These intercultural relations are becoming more and more critical as the world becomes smaller, and faces new choices and challenges: sovereignty versus interdependence; nationalism versus internationalism; regionalization versus globalization; fragmentation versus integration. Nobody can ignore the differences in cultural approach and their impact and influence on the way policy-makers behave.

For example, some observers of the relations between China and the United States have described them —especially when conflicts emerged— as "Middle Kingdom mentality versus superpower mentality".

Once the critical role of culture is acknowledged in international relations, the next question is whether it would be possible to build a universal cultural system which would remove all cultural barriers. To be realistic, we cannot do so in our generation, nor in several generations to come.

Take the examples of "democracy" and "human rights", which have been and still are the most important values of modern society. History has shown that they can be the source of tremendous energy, mobilizing the wisdom and creativity of human beings. The spread of democracy and respect for human rights is an irreversible trend worldwide.

But we should not forget that these values, with their deep roots in Western political culture, have not spread to the rest of the world without pain. In China, for example, these concepts arrived with the gunboats of Western powers and created dilemmas in its process of modernization as Chinese intellectuals struggled to build and rebuild the value system. According to Professor Yuan Ming of Peking University, "For many Chinese youth, democracy means total freedom on the individual level, but they don't realize that democracy also means responsibilities —to society, to the community and the nation."

Furthermore, copying Western models has not always been successful, quite apart from the problem of choosing which Western model to follow: the American, the French, the British?

How then can we begin to understand, to tolerate if necessary, to learn from other cultures?

Is real dialogue between cultures possible?

The nature of the dialogue between cultures is changing radically under the impact of post-modernism as a new way of thinking, greater globalism and multilateralism, and the revival of nationalism.

To define the conditions in which real dialogue between cultures would be possible we must ask some questions. Could an equal and reciprocal link exist between the European scientific and technological culture and the "traditional" cultures of the Third World? Are the scientific and technological values the expression of a universal culture or do they reflect a cultural standardization? To what extent are the values embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights part of a universal culture? Are intellectuals representative of the dialogue between cultures? To what extent should the popular culture be part of the dialogue? Does the implementation of the dialogue between cultures require a universally accepted definition of what "culture" is? And how are we to describe the changing world community, which will affect the conditions and implementation of the dialogue between cultures? Can the ideological concept of the New World Order give a proper characterization of the multiple processes which are interacting at all levels? Or do we need a better paradigm to help us understand the complicated text of the world?

We are baffled by the complexity of the modern world because we are still attached to existing paradigms, which have been constructed under the influence of the notion of modernity which

has been elaborated in the West ever since the Enlightenment. This notion has been based upon some specific values, the most important being secularism, the absolute dependence upon human reason, which led to the development of rationality, the adoption of a linear concept of human progress and the necessity of social engineering to attain it, relying largely on science and technology.

But modernity is being attacked by those who claim that it has collapsed, along with all its paradigms, and that we are passing now to post-modernity, which is based upon different concepts for the simple reason that it represents a new "world view".

The first new concept, **globalism**, is emerging in the current literature of social sciences as an analytical tool to describe the processes of change in fields such as technological innovation and internationalization of production and trade. Globalism is not just an abstract concept, it is a continuing process, which can be observed by using quantitative and qualitative indicators. Given the emergence of the "global information society", we may expect the consequences of globalism to be the growth of a new type of consciousness.

One of the most important features of international relations in recent decades has been the strong tendency towards **multilateralism**, the second new concept. The project to create the European Community, with all its implications, is typical of this trend. There is now a strong trend towards regionalism, for different reasons - partly in reaction to the successful construction of the European Community and the impact of globalism in general, and partly the felt need for a redefinition of identity.

The third new concept, **nationalism**, is a highly complicated topic, involving a mix of ideas about nation, ethnic group and class. We are witnessing a revival of nationalism across much of the contemporary world. This revival has positive aspects in that it helps many people to practise full democracy and express freely their cultural diversity, but it is already leading to very serious conflicts within the same state or between states. A new racism is developing, closely related to excessive expressions of nationalism.

This raises the question: what will be the impact of globalism on nationalism? The answer depends upon the nature of globalism and on whose terms it takes place; whether it is a democratic process, varied and egalitarian, or if it is hegemonic. If globalism turns out to be hegemonic, it will create the danger of intensifying the excessive expressions of nationalism. And if this happens, the dialogue between cultures will pass through a period of crisis.

So, humanity faces various choices, as we approach the 21st century: whether to reproduce the old hegemonic order, under the slogan of "the world order", or else to create a post-hegemonic order which will have to derive its normative content in a search for common ground among constituent traditions of civilization. To find the proposed common ground requires the representatives of different historical structures in the world to play an active role, by conducting the dialogue between cultures in a creative way.

On democracy

Throughout history, despots and tyrants have viewed democracies as hostile to their hegemonic ambition and have therefore always tried to undermine them. At present, we stand at an extraordinary moment in the history of the world, a time of unprecedented movement towards democracy. At the end of 1991, Freedom House rated 75 countries as politically "free", 10 more than in 1990. A more generous list counted 89 democracies —approximately half of the world's independent countries and twice the number of 20 years ago. By either standard, democracy is more prevalent than ever before. The prevalence of democracy is a response to the crisis of the state and to the crisis of economic development and transformation.

Democracy seems to have won the great ideological struggle of the Cold War. As a dynamic, coordinated, self-confident international movement, communism is (to quote the political scientist Ken Jowitt) "extinct", even if it is still alive in some countries. This opens up a rare opportunity to restructure world politics. The Bush administration had a vision of a "New World Order" in which "nations recognize their shared responsibility for freedom and justice". So far, however, that vision has been more preoccupied with order than with freedom. Within the framework of this new and more equitable world order, economic issues will take precedence over security concerns, although the latter remain important and must be addressed effectively first or at least simultaneously. In that context the world economic order will have three players: the United States, the Uniting Europe and Japan (the G3), and will be based on shared rights and responsibilities. There is therefore a crucial need to build systems of collective leadership in the economic and security spheres.

The democratic movement as the basis for a new world order does not mean that we are at the end of History, but rather that

we have reached a critical turning point in History. Not since the end of the First World War have the Western democracies had such an opportunity to shape the political nature of our world, and more specifically of developing countries. Democratic countries are more reliable, open, and enduring trading partners, and offer more stable climates for investment. Because they must answer to their own citizens, democracies are more environmentally responsible. They are more likely to honour international treaties and value legal obligations since their openness makes it much more difficult to breach agreements in secret.

Promoting democracy means three things: On the external front, it means offering moral, political, diplomatic and financial support to individuals, organizations and governments that are struggling to open up authoritarian regimes. This strategy emphasizes pluralism, multilateralism, and private sector initiatives (including NGOs).

On the internal front, promoting democracy also implies fostering market-oriented economies, for two reasons. First, if the state alone owns and controls the means of production, this is intrinsically incompatible with democracy, which requires some distribution of power resources so that political competition can be real and the state can be made accountable. Secondly, experience shows that full state ownership and control has not led to sustained economic development and created competitive economies.

However, "promoting" democracy does not mean "exporting" it. Democracy does not work when foreign models are imposed, and many features of Western democracies are ill-suited to poor, unstable and divided developing countries.

Many people in the developing countries believe Western democracy is a very poor form of democracy and they are sometimes emboldened when they hear the same view expressed by people in the West itself. They think that democracy is no longer well suited for the task ahead, that Western democracies are inefficient, unproductive, weak and hence are misguided in some ways.

In order to sustain democracy the developing countries must make their own, a "do it yourself" project, which must be firmly rooted. As Noordin Sopiee has emphasized, "we must all find the right roots and find the right seeds, and we must discover it ourselves. And we must find the developing infrastructure to ensure that we will have democracy. We believe almost without exception that if you have rapid economic development, you are condemned to democracy whether you like or not. That process must move step-by-step. We must have the patience in order to have a proper, stable, productive democracy rather than to have an uns-

table one, flash-in-the-pan, jump-in-the-lake, jumping into the deep end only to suffocate and to die from drowning."

The challenge now is how to enrich, to give new strength to the concept of democracy in a broader framework of multiculturalism in the world in which the issue of language is very important.

On the need for cultural pluralism

With regard to culture, in the better world order, there must be an acceptance of cultural pluralism. Some people think that this is already so, but that is very far from the reality.

There must be a readiness to accept that the status quo of the last few hundred years —cultural dominance or hegemony or authoritarianism or dictatorship, whichever term you want to use— should gracefully, if possible, yield to greater cultural pluralism, egalitarianism and democracy.

For hundreds of years, the Judeo-Christian ethic (which contributed so much to human civilization) has been the overpowering cultural value system of the entire world. Except for tiny elites of scholars, everything else was regarded even by the rest of the world as second class - sometimes tolerable, sometimes "understandable" because foreigners are very unusual, but never quite as good as the Judeo-Christian ethic and never superior.

As Noordin Sopiee said, "This has been drummed into us and we have drummed it into ourselves to a point where we believed it for a long time. It is only now, as our hands touch and our minds meet in many parts of the world, that we are beginning to come to a sort of discovery: that maybe our values are really not second class after all, our way of life is really not inferior, and we have no reason to bow and scrape and to apologize all the time."

This was the result of the pattern of power and the political, economic, informational, educational and cultural power and dominance of Western Europe, later joined by the United States. It was a North Atlantic community. That is history, but history is changing.

There has begun and there will be an acceleration of two culture shifts. First, the shift from awe and utter respect of the Western model to deep reservations and sometimes even utter contempt for various aspects of Western society - not all, but a few aspects. Second, the discovery of other values and value systems on the part of the non-Western world (and even perhaps within the Western world). These two shifts are the outcome of many

factors: cultural decadence and social deterioration in the cultural citadels of the West, by Westerners from many countries, as well as others outside the West; self-criticism and even self-contempt in these Western societies; the process of political decolonization and the increasing though slower mental decolonization of large masses of mankind; increasing nationalism-driven recognition of the value of indigenous cultures and traditions; the global decentralization of political, economic, informational and educational power and the rise of new power centres; and the new impulses of confidence, pride and even sometimes arrogance, in areas outside the Western cultural world.

It cannot be assumed that simply because people are weak and poor that they must therefore also uncivilized, and that because people are rich and powerful, they must also be civilized and possess a higher degree of civilization. There must be a greater balance in moralizing. Today, spendthrift nations are telling thrifty nations that they must save less. Lazy nations are telling hardworking nations that they must work shorter hours, they must take longer holidays and that they must have more leisure. "We in Southeast Asia have been told by countries which have destroyed the family system, that it is unfair that we do not have a welfare state because we rely on the social welfare of the extended family. Now, why do they tell us that is unfair? Because they have to deal with a welfare state while we do not. Therefore, the world does not play fair, and there is no free and fair trade. We have been told by countries where they have very strong trade unions that we must organize trade unions exactly along the same lines, because if we do not, this is completely unfair. Why? Because they cannot compete against us?" (Noordin Sopiee)

Genuine multiculturalism is not only something we have to live, but also something we have to begin to learn to appreciate for the first time, and to take advantage of, if we are to make a better world order. And this is going to be extremely difficult because the egos of nations and cultures are involved.

"Dignity International"

There are at least 30 basic human rights - not just one or two or three that are the favourites of some very well-meaning and very sincere people in some Western countries. Among these 30, there is the notion that a person must be presumed innocent until proven guilty, although there are judicial systems in which a

person is presumed to be guilty unless proven innocent. There is also the right to employment, which is a fundamental human right. But there are even more fundamental human rights: the right to water, for drinking and washing, the right to eat properly; the right to refuge from mass civil violence. The meeting felt there ought to be a Dignity International, to complement and supplement some of the work done by Amnesty International.

The obstacles to the spread of culture and education

Why is there such a discrepancy between the world's reality and our dreams and expectations? It is widely believed that the answer to this question lies in education, information and culture. However, the present problematic arose despite our existing education, information and culture, and so the real question is: why?

Information and learning, the system of cultural-transfer, is a function of values, of recognition and of scale. If the receiving organism, be it social, political or biological, for instance, becomes too large, then it cannot validate, recognize and absorb the transferred information. Complexity can hardly be taught on the scale of a whole society, let alone on a global scale. As a result, people and nations tend to do the opposite of what is required for a better world order: they look inward instead of outward, they close borders instead of opening them. Neo-orthodoxy, tribalism, fundamentalism and nationalism are reactions to global complexity, and consequently the future belongs largely to this local disorder rather than with a global order.

Parallel with this, we see the appearance of a so-called crypto-state alongside the formal existence of the nation-state. If the formal state implodes because of the inability of its bureaucracies to create order, then gradually it will be replaced by the crypto-state. In the crypto-state, everything is illegal and corrupt. Formal systems, laws, taxation, defence, parliaments and security do exist, but they are ruled, in reality, by the forces of the crypto-state. In Europe, the best known example is Italy, with the crypto-state of the mafia, a model which exists in all forms in the rest of the world. In Colombia, the Medellin-Cartel has virtually taken over the formal state.

If the formal institutions in the world fail to stop the current disasters, the evil forces of the crypto-state will prevail. It is not possible to spread culture, principles of democracy and human rights if there is daily proof that those in positions of responsibility

in the world do not adhere to those principles. The behaviour of leaders will be decisive in determining whether orderly states will shape the world or whether the crypto-order will be superimposed upon it.

We cannot allow these evil forces to grow and at the same time expect the citizens of this world to obey the rules of democracy, human rights and cultural diversity, which involve, for example, tolerance.

Responsibility is the key. It is the sense of responsibility which has given NGOs such as Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF), the Club of Rome or Médecins sans Frontières their authority. They have asked the right questions. Growth at what price? What educator for what education? Why can't we intervene where human rights are violated day by day?

Nobody can deny the value of culture and education, but we must realize that to a large extent, local cultures suffer from rape by outside forces, and cannot resist the trend towards globalization. Furthermore, information in many parts of the world amounts to propaganda and belief rather than being unambiguous and independent.

Independent research and information is the answer to propaganda and illiteracy. We should realize that many world leaders are largely illiterate when it comes to such matters as understanding the environment and development issues.

Decision-makers and policy-makers are often far removed from the people and places they manage, isolated physically, economically or socially from the direct results of their decisions. As a consequence, managers often tend to view environmental issues as somehow "separate" - separate from the daily job of running a corporation, a foundation or a division of government and separate from their own lives, families and futures. Environmental goals are often considered to be "at odds" with other corporate or government goals, such as achieving economic growth and profits, or improving standards of living. In fact, most of these goals interact: an economy that is truly robust and sustainable must be founded on a clean, safe, healthy environment. Part of the problem is that managers, planners and policy-makers are trained primarily to plan, set and manage policies - few have the necessary background in environmental science or analysis to do more.

Yet, the required knowledge is available, somewhere, and it should come to the surface. That is the task for the very near future.

Learning in the face of uncertainty

As the quantity of information becomes overwhelming, uncertainty invades every corner of modern life. The quickening pace of change, the inexorable extension of affairs to the global scale and the long-run impact of today's decisions contribute substantially to uncertainty, as does such a key factor as the growing complexity and interdependence of all world problems. This new reality is becoming more and more visible in practically all activities. When we act, we usually assume our understanding is much greater than it really is, and we run the dangerous risk of making major mistakes. We often take decisions with a high degree of uncertainty whose potential results are devastating and even irreversible. That is why, when uncertain, we must make careful assessments and experimentation, followed by an evaluation of the results, and be prepared to change the strategies we already have under way.

The educational system (at least in the West), and in particular the University, has always emphasized teaching with cognitive and, if possible, clear, sure goals, which allow acquired knowledge to be evaluated later with the maximum exactness and objectivity. In this way our educational institutions also contribute to creating convergent thought in the face of any temptation to encourage ideas that shear away from commonly established modes, that are often linear, dogmatic and relatively simplistic. Under these principles, even projects, experiments and research are too frequently subject to closed-minded, predetermined criteria.

These practices contrast with the working conditions of every high-level professional, not to mention businessmen, managers, creators and especially leaders. In all these areas, the main task lies open to initiative, and the one characteristic all these jobs share consists in knowing how to deal with the uncertainty entailed in decisions and work. From these generalized experiences we may draw the principles of learning to try effectively to face uncertainty or to familiarize ourselves with the effort of doing so, breaking out of the traditional system, which is organized around the security of the communication of knowledge in systematic, rigid educational processes. It is a matter of introducing open curricula into the teaching process, and the difficulty lies in self-evaluating the final result of one's own experiment, problem solution or material creation, with the resulting possible sensation of great insecurity and even failure.

The teacher's judgement thus ceases to have the often excessive, dogmatic value it had in the past. It is compensated by a

team evaluation and, most of all, self-esteem stemming from a deep awareness of one's own criteria, because even "team evaluations" or the external judgements of others with experience and prestige is a "consolidated" but human judgement and therefore never free of subjectivity.

As opposed to the current emphasis on cognitive ability, the emphasis must be placed on creative capacity in the face of uncertainty, helped by a certain degree of creative anxiety. In other words, creativity is something like the product of tension over a specific task and the motivating experience of uncertainty. Thus it is a matter of bringing into the classroom not only knowledge but also the creative experience, helping the student to familiarize him or herself with the tension of innovation as well as the emotional difficulties of evaluating one's own work. These are also the main qualities of learning processes, whether with or without a tutor, as opposed to traditional teaching through a teacher.

To meet the challenges of the present crisis will require innovative approaches to management of Earth systems and new solutions for a variety of complex problems on local, regional and global scales. All of our knowledge, creativity and vision must be rallied in order to respond to these challenges in ways which will fundamentally alter and ultimately sustain and improve human life on this planet. New management approaches, new attitudes, new skills - we must begin now to promote the types of changes that are essential in making the transition to sustainability. Planners and decision-makers have been given a mandate to manage and reduce the risks to humanity posed by the current development paths; they must be provided with the tools and techniques with which to respond to these challenges.

One of our first tasks, therefore, must be to encourage and assist leaders and planners —particularly those who deal with the allocation of resources— to incorporate the goals and values of sustainability into the decision-making process. Through creative approaches to learning, through the development of international partnerships and through the dissemination of basic information about the environment, we can begin to facilitate the transition to sustainable futures. Meeting the learning needs of decision-makers and policy-makers is a strategic and timely step towards bridging the critical gap between wishing, planning or striving for sustainability and actually achieving it. Identifying these needs is the first requirement for designing a programme to fill the gap.

Some practical examples of the kind of information and learning needed in building a new world order include:

- A continuously updated "Limits to Growth" report[5]. This sort of message will be fresh for every new generation, and perhaps should be revised every five years.

- A report on world hunger and agriculture: as often pointed out, the world's food supply system is insane: highly productive agro-systems are forced not to produce, whereas in areas where there is starvation, agriculture is weakened and incapable of producing. What is the misconception and what is needed to change it?

- A report on the role of the arms trade: as we all know, the trillion-dollar arms-economy destroys the world order. Who decides, who profits and is there a way out?

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[5] The Limits to Growht, first report to the Club of Rome (New York, 1972) .

AT THE CROSSROADS OF ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Facing looming crisis

The global community is facing a crisis that threatens our very survival as a species. The dimensions of the crisis are clear and stark: stressed beyond their limits, ecosystems are being severely and even permanently degraded. As a result, we are witnessing the greatest mass extinction in the history of the planet; species are being lost at the rate of approximately one per day, threatening the diversity and the stability of the biosphere. Given the high rate of population growth, we must even question the capacity of the planet to provide food for 8 billion, maybe even 10 billion people.

Many of our current environmental concerns are regional and international in their dimensions, and for the first time we must also confront environmental problems that are global in scope.

In an absolute sense, and on a global scale, the Earth's resources are still sufficient; yet in some parts of the world, severe shortages and contamination of vital resources are seriously undermining human well-being. In urban areas, the sheer numbers of people making demands on the environmental resources base causes critical problems. However, population is not, by itself, a reliable indicator of stress on a natural system. A few people with wasteful or resource-intensive lifestyles can be more damaging and burdensome to an ecosystem than many people leading more frugal, less consumption-oriented lifestyles. The problems of environmentally irresponsible patterns of resource utilization are most evident in the industrialized world, where conspicuous consumption and wasteful industrial processes are the rule rather than the exception.

Yet concern over environmental issues is not limited to the affluent industrialized nations of the world. Today there are enormous economic, social and political pressures which have led to a constant and increasing drain of natural resources away from the developing world. The pressures of poverty and the desire to industrialize and to improve standards of living often draw both policy-makers and the general population into damaging modes of resource utilization. Environmental deterioration, particularly in fragile or marginal lands, has become a life-and-death issue in many developing countries. The process often turns into a complicated downwards spiral: a growing population causes increasing stresses on the environment, and mounting pressure for economic panaceas, to which the government and the economy respond with short-term solutions, which cause further stress on the environment, further depletion of resources and ultimately further poverty.

The time has come to develop new standards and guidelines by which to measure the progress of growth, development and human well-being. This really means changing our attitudes and redefining our approaches towards both the measurement and the management of economic growth, such that development becomes sustainable.

The global community must embrace and foster new types of growth and development, less material- and energy-intensive, more equitable and incorporating the value of non-material aspects such as education, health, clean air and water and the enjoyment of the natural beauty of planet Earth. The process of incorporating environmental concerns and costs into private and political decision-making practices involves learning to think through the direct and indirect environmental consequences of one's actions. This has become the sine qua non of sustainable economic development.

We live in an increasingly "managed" environment — virtually the entire Earth falls under some degree of influence, regulation, or intervention due to human activity. We have become the de facto managers of the planet, but we have not yet learned how to manage it successfully.

Coping with scarcity

The basic problem that development has to tackle is scarce resources —physical, human, technological and cultural. The problem is not new: more than two hundred years ago, Adam Smith wrote "The Wealth of Nations" as a strategy for overcoming the limitations to growth due to scarce resources.

Ever since Adam Smith's time, great emphasis has been laid on industrialization, making use of all available resources in order to produce more goods and wealth. The legitimacy and the credibility of governments has rested on their ideas and methods and ideas of fostering the growth of the "wealth of nations" through expansion of manufacturing.

The rivalry between the free-market and Marxist systems has ended with the failure of Marxist methods to stimulate and manage this process satisfactorily. Even if the free-market system has revealed many shortcomings and has experienced major political and economic crises, it has finally proved to be the least imperfect and the most efficient of the two systems.

Nobody can deny the great overall successes of the Industrial Revolution, which brought unprecedented increases in life expectancy and improvements in living standards, mainly in the industrialized countries, but also in the developing ones. But the Industrial Revolution has now reached a point where there is growing doubt as to its capacity to pursue the goal of developing the wealth of nations without some major and fundamental adaptations in order to avoid further damage to the environment. As we have seen already, the traditional model of industrialization as evolved by the North is being seriously challenged.

Everybody now knows that the North is the champion polluter and also a big consumer of natural resources - as is clear from a comparison of consumption of energy and raw materials by industrialized and developing countries. Northern lifestyles and consumption rates are not sustainable, if 5 billion people or more try to copy them.

"Sustainable development" is sometimes understood as an admonition to the South to shape its development course more towards pollution control, low resource use and perhaps also to stop population growth. Yet History shows that asking the underprivileged not to emulate the privileged has never worked.

So we are left with the need to change lifestyles in the North. This is a formidable challenge. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change wants CO_2 emissions halved within about 40 years, yet the forecasts at the World Energy Conference reckon energy demand will double within that period. Most of this demand is likely to be met by fossil fuels, while the nuclear option will be limited because of persisting major problems.

At first glance it may sound completely utopian to close this gap and arrive at a model of prosperity, not austerity, that can be copied by 8 billion people.

The notion of sustainable development refers precisely to the core preoccupation of the pioneers of industrialization: how to mobilize and make the best use of scarce resources. The word "sustainable" refers essentially to the fact that the industrialization process, in certain cases, instead of increasing wealth tends to produce scarcity of resources, as happens when those resources which once were available in an unlimited quantity (air, water, land, animal species, efficient ancient cultural traditions producing well-being, etc.) are destroyed or become steadily scarcer.

The issue of "sustainable development" has to do with the need to cope with this danger. A special feature of this phenomenon is its tendency to occur over the medium, long and very long term, unlike an industrial or economic process, which is dominated by short-term considerations. Sustainability means that resources must be managed properly simultaneously over the short and the long term.

Encouraging more rational use of resources

Today, technologies and social innovations are available —or can be evolved— which can gradually lead us into prosperity with virtually no destruction of non-renewable resources in the long term. The key word for the new technological revolution is resource productivity. People believe environmental protection is by definition costly. True, pollution control involves costs without immediate benefits, but this is because it usually works "at the end of the pipe", and so means add-on costs. Small wonder that the less affluent countries show little enthusiasm for adopting — and enforcing— high standards of pollution control.

But by switching the emphasis from the end of the pipe to the ecologically important input factors (such as energy, water, minerals, land) and drastically increasing their productivity, we could make environmental protection a gain for both the environment and the economy. Energy productivity (not just energy efficiency) can be quadrupled at least. Larger increases are thinkable, and switches to environmentally benign sources of energy (chiefly the decentralised use of renewables) give further relief.

Labour productivity in OECD countries may be 20 times higher today than it was 150 years ago. Technological progress was almost identical with the increase of labour productivity during these 150 years. Energy productivity, by contrast, rose only very slowly, as can be seen from the fact that energy consumption went almost in parallel with economic growth. As a tragic result,

economists began to believe that energy consumption was actually an indicator of a nation's wealth.

Today, labour shortage is hardly a problem - at least not in the sectors of the economy where more energy consumption is used to replace human muscle labour. By contrast, energy consumption **is** a problem. Hence high energy productivity has become a much better indicator of macroeconomic performance than energy consumption.

But what is true on the macroeconomic level is not automatically true on the business or microeconomic level. In fact, resource efficiency is a secondary concern for most players in our economies, because energy, water, minerals, etc.. are underpriced. We pay nothing for resource depletion, the greenhouse effect, landscape destruction or biodiversity losses, and not enough for pollution and waste disposal.

It is difficult to measure the true costs scientifically, but reasonable estimates suggest that energy consumption causes economic damage amounting some 5% of GDP.

To make prices reflect true costs therefore means charging an additional 5% for the use of energy. Paradoxically, this would make countries richer, not poorer. Over the last 15 years, the main industrial powers with the highest average energy prices (Japan, the European Community) have in fact had far better rates of economic performance than those where energy was cheap (USA) or subsidized (the Communist countries).

A gradual phase-out of all public subsidies to energy and transport, plus a revenue-neutral environmental tax reform, appears to be an attractive way of making prices tell the truth without disrupting the social fabric and without damaging the economy.

Assuming that prices for fossil and nuclear energy would be increased by 5% per annum for some 42 years, the energy pie would change drastically both in size and in shape, as Figure 2 indicates.

Figure 2. Likely use of renewable energy versus fossil fuels and nuclear power if prices of the latter were raised by 5% p.a. (X=prices of fossil and nuclear energy in 1992).

Fossil and nuclear.

Renewable.
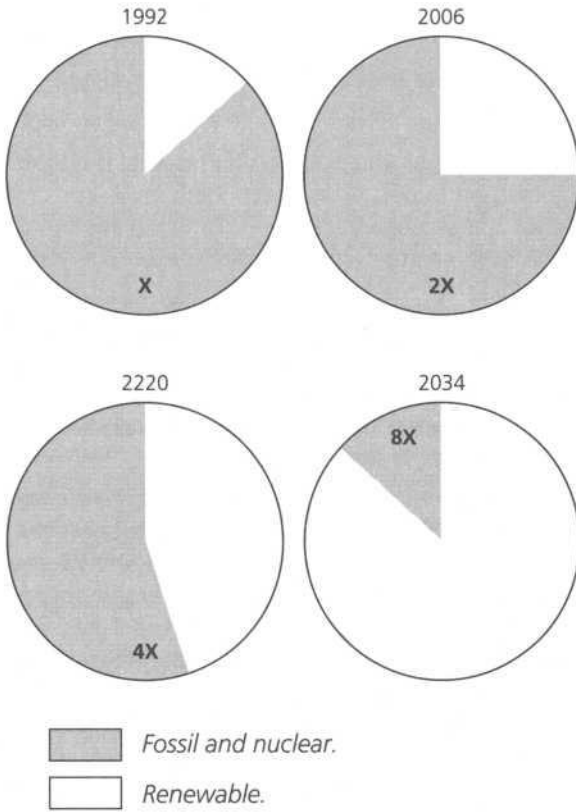
The tax reform would favour rather than penalize the use of human labour, the creation of added value, and corporate activities, while wasteful technologies, wasteful consumption patterns and wasteful infrastructures would be gradually driven out of the market.

For countries like Malaysia, Egypt or Brazil, an increase in energy productivity should be economically even more beneficial than for Germany or Japan. For Mauretania or Iran, a drastically increased water productivity (which would result from a rational water pricing policy) would be infinitely more important than for Britain or Canada.

Key institutions for sustainable development

The rethinking of economics and of a credible strategy for increasing the wealth and well-being of nations is today at the centre of the problem of providing a sound basis for the legitimacy and credibility of public institutions and governments.

At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, a programme to clean up the global environment was put together which would cost $125 billion. A total of $3 billion was pledged and strong doubts were voiced about ever raising $125 billion. Yet the Gulf War cost $61 billion — we can find money for war but we cannot find money for peace. In other words, for the price of two Gulf Wars, we could clean up the global environment. The problem is not shortage of money but political shortsightedness.

The same goes for the UN Environmental Programme. The unit established at the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Environment has a budget which was actually smaller than that of the Greenpeace Organization around the world. We are not putting our money where our mouths are.

The UN suffers not only from underfinancing, it is also hampered by the fact that its Conference consists of about 180 delegations, speaking in six languages. The proceedings move very slowly, and it is very difficult to negotiate any treaty. For example, negotiations for the Law of the Sea Treaty began in 1973. They concluded in 1982 and at the very last minute the United States did not sign. A number of countries signed but still have not ratified the treaty. The treaty, ten years down the line, is still not enforced. So, the UN, which is the hope of the future, is itself very weak.

Hence we must urgently review the meaning of "the wealth of nations" today and find the best economic methods to promote it in a credible and adequate way, with a vision aiming at

strengthening democratic economic systems. In terms of sustainable development, it means finding a reasonable compromise between the short and the long term in order to reduce scarcity now and in the future, avoiding undermining the patrimony represented by the Earth's resources.

Mention must also be made of the transnational corporations, which are the main economic actors around the world and have more money than the central banks. They are important in the environmental debate because they are amongst the major destroyers of the environment, although they are of course also among the major protectors of the environment, for reasons that are not purely altruistic. There is a growing market now in terms of "green" dollars and, since transnational corporations are market-driven in a way that governments often are not, they can be very responsive to public opinion. These firms realized very early on that there is money to be made out of protecting the environment. We therefore need to find ways of recognizing their importance — politicians very rarely make reference to them and try to operate as if the corporations do not exist.

If the gap between traditional economic goals and new ecological and environmental requirements for "sustainable development" cannot credibly be bridged, if lack of understanding and awareness of the realities persists, the political consensus, the legitimacy of governments at the local, national and international levels will tend to cause the new liberalizing world to fragment in the same as we are witnessing in former Communist countries.

Two other kinds of organization must be mentioned: the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the media, especially television. Television is a mixed blessing: it is good for communicating information, but it is very bad insofar as it encourages global materialism. Whatever your problem is, you can solve it by spending more money, and of course advertising is geared to make people feel dissatisfied —no matter how good your car is, you can always be tempted to go out and buy a better one. Television everywhere helps form public opinion, but it purveys so much information, intermingling fact and fiction, that it is hard to establish an order of priorities.

The NGOs have won public respect through their efforts on behalf of development, the environment and human rights. The Conference on the Environment in Stockholm in 1972, for example, was a response to a great wave of public opinion that NGOs had helped create. NGOs currently enjoy a high profile, and there is a risk that we may be overestimating them and overlooking their blind spots.

It seems that NGOs operate on cycles lasting about seven years: after that, public interest in an issue will decline because the media have squeezed out of it as much as they can. The issues do not go away, the problems are not solved, but public concern wanes. There is a "ricochet effect" —in other words, public pressure builds up, laws are changed, then the pressure tends to diminish again. In Australia, for example, there is now a decline in the environmental movement, but thanks to earlier pressure the country has some of the world's toughest environmental laws. For example, a company director whose employees damage the environment can go to prison.

The voluntary sector has become one of the essential elements of civil society, and the importance of a strong civil society in helping new democracies to emerge or gain strength is increasingly being recognized. The civil society is needed to balance both the government and market forces.

Given the terrible failure of most aid programmes and many governmental and multilateral policies to solve problems of poverty and environmental degradation in the world, these organizations offer a potentially viable path for mobilizing and channelling resources, as well as a hope for effective local problemsolving. This is because they represent a force bringing together groups that previously did not cooperate to work together towards solving social and economic problems in society. Through their funding, as well as through their other policy-oriented or training activities, they represent a means of building indigenous capacity to find local remedies to local problems.

Southeast Asia and the environment

The region has one of the largest and most important areas of tropical forest in the world. Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines, in particular, used to have enormous forests, including mangroves, which grow in water and have an extremely fragile ecosystem. Because for a long time the mangroves were considered to be second class, they were gradually cleared, for wanton exploitation of the timber or for industrial development. In fact the mangroves are unique ecosystems which grow very well on the salty deposits along the banks of rivers and on shores, and if properly managed they provide local people with a valuable source of food, fuelwood and other necessities. They also act as natural flood barriers which prevent soil erosion and stop seawater from penetrating too far inland.

These mangrove reserves are used to make paper for computers and quality newspapers — products in great demand in the industrialized countries, so they are naturally coveted by the latter. Consequently, for example, a consortium of five Japanese paper manufacturers is exploiting a small Indonesian island near East Kalimantan, and they export 126,000 tons of mangrove shavings per year, which means cutting down about 2000 hectares every year. This is just one of thousands of examples. In ten years, the mangrove forest at Kamal Muara, near Djakarta, was completely destroyed.

In Indonesia, only 3.2 million of the 4.6 million hectares of mangroves are still being worked at present. The mangrove forests on the coast will soon be nothing but a distant memory if nothing radical is done to replant.

In Thailand, a study in the east of the country shows that mangrove reserves yield ten times more, if they are exploited in their natural state, than any other type of land use. Nevertheless they are being cut down at a great rate, and are being replaced by fields, fish ponds, roads and even rubbish dumps. The development of shrimp farms on the coast is largely responsible for much of the destruction of the Thai mangrove forest. The country has started quite recently to protect its coastline.

Malaysia, which has the second largest mangrove forest but is also the largest exporter of wood to Japan in Asia, is unfortunately the country that has the weakest protection of this natural resource, according to the data published by the Asian Wetland Bureau.

In the Philippines, too, the situation has reached a critical stage. In 20 years, the area under mangroves has been reduced from 448,000 to 110,000 hectares.

If the mangroves are to be protected, foreign countries must alter their consumption patterns, starting with Japan, which is by far the world's leading importer of wood and tropical products. It is thus the most responsible for deforestation in the region. A first step forward was made in 1990, with the creation of an International Society for Mangrove Ecosystems in Okinawa, which aims to protect the mangroves and promote the rational exploitation of the resource.

In Southeast Asia, as everywhere else in the world, the other forests and woodland are also at risk. A few years ago, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), estimated that if deforestation continued at the same rate, the tropical forests would disappear from the face of the Earth well before the end of the next

century. A survey in 1990 shows that the rate of destruction is 50% higher than had been estimated by FAO. The President of the World Resources Institute (WRI) in Washington reckons that 3 hectares of forest are lost every 5 seconds.

The WRI report, prepared in collaboration with the UNDP, indicates a clear increase in the rate of destruction of tropical forests in Myanmar, where satellite pictures show that deforestation is occurring at 500 times the rate estimated by FAO in 1980. Deforestation in Indonesia is reckoned to have increased by 50%. In the 1970s, it was estimated that 300,000 hectares were cut down every year. This figure had doubled by the early 1980s, and the FAO statistics show that it is now close to a million. Thailand used to have huge forests of tectonas but must now import in order to meet its own demand for furnituremaking and house-building purposes. Thailand has been losing up to 500,000 hectares of forest per year. By 1990, most of the remaining forests were on steep slopes, whereas they had once been on gentle hills. Fifty years ago, 57% of the land area of the Philippines was under forest; the proportion has fallen to 22% today. The rate of deforestation is now one of the highest in the world, as a result of a combination of the population explosion, poverty and unregulated exploitation of the forest. The island of Palawan, which a few decades ago was one of the last areas of virgin forest in the country, has lost more than half its forests. An average-sized family destroyed a quarter hectare per year. The nomadic farmers who live in the highlands gradually cleared the forest with slash-and-burn techniques; once the fragile layer of arable soil had been eroded by one or two monsoons, the nomads would move on to another patch.

The timber industry in Southeast Asia currently meets 90% of world demand for tropical woods, which is currently worth around $7 billion per year. This money constitutes a major contribution to economic growth in the region. However, the WRI and UNDP forecasts that this income is now likely to fall by $2 billion per year.

Quite apart from the economic considerations, deforestation has other consequences that are equally worrying. Without forest cover, the acid soils are rapidly eroded and lose their fertility, hence their agricultural value.

For the planet as a whole, as we now know, the overexploitation of forests undermines the ecosystem and adds to the greenhouse effect. Indonesia has 10% of the world's tropical forests — the largest area of forest in Asia — and has been at the centre of the world debate on the future of the tropical forests. In the 144

million hectares of forest in Indonesia, there are 4000 species of trees, 500 species of mammals and 1500 species of birds. Besides the rare flora and fauna, the Indonesian tropical forest helps reduce the build-up of carbon dioxide responsible for global warming.

The countries of Southeast Asia are now well aware of the problem and are trying to solve it, with the aid of UNDP in particular.

In Indonesia, however, it is not easy to protect the forest *and* find land and jobs for almost 200 million people. The Indonesian authorities have in any case pointed out that if the tropical forests belonged to the whole world, the costs of protecting them would be shared between the developing and the industrialized countries; they need technical and financial assistance to carry this responsibility.

More than 53 million hectares of Indonesian forest are leased for periods of 20 years on average, to firms that do not really respect the government's regulations on forest use, which are applied in the state forest operations. Forest fires also contribute to the destruction: recently forest fires were burning right across Indonesia, producing a vast pall of smoke that shrouded the islands of Sumatra, Borneo and Sulawesi, together with parts of nearby Malaysia and Singapore. Airports had to be shut and ferry services cancelled.

Some years ago, the Penans, a small tribe in the Malaysian state of Sarawak, formed human barricades to stop the entry of trucks belonging to timber companies. There were around a hundred arrests and the incident was widely reported in the national press. The timber industry occupies an important place in the state's economy, indeed to such an extent that the prime minister of Sarawak is reputed to have said that anyone who opposed the exploitation of the forest was guilty of high treason. In fact Sarawak, together with Sabah (another Malaysian state on the island of Borneo), has two thirds of the world's tropical deciduous forest. In 1987, 310,000 hectares were cut down, which represents an increase of 180% in ten years. Two years after the Penans' protest, Sarawak invited the International Tropical Trees Organization (ITTO) to make an inspection and issue recommendations. It was the first time that this advisory body (bringing together 36 producing and consuming countries) had conducted a survey of the forest practices of one of its members. The ITTO report judged that the current system was inadequate, in particular as regards staffing levels, to achieve lasting exploitation of the forest, even if the standards set were reasonable. The report states that at the present rate of deforestation (roughly 12 million m3 per year), there would not be a single tree left in Sarawak in

ten years' time. Protecting the forests is not easy in Malaysia because each of the 13 states of the Federation is responsible for regulations in its own forests. The federal government's role is limited to financing research and providing technical and educational assistance.

On the basis of what was learned from pilot projects in various islands, such as Palawan, the Philippines launched a 25-year plan for forest use in 1990. The measures, which include limiting the amount leased and preventing illegal felling, should lead to rapid results. Since 1988, 65,000 hectares of forests have already been replanted, and if the funds envisaged in the plan are forthcoming, the figure could reach 300,000 hectares per year in the course of this decade. The Philippines will then be planting more trees than they are cutting down.

The Asian Development Bank, which has its headquarters in Manila, alarmed at the devastation of the natural environment in the region, no longer gives loans and subsidies until it has made an environmental impact study of the likely effects of the projects proposed to it.

In Thailand, it has been against the law since 1989 to cut down trees and a vast replanting scheme is under way. Nevertheless, the Thai law has had unfortunate repercussions in neighbouring Myanmar, where about 30 Thai companies have managed to acquire substantial concessions. As a result, large areas of forest are being destroyed. Recent satellite pictures show that 8000 km^2 of forest cover disappear every year in Myanmar, yet the Burmese government maintains that the official amount is only 1050 km^2 (0.3% of the forest cover), a figure which outside observers challenge. The government alleges that the rebels are responsible for illegal trading in teak.

Even if these rebels are not responsible for all of the deforestation, it is obvious that throughout the region, war, guerilla movements and armed conflicts have had a disastrous effect on the environment.

In Vietnam, for example, several decades of fighting have destroyed half the forest cover and brought about the loss of several rare tree types. 72 million litres of herbicides were released across the country and 13 million tons of bombs caused about 25 million bomb craters. But as housing, hospitals, schools, bridges and roads are rebuilt, the forest cover is retreating even faster than during the war. The tree varieties are disappearing rapidly as 100,000 and 200,000 hectares of natural forest are destroyed every year. Vietnam is trying to combat this destruction, but its efforts have often been hampered by the aftermath of the war:

huge areas of arable land are riddled with unexploded mines and bombs. The advance of farmers, foresters and scientists working on the ground is constantly hindered by the quantities of military debris. On the bare hills, heavy rains deepen the remains of the trenches, wiping out the efforts of the replanting teams. In 1987, they managed to replant 160,000 hectares, but there must be some way of encouraging people from other parts of the country to settle in the reforested areas, because the trees will not thrive if they are not cared for.

Reforestation is all the more important in that it helps in the fight against the plague, which has flared up again in areas where a defoliant containing dioxin was used in large quantities. The defoliant led to the appearance of a poisonous weed that has encouraged the rat population to increase, and the rats spread the plague and destroy crops.

Vietnam was supposed to receive financial help from the World Environment Fund for a new project. The WEF is a combined programme concerned with global environmental problems, run jointly by the World Bank, the UNDP and the UN Environment Programme.

The environmental problems of Vietnam, as elsewhere in Southeast Asia, are not limited to the forest. Solutions are also needed very quickly to problems of water pollution, degradation of soils, waste disposal, etc. These problems need to be solved all the more urgently because demographic pressures are making them even more acute and hamper the efforts already under way.

In Malaysia, the various states of the Federation each have different priorities, so that it is up to the federal government, as stated in its programme Vision 2020, to provide the means and the incentives to protect the environment. Mrs Rafidah Aziz, Minister of International Trade and Industry, said "We now have various laws pertaining to environment-pollution control, and we do have an 'exclusion list'. Industrial projects that fall under the list require an environmental impact study before they can proceed. There is no reason a foreign investor who cannot do something in America or Japan —in terms of pollution— would be allowed to do it in Malaysia." As yet, however, mandatory environmental audits for industry are not on the agenda, but the Director General of the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority, Sadasivan, says that auditing proposals are "interesting".

World eyes were attracted back to the Philippines in 1991 by the eruption of Mount Pinatubo - and the possibility that the global warming trend could be offset for a couple of years by the cooling triggered by the global haze created by the eruption.

The Philippines Strategy for Sustainable Development was adopted in November 1989, covering such areas as the integration of environmental and economic decision-making, the proper pricing of natural resources, property rights reform, strengthening industrial waste management, promotion of environmental education and the rehabilitation of degraded areas. It will be interesting to see whether the country can give more than lip service to sustainable development.

The sea traditionally provides both food and a living for much of the Philippines. During the last decade, the abundant fish catches have dwindled and consequently so have the food supply and the income of local people. Because of overfishing, coastal pollution, and the use of poison and dynamite in attempts to increase the size of catches, small-scale fishing is no longer possible in many coastal areas. A community management plan has been started in the Gulf of Lingayen, based on the local people's desire to protect their environment.

In Indonesia, a scheme has been launched to clean up the country's 20 most polluted rivers.

Only 10% of Jakarta's population is connected to main sewerage, with the result that nine heavily polluted rivers flow into Jakarta Bay alone. Effluents from industry are another major threat. Again Jakarta is one of the country's major industrial concentrations and WALHI (Wahana Kingkungan Hidup Indonesia, a nationwide movement made up of NGO's interested in the ecological and social aspects of sustainable development) is concerned that some industries currently discharge waste water virtually at their own discretion.

The government decided that water pollution by industry must be halved. Firms must either reduce the waste discharged or else instal purification equipment. Polluters risk a sentence of 10 years in prison or a fine of about $500,000. It is not clear that this measure will really be enough to discourage the polluters, if the fine is less than the profit they can expect to make from operating regardless of the regulations. WALHI says that the government rarely takes action against polluters, but the "Proyek Kali Bersih" (Clean Rivers Project) is at leas one sign of a growing government interest in environmental protection.

It is far from easy, in any part of the world, to work out a balance between the requirements of the environment and development. For example, how is it possible to increase food production in order to feed the constantly growing populations, althhough the amount of arable land available is shrinking, and yet at the same time restore a healthy environment? A body like the

International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), which has existed for many years, provides a model of the kind of solutions that could be sought. The IRRI created a new rice variety in the late 1960s, "IR-8", which led to the so-called Green Revolution throughout Asia. By constantly improving its seed varieties, IRRI made a key contribution to maintaining food security in the region, allowing countries like Indonesia to escape from chronic food supply problems and enabling others, such as Thailand, to become rice exporters. Thanks to the Institute's work, the land area devoted to rice cultivation in Asia has increased by only 17% in the course of the last 25 years, yet rice production has doubled (the population grew by 67% over the same period). The Green Revolution is now having problems. Negative factors, such as reduction in arable land, pollution, floods and salination of irrigation systems, are beginning to offset the positive gains achieved by the technical evolution. Some reckon that the Green Revolution is running out of steam.

According to researchers at IRRI, if rice production in Asia falls by as little as 5%, this would be enough to wipe out all the current surpluses. The margin is thus tiny. Moreover, world demand is expected to increase from 460 million tons per year at present to 560 million tons in less than 10 years' time and to 760 million tons in 30 years, which would mean a 65% increase.

Hopes for rice must now be pinned on bioengineering, since the technique has produced excellent results for some other plant varieties. If the programmes currently under way are as successful as expected, rice yields could rise by 30 to 40% in the next ten years. Furthermore, the new varieties should be more resistant to drought, floods and pests.

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Malaysia: Vision 2020

"Hopefully, the Malaysian who is born today and in the years to come will be the last generation of our citizens who will be living in a country that is called developing. The ultimate objective that we should aim for is a Malaysia that is a fully developed country by the year 2020. What, you might rightly ask, is a 'fully developed country'? Do we want to be like any particular country of the present 19 countries that are generally regarded as developed countries? Do we want to be like the United Kingdom, like Canada, like Holland, like Sweden, like Finland, like Japan? To be sure, each of the 19, out of a world community of more than 180 states, has its strengths. But each also has its fair share of weaknesses. Without being a duplicate of any of them, we can still be developed. We should be a developed country in our own mould."

With these words, the Malaysian Prime Minister, YAB Dato' Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, stated the principal goal of Vision 2020, a remarkable effort to mobilize all sections of Malaysian society to think about their country's future, as well as the practical steps necessary to achieve their chosen objectives. The government has started from the premise that development plans cannot simply be imposed from above: they are far more likely to be successful if the whole community feels involved.

The aim of Vision 2020 is that "By the year 2020, Malaysia can be a united nation, with a confident Malaysian society, infused by strong moral and ethical values, living in a society that is democratic, liberal and tolerant, caring, economically just and equitable, progressive and prosperous, and in full possession of an economy that is competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient."

The emphasis on national unity is understandable when one considers the extraordinary geographical, ethnic and cultural diversity of the Malaysian Federation. More than 600km of the South China Sea separate the mainland states of the country from the other states in the northern part of the island of Borneo. It is hard to imagine greater contrasts than between the bustling modern city of Kuala Lumpur and the dense tropical jungle regions. Politically, the Federation is made up of nine sultanates and four non-monarchical states.

The population of about 17 million include Malays, Chinese, Indians and Vietnamese, speaking at least a dozen languages in addition to Malay, the official language. The official religion is Islam, but there are also Buddhists, Hindus, Taoists and Christians. Ever since independence, the government has tried to eradicate the differences between these groups, in particular the link between ethnic identity and economic function which had been encouraged under colonial rule. Racial and religious tensions are inevitable from time to time, although there have not been major disturbances since 1969 — an episode that is still vividly remembered and that nobody wants to see repeated.

The authorities therefore have to strike a delicate balance between promoting national unity (through such measures as encouragement of the Malay language and a unified school system) and respecting the desire of the ethnic communities to maintain their own languages and culture.

Ultimately it is hoped that if Malaysia is a great nation, everyone will want to be identified as Malaysian.

In preparing Vision 2020 the government has identified nine **"strategic challenges"**:

"1.- To establish a united Malaysian nation with a sense of common and shared destiny. This must be a nation at peace with itself, territorially and ethnically integrated, living in harmony and full and fair partnership.

2.- To create a psychologically liberated, secure and developed Malaysian society with faith and confidence in itself, justifiably proud of what it is, of what it has accomplished, robust enough to face all manner of adversity.

3.- To foster and develop a mature democratic society, practising a form of mature, consensual, community-oriented Malaysian democracy that can be a model for many developing countries.

4.- To establish a fully moral and ethical society, whose citizens are strong in religious and spiritual values and imbued with the highest of ethical standards.

5.- To establish a mature, liberal and tolerant society in which Malaysians of all colours and creeds are free to practise and profess their customs, cultures and religious beliefs and yet feel that they belong to one nation.

6.- To establish a scientific and progressive society, innovative and forward-looking, one that is not only a consumer of technology but also a contributor to the scientific and technological civilization of the future.

7.- To establish a fully caring society and a caring culture, a social system in which society will come before self, in which the welfare of the people will revolve not around the state or the individual, but around a strong and resilient family system.

8.- To ensure an economically just society, in which there is a fair and equitable distribution of the wealth of the nation and full partnership in economic progress. Everyone is aware that such a society cannot be in place so long as there is the identification of race with economic function, and the identification of economic backwardness with race.

9.- To establish a prosperous society, with an economy that is fully competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient."

The Prime Minister stresses that Malaysia is not seeking just economic progress, even if it goes without saying that "all Malaysians, whether they live in the rural or the urban areas, whether they are in the south, north, east or west, must be moved above the line of absolute poverty."

We have seen that the country still has a long way to go, given that one person in three still lives below the poverty line (and an even higher percentage, 38%, does so in the rural areas). Malaysia must also pursue its efforts with regard to education, because there is still a high proportion (22%) of illiterate adults (especially women, 30%), even if the educational system has claims to be one of the best in the Third World.

The programme also states clearly that "this nation must be able to provide enough food on the table so that not a solitary Malaysian is subjected to the travesty of gross under-nourishment. We must provide enough by way of essential shelter, access to health facilities and all the basic essentials. A developed Malaysia must have a wide and vigorous middle class and must

provide full opportunities for those in the bottom third to climb their way out of the pit of relative poverty."

In trying to create a prosperous nation, Malaysia reckons that it can reasonably expect to double its GNP every decade. This target will require that an average annual growth rate of about 7% (in real terms) over the next 30 years. "Admittedly this is an optimistic projection, but we should set our sights high if we are to motivate ourselves into striving hard."

During the 1960s, the annual average growth rate was 5.1% and it was 7.8% in the 1970s. During the worldwide recession of the 1980s the rate fell back to 5.9%, but picked up again in the late 1980s, achieving 9.4% in real terms in 1990. The 7% target is therefore not unrealistic, given that growth has averaged 6.9% p.a. during the last 20 years, a performance easily on a par with that of the "little tiger" economies.

The striking thing about Malaysia's development plan is the long-term view taken: "The great bulk of the work that must be done to ensure a fully developed country called Malaysia a generation from now will obviously be done by the leaders who follow us, by our children and grandchildren. But we should make sure that we have done our duty in guiding them with regard to what we should work to become. And let us lay the secure foundations that they must build upon."

Such foresight on the part of governments, whether in developing or industrialized countries, is so unusual that it is worth highlighting. Usually governments rely more on short-term policies, often with the next elections in mind, that on a long-term vision and on provisions that may not be particularly popular.

Vision 2020 is not a rigid plan, but rather a process of stimulating thinking about the future, and about the options and challenges ahead. The government has suggested certain broad principles and priorities, at the same time recognizing that these may need to be altered as circumstances change.

The economy

In general, the government is expecting the private sector to provide the main driving force, with its own role primarily that of "facilitator, pace setter and implementor", as well as protector of the public interest. Naturally the government will take responsibility for ensuring proper fiscal and monetary management. The policies of deregulation and privatization will continue, as part of a strategy to increase efficiency and competitiveness.

In order to be able to sustain itself over the longer term, the economy must be flexible and diversified, with a better balance between agriculture, manufacturing and services. Well over half the exports of manufactured goods have been in electronics and textiles, so that other sectors should be expanded. Small and medium-sized industries are seen as having "an important role to play in generating employment opportunities, strengthening industrial linkages, penetrating markets and generating export earnings."

As mentioned in Chapter IV, the local technology base needs to be expanded. "There is too little value-added, too much simple assembly and production. There is also a need to counter rising production costs, brought about by rising costs of labour, raw materials and overheads, by improving efficiency and productivity." Steps must be taken to overcome the shortage of skilled manpower and foster entrepreneurship.

While continuing efforts will be made to expand manufacturing, the government is pledged not to neglect agriculture and services. "In the years ahead, we must work for a second rural development transformation, restructuring the villages so as to be compatible with both agriculture and modern industry."

The environment

Vision 2020 includes a strong commitment to the environment: "We must ensure that our valuable natural resources are not wasted. Our land must remain productive and fertile, our atmosphere clear and clean, our water unpolluted, our forest resources capable of regeneration, able to yield the needs of our national development. The beauty of our land must not be desecrated — for its own sake and for our economic advancement."

It would indeed be a tragedy if Malaysia's rich flora and fauna were to be lost. 15,000 varieties of plants and 6000 varieties of trees have been recorded. Among the wild animals are tigers, panthers, leopards, elephants, tapirs, rhinoceros, orangutangs, as well as many less well-known species and 500 different kinds of birds.

Malaysia has not only taken a lead by producing "An Initiative for the Greening of the World", but has set a higher standard for itself than it is urging on others. As a contribution to the global commons, Malaysia is ready to pledge itself to a minimum 50% level of forest and tree cover in perpetuity.

To achieve the goals it has set itself, Malaysia will need the agreement and active involvement of the entire population, which is not altogether a simple matter to obtain. Nevertheless, Vision 2020 is sufficiently ambitious and unifying a project to have caught the interest of the vast majority of the population, in cities, towns and villages throughout the country. The plan's strength lies in its flexibility, which will allow the ambitious project to be carried out gradually, and as each stage is completed, the benefits it brings will encourage Malaysians to keep up their efforts to turn the targets into reality.

CONCLUSIONS

You see things and you say why, but I
dream things that never were and I
say why not?
Bernard Shaw

There will be no better world order unless it is centered on human beings and their relations with others, the essential value of every person and the interdependence between people. A better world order means communication and dialogue. Are we capable of practising such a dialogue? We are now facing major changes and uncertainties, and the potential for understanding, creativity, innovation, tolerance and the sense of solidarity with others are needed more than ever. We must have more confidence in ourselves and in our abilities as well as trust in each other. Without confidence, nothing can be constructed.

Despite their differences, all people aspire to peaceful lives. Development and progress require a minimum of peace and stability. In order to be sustainable and long-lasting, peace has to be based on justice and equity. This can only be achieved through effective democracy, respect for minorities and human rights.

Cultures should be given the means to flourish without clashing with one other. A balance between different sets of values has therefore to be found. For a start, it is indispensable for basic human rights to be universally recognized and applied without any exception. The mechanisms granting protection of human rights have to be strengthened, and given the right to intervene if necessary.

Democracy has to be more participatory. Quite apart from the gap between people and science and technology, there is a gap between people and the social and political system. Democracy should seek to bring citizens and their governments closer together.

There are threats to values such as liberty and security. The selfishness of nations must be offset by solidarity and democracy. Democracy itself can be threatened by the tyranny of the majority, etc.. Greater liberty implies greater responsibility to the community in order to avoid possible conflicts. Democracy must go hand-in-hand with economic advance, the elimination of poverty and a more equitable social system.

No proper education is possible if there is war. However, education may prevent conflict where culture creates divisions. Education must, can and should unite people. It should develop in a way that closely matches the needs of the modern world by transmitting the legacy of tradition and by encouraging innovation and creativity. Transmitting knowledge is no longer sufficient. Education has to teach how to learn, how to assess and judge as we move ahead and learn more. Its primary role should now become the development of essential human values that help people interact with each other in peace and mutual respect. In other words, education should foster a sense of justice, solidarity and goodwill. Ethics, philosophy and humanity should be introduced into all educational programmes. The time has come for a renaissance.

A code of ethics has to be defined to cover the transmission of information. With the development of mass media technology there is an increasing danger of manipulation. For example, Canadian children spend as much time watching television as attending school. This means that the media must ensure that their power to influence serves education in a positive way. The profession of journalism should follow a strict code of ethics. In each country an independent body representing all of its cultural communities could supervise the media — without, of course, instituting censorship. At a higher level an independent body could ensure a minimal international coordination.

Disputes among nations have to be settled according to international law. Means for enforcement have to be provided. Territorial disputes should be settled by arbitration through a third party recognized by all the communities concerned.

To move from a vision of a better world order to its reality, leadership is needed, leadership with a long-term view. Far-reaching changes and actions should not be based on utopian dreams but on a realistic assessment of human nature, taking into account its strengths and weaknesses. Leadership will have to be more consensual, featuring less comments and compliances but by no means will it lead to a world order which is less complex. Leadership should seek commitment from all.

Solidarity is a necessity as well as a duty. World challenges today are of a magnitude and complexity beyond the capacity of any one individual, group or state to resolve. Witnessing day after day systematic violation of human rights and humanitarian laws and suffering without having the courage to intervene is in itself a violation of human rights and dignity.

The vision of a better world order must be shared with the younger generation. The late American sociologist Margaret Mead said "Young people are the native population of this world in which we adults are immigrants". Let us seek guidance in their extraordinary hope and desire for a better world order.

"TOWARDS A MORE EQUITABLE WORLD ORDER"

The participants at the Club of Rome Annual Conference (some 80 people from 30 countries on the five continents), held in Kuala Lumpur on 15-19 November 1992, have adopted the following final declaration:

We are entering a totally new society which is characterized by globalization and at the same time by cultural pluralism. The present situation is characterized by interdependence among nations, the gap between the richest and the poorest countries, and a number of environmental threats.

In facing this new emerging global society, with profound changes affecting the world after the collapse of communism and the implosion of USSR, with rapid demographic growth in the South, and an ageing population in the North, the global community will have to be innovative because of the magnitude and the novelty of the problems waiting to be solved. We are certainly not yet equipped to embark on this new society with our traditional mentalities, behaviour and archaic institutional structures. The aim must be to construct new systems of governance.

We consider the main objectives of a better world order to be:

- The survival of the human race, in view of the fact that most contemporary problems are man-made.
- The eradication of poverty, hunger, malnutrition and disease, ensuring a life of modest prosperity and human dignity to every citizen of the planet;
- The establishment of an international community based upon freedom, equality of opportunities, democracy, tolerance and universal solidarity.

- The full acceptance of human rights and firm recognition that this goes together with human responsibilities;
- The generation of new regulations, the review and reinforcement of international law in the light of the new global situation.
- The establishment of a stability which will obviate the recurrence of war and violence.
- The maintenance of cultural diversity and the enrichment of multicultural cooperation based on mutual respect.

In pursuing these objectives, we must constantly have in mind that human beings are the centre of our concern and the societies at the global, national, local level should evolve as caring societies, enhancing the human potentialities of every individual.

The market economy is now almost universally accepted as the most efficient economic system. Nevertheless we note that market forces alone are insufficient to deal with a number of longer term issues, such as those of social policy, science and technology, health, education and environment. Hence corrective mechanisms have to be put in place.

Among the very many suggestions of the Conference we will stress only a few.

There is a great need to explore fresh concepts of development and cooperation for development, based on partnership rather than on aid alone. Sustainability of growth and environment will demand a dynamic change in the existing economic disparity between rich and poor.

There must be multilateral rules that emphasize equitable and non-discriminatory treatment of trading partners. Protectionism and closed regionalism must be vigorously fought.

Science and technology have been a major driving force in the creation of our present civilization, but its continuing innovations tend to increase the disparity between rich and poor countries. The gap in knowledge and capability between all nations is even greater than the gap in wealth, and is vastly more tragic in its implications. New approaches and mechanisms are required to ensure greater benefit to the developing countries and must be socially and environmentally acceptable.

In creating the new society human beings must be the innovator and not the victims, drawing their strength and inspiration from the positive values of the diverse cultures.

From this source, they must develop through a new system of education - elementary and advanced, formal and informal to the highest level. Unless education is undertaken in the perspective of the totality of the world situation with a vision of the future, mankind will fail to respond to the needs of the new global society and thus betray future generations. This involves learning about the relevance of the many interacting problems of the world, understanding and attempting to manage the present system of complexity, and learning to take advantage of uncertainty and rapid change.

The rich and ancient religious heritage of the human race represents a valuable cultural diversity and pluralism which needs to be nurtured. However, these factors should not become a source of tension and conflict but rather lead to a creative interfaith dialogue in which the spiritual dimensions and values of the world's great religions should be stressed.

The Malaysian initiative of Vision 2020 is an inspiring example in mobilizing an entire population towards the achievement of a new concept of development which involves all the dimensions - political, economic, psychological, social, ethical and spiritual.

We call upon the young people to take up these challenges and opportunities for a better future for themselves, their countries and the world.

Despite the immensity of the tasks facing humankind, we reaffirm our confidence that we will, innovative capacity and sense of solidarity of all men and women will overcome and usher in a better and sustainable global society.

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