

Med forbehold om endringer

Gro Harlem Brundtland

Statsministerens tale under lunsj med EF og EFTA
miljøvernministre 5.mai 1987 i Brussel.

Honorable Commissioner,
Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I deeply appreciate, Mr, Commissioner, the generous words of welcome extended to myself and to the World Commission on Environment and Development.

This afternoon we will present to you all the Report "Our Common Future".

The Report is the outcome of a political process of dialogue which lasted for about 900 days. It is not a scientific Report, of which there are many, and well written too. Our Report is first of all a political document. It was formulated by Commissioners from 21 countries - who served in their individual capacities, coming from different backgrounds and experiences, and with a broad range of national and international political responsibilities.

When asked on Norwegian TV a few days ago which single word I found to be the most important of the whole Report, I chose to answer by pointing at the final word in the final Chapter. That word is now. The need to make necessary changes is urgent. It is called for now.

The most significant concept in our report is the concept of "sustainable development". We have defined this concept most simply as progress which meets the needs and

aspirations of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Mr. Commissioner.

Most of the Commissioners of the WCED come from developing countries, picturing the real world of today. We call for necessary change in policies and practices to assure survival and sustainable patterns of growth and progress. However, although we have a central role to play the responsibility for our common future is not placed solely upon the affluent North. North and South must share this responsibility. Change is needed in developed and developing countries alike. Sustainable development is a goal for the world community. We offer - through Our Common Future - a consensus document as a basis upon which the international community of nations can build.

For us who represent the richest countries of the World, the challenge is great, but so are the opportunities involved. Europe can play a leading role in the transition that must come.

Important steps forward in human history of have often grown out of European ideas. Today, the influence of Europe does not correspond to its real potential or responsibility. The issues of environment and development, of securing our common future, of directing the world economy towards an era of new and sustainable growth that respects nature all underline the challenge that we face, as Europeans, a challenge to our ideas and our leadership.

I welcome this opportunity to present our analysis and recommendations to the European Commission. We have - during our work - received generous support from the Commission as well as from member countries. The support of the EC for the Report itself is no less significant. It is clearly an essential element in the dissemination and follow up of "Our Common Future".

Ladies and Gentlemen, we look forward to a stimulating discussion about our common future and to a continuing process of debate and change.

Thank you.