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Prime Minister  
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Acceptance Speech  
The Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order

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Environment and Development  
The Next Step Towards Our Common Future

It is a great honor for me to be here in Louisville to receive the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order for 1991. On behalf of the other members of the World Commission on Environment and Development, I would like to express our deep gratitude to those who have been involved in nominating and selecting our report "Our Common Future" for this very distinguished award. This is the largest award ever received by the World Commission, and I am deeply honored that you have found our work worthy of this generous acknowledgement.

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The dream of world order.

For centuries, the dream of world order was only a vision, a theoretical concept. The world was too large, too separated by distance for the dream to come true.

In the century that is soon drawing to a close, world order has become not only more possible, it has also become more imperative.

We have seen the horrors of two major breakdowns in the existing order, leading to World Wars I and II. Mankind has acquired the power to destroy not only the existing world order, but the world itself. The alternatives to a world order have become more unacceptable, more frightening. Anarchy or the rule of the strongest in a world full of modern weapons of mass destruction is a scary prospect.

World order is not possible without the rule of law. It also requires institutional mechanisms that can ensure adherence to these laws. These two are inextricably linked. If dictators think they can violate the most basic elements of international law with impunity - as recent examples have shown - the world will be a much more dangerous place to live.

This was also the lesson learned from World War II. Towards the end

of the war, the leaders of the allied nations therefore set out to create a new system of world governance, a United Nations that would "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war", a world organization based on "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small."

The organs defined by the UN Charter and the network of UN specialized agencies and bodies are today - together with the Bretton Woods institutions and GATT - the closest we have come to an institutionalized world order.

But for long periods of postwar history, the UN has only provided a framework for the maintenance of world order. Very often, this framework has not been used for cooperation, but as a forum for recrimination, rivalry and confrontation. For far too long, UN bodies were a mirror of the political cleavages within the world community, both along the East-West and the North-South axes.

The real world order has therefore only partly been defined by the rule of international law and by the bodies of the United Nations. In dealing with the three issues that will be most central for the survival of humankind in the next century, peace, development and environment, the present world order is at best imperfect.

The issue of war and peace has to a large extent been defined by a balance of power outside the UN. In Europe, NATO has been vital to the maintenance of peace and stability through the long years of East/West conflict. It will continue to play an indispensable role in the new Europe. Regional security arrangements have also been necessary in other parts of the world.

But the end of the cold war and the new cooperation between the permanent members of the UN Security Council mean that we can finally move towards a more global security system based on collective security, as envisaged in the UN Charter. At long last, the exercise of power to ensure international peace and security can be effected within the UN framework, rather than outside it. The performance of the UN Security Council during the Kuwait crisis, and the increasing effectiveness of UN peace-keeping operations, are an indication of the potential that should now be exploited to ensure a truly global security system.

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Peace is a necessary precondition for world order, but it is not the only one.

Efforts to achieve world also must address the issues of economic growth, development and poverty. This must be done in a situation where the old way of managing economic development, through national decision-making, is rapidly being overtaken by the process of internationalization. The economies of individual nations are becoming increasingly intertwined and interdependent.

During the 1980's, the world economy became truly global, spurred by a liberalization of capital markets and rapid growth in world trade. This has not been a universal process, however, because parts of the developing world are becoming decoupled and marginalized in relation to the world economy. More than one billion people, i.e. one fifth of humanity, live in extreme poverty. It is morally reprehensible that hundreds of millions of people live on less than a dollar-a-day and that 40 000 children die each day from malnutrition and disease. Poverty undermines the cohesion of societies, states, and world order.

Equally important, our efforts to create a better world order must also address the problems of the global environment. The world order set up in the first postwar years took very little account of the order defined by nature, the need to preserve global ecological systems.

Today, we have become aware of the mounting threats to our global environment. Global warming, depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer, rapid population growth, massive loss of species and biological diversity, accelerating desertification, deforestation and soil erosion, - these are all threats that will soon lead to breakdowns of vital support systems for life on Earth.

We will also pay dearly if we underestimate the conflict potential of large-scale migration, if we fail to take seriously the plight of millions of refugees or the cancerous threats of environmental damage and rival interests in natural resources.

How do we maintain and strengthen world order in a situation of rapid global change? How can we move from the stage of merely trying to cope with global change to a better, more long-term and strategic management of interdependence? These are the questions that must now be addressed.

#### A new strategy for global change:

Let me offer three brief snapshots from recent history that illustrate how rapidly the background for dealing with international development and environment has shifted, and how the opportunities for positive change are being influenced by these shifts.

In 1982/83, international cooperation on environment and development had almost ground to a halt. The first wave of environmental interest - manifest before and immediately after the Stockholm Conference in 1972 - had dissipated. Environmental issues were not very high on the political agenda. The North-South dialogue was at a deadlock. The United Nations and multilateral cooperation were in a serious crisis.

It was in this situation that the UN General Assembly in 1983 decided to establish a new special, independent Commission on Environment and Development. The Assembly in reality gave us a

mandate to develop "a global agenda for change." The challenge was to provide new conceptual frameworks and fresh ideas to international cooperation.

The result of four years of hard work, of listening to scientific evidence and to the voices of governments and concerned citizens in all corners of the world, showed that we were right in focusing on global interdependence and the close linkage between ecology and economy, between environment and development.

In 1987, when the World Commission on Environment and Development presented the report "Our Common Future", the international mood had changed. Environmental interest was on the rise, spurred by major ecological accidents such as Bhopal and Chernobyl. In the Soviet Union, Brezhnev had been succeeded by Gorbachov, superpower relations were improving, and there was a gradual shift back to multilateralism and the United Nations.

By the end of the 1980s, the concept of sustainable development as defined by the World Commission had become firmly anchored on the international agenda. It had been endorsed by the UN and other international organizations, by national governments - including the leaders of the G-7, and by a wide range of non-governmental organizations both from the economic and environmental constituencies.

Where do we stand now, in 1991, eight months before the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio, which will define the agenda of international cooperation on environment and development for the rest of the 1990s?

The political agenda has again shifted. We have gone through a period of dramatic change in Central and Eastern Europe. The end of the cold war has significantly reduced antagonism and enhanced cooperation at the United Nations. But at the same time, we also face fresh demands and expectations from the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. There is a very real risk that the developing world will be the loser in the competition for financial and technological resources from the West.

On environmental issues, we have made some progress in solving regional and local environmental problems such as air pollution, water and waste management. Globally, the agreements to protect the ozone layer and the start of negotiations on a world climate convention are significant signs of progress.

But these encouraging developments have not been sufficient to offset the general trend towards global environmental deterioration. There is growing scientific evidence that the scope of human activities on Earth will soon surpass the carrying capacity of nature. Precious natural resources such as fossil fuels, fertile topsoil and biodiversity are being rapidly depleted.

We may be approaching critical thresholds in nature's ability to absorb the waste products of human civilization.

And as if this were not enough, we see clear symptoms that the world may be hit by a development disaster before reaching more critical levels of global warming. Hunger, famine and infant mortality are again on the rise, causing tension that will lead to internal conflict and social breakdowns.

Sustainable development is the only viable strategy for global change - an imperative to save our common future. It means that we must aim at nothing less than a shift in the overall direction of the world economy. It means creating a new kind of growth and that we must change the way economic decisions are made.

There is today a growing recognition of the important complementary roles of the public and private sectors in development. Support is rising for a more market-friendly approach to development. But the war against hunger, disease, poverty, or ecological degradation cannot be left to the market to fight.

To achieve the transition to sustainable development, we must focus on the positive incentives for change. We need to find the right mix between government regulations, government incentives, and industry's self-control and corporate strategies. And this calls for wider use of economic instruments.

Governments must establish the framework conditions that can accelerate the development and dissemination of environmentally benign technology. Market mechanisms must be adjusted so that prices reflect the true environmental costs of what we do and what we consume.

More active use of economic instruments to benefit the environment will also require international harmonization of rules. We must avoid distortions of international trade relations. Closer international cooperation is necessary to establish standardized charges.

Each nation has a responsibility towards its own citizens and towards the world community to get its own priorities right. With the end of the cold war and a strengthening of the collective security systems of the United Nations, it should now be possible to shift resources away from military purposes and towards sustainable development priorities.

The agenda of the Brazil Conference is ambitious. But our ambitions for the Rio Conference must match the nature and the magnitude of the problems facing us. To tackle the priority issues to save the global environment, we must address the fundamental problems of development, including capital, technology, trade and energy.

Financial resources, debt, aid

Access to capital in the world economy is still very much determined by the unequal distribution of wealth between and within nations. For the poorest countries, there is still a severe lack of capital to invest in the very infrastructure of sustainable development: health, education, the eradication of poverty, conservation measures and effective population policies.

Faced with such urgent problems, the reversal of capital flows that are now running from the poor to the rich remains morally unacceptable and environmentally unsustainable.

We believe a dedicated effort should be made to reach agreement on a programme of comprehensive debt relief for low income developing countries, for example on the Trinidad terms proposed by the British Government. We should intensify efforts to have such a programme in place before the Brazil Conference.

We could also discuss proposals for "debt for sustainable development"-measures on terms that would be acceptable to both sides. Such measures should not replace debt relief measures, but supplement them. In Europe, Norway and Poland have proposed one way of setting up such arrangements, with a 10% debt for sustainable development swap on top of a 50% debt relief programme agreed through the Paris Club. Other models could be pursued.

Additional financial resources will be required to enable developing countries to take part in the effort now needed.

We believe a distinction should be made between resources that are necessary to finance global environmental efforts, and those that will be required to tackle regional and national problems. Such a distinction would increase transparency and make it easier to avoid leakages from ordinary development assistance.

To solve global environmental problems such as ozone depletion and climate change, we clearly need new and truly additional resources to enable developing countries to join the global agreements now being negotiated, i.a. on climate change. These global problems have been caused largely by emissions from the industrialized world. We have used the world's atmosphere, oceans and soil as a free wastebasket for much too long. This waste-basket is now almost full. We have no chance, not in reality and not from a moral point of view, to convince the developing world that it must stop using that basket because we have already filled it up.

Developing countries also need new capital to tackle the more immediate environmental problems at the regional and local levels. All industrialized countries should now make an effort to increase their official development assistance (ODA) to agreed levels. My Government will maintain its development assistance at a level of more than 1 % of our GNP, which is the highest among industrialized

countries.

But the costs of stabilizing and then reducing emissions related to energy consumption, the engine of modern civilization, will be extremely high, probably higher than what can realistically be found in public budgets. We must start asking the question: how can we get most environmental value for our money? And we must search for new ways to raise this money.

In the current negotiations on a world climate convention, Norway has proposed an approach based on a cost-effective implementation of the targets set to limit global emissions of greenhouse gases. Some kind of global and/or regional targets should be set to curb emissions of greenhouse gases, for example a stabilization of CO2 emissions by the year 2000 at the 1989 or at the 1990 levels which is the goal of most European countries, including Norway.

What we now need is a new partnership in a new generation of environmental agreements. The parties to the climate convention should be encouraged to implement its provisions individually or in cooperation with other parties. This would encourage investments in countries where significant reductions could be achieved at lower costs than in high-cost countries. It would tap new sources of capital, encouraging the private sector to take part.

An international clearing house would be needed to assess and recommend projects presented by the parties and match them with funding provided by parties who wish to implement commitments outside their own territories.

If we do not manage to mobilize new and additional financial resources, funding for environmental purposes will inevitably be taken from existing sources for development.

What this means, is that the Brazil Conference might tacitly give the green light for a switch away from the poverty-oriented approach to development. If this is allowed to happen, UNCED risks being a step backwards in our efforts to achieve real sustainable development. We cannot allow this to happen.

#### Technology transfer

The UNCED process must also search for new ways to ensure better access to environmentally sound technology. Governments should create incentives and a framework to facilitate technology transfer and cooperation. Industrialized countries must assist developing countries in developing a better capability to assess, choose and use such technology. But technology transfer is not a one-way street. The South has its own ingenuity, skills and creativity which can be used to make an invaluable contribution to our global efforts.

Trade remains a key issue in any effort to promote world development. A successful outcome of the Uruguay Round in GATT will

be of the utmost importance to all countries, also in the South. Better access to world markets would boost the export earnings and foreign currency holdings of developing countries almost as much as aid. Today, Africa accounts for only 4% of world trade. This also means lost opportunities also for the diffusion of technological progress.

When the Uruguay Round is concluded, we should also start international talks on how to deal with the complex relationship between trade and environment. Today, there are conflicting views on how this relationship should be handled. Some countries fear that environmental concerns will be used as a new screen for protectionist policies. On the other hand, trade patterns and practices cannot be excluded from environmental evaluation.

### Energy

Energy is at the core of most environmental problems. A doubled world population, which may be a reality some time in the next century, will require more energy. Today we are wasting it. Energy prices are generally misleading. They do not reflect environmental costs, nor do they reflect scarcity of resources.

The big questions are: How can we speed up the development and dissemination of energy-saving technology when current prices encourage business as usual? How do we include the Third World which faces such enormous investment challenges and immense energy needs in the future?

The World Commission on Environment and Development concluded that this is a key area. We must intensify efforts to increase energy-efficiency and energy-saving measures. We must strengthen investments in renewable sources of energy. We need research and development on a scale and magnitude comparable only to the great space programmes and the harnessing of nuclear energy in the past. How can this be achieved?

At present, global cooperation on energy issues is largely confined to the nuclear sector, through the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. In the petroleum sector, which is so vital for both economic development and environmental issues, producers have cooperated within OPEC and consumers within IEA, with little contact between the two.

The common interests of oil-exporting and oil-importing countries became clearer in the wake of the Gulf crisis. This was followed up by a timely initiative by France and Venezuela for a "ministerial seminar" between producers and consumers that took place this summer in Paris.

Norway has offered to host the next meeting of oil-exporting and oil-importing countries at political level so that a global dialogue on energy can be continued.



### Population

No effort to save our common future will succeed unless we manage to curb world population growth. In the 1990s, we shall have our last chance to prevent another doubling of the world population. If population growth is not slowed by falling birth rates, it will be slowed by famine or malnutrition. Let us not forget that this is a question of women's rights and roles, of basic needs, family planning and the right to a decent life.

When industrialized countries try to tell developing countries that they must curb the growth of their population, Southern representatives often counter with the argument that population figures are not the real issue. They say that the real threat to the global environment comes from per capita overconsumption in industrialized countries, that the main threats to our global environment, such as climate change, are a result of very high per capita emissions in industrialized countries.

The tragedy is that although both parts may be correct, they cannot both continue to deflect the responsibility to the other side. A scenario where world population on the one hand and per capita consumption and pollution on the other both continue to increase - as they are doing now - is totally unsustainable. We must curb world population growth and we must shift to a more sustainable life-style in the North at the same time.

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### Public participation

I would like to return briefly to the question I posed initially. How can we manage the transition to a more sustainable world society, a better management of global change, and do it in time? We have learned one important lesson from the dramatic events in Eastern Europe during the last couple of years. It is no longer possible to maintain an order based on power or suppression. The new world order must be based on consent and participation, not on passivity or alienation.

A strategy to save our common future must be people-oriented. No other strategy for economic development will be more effective than a massive investment in human resources, in health, in education and in an end to poverty.

All sectors of our societies must take part in the effort now needed. Sustainable development requires democracy, and - if implemented - it will strengthen our democracies.

One of the most encouraging signs in the preparations for the UNCED is the tremendous response from the private sector and from non-governmental organizations.

Environment and development groups, industry and business leaders,

trade unions, local authorities, religious and spiritual groups, indigenous peoples, women and youth are holding summit meetings to prepare inputs for the Earth Summit in Rio. A series of important Public Forums involving grass-roots organizations from all regions of the world will converge in a Global Forum in Rio next June - in a massive declaration of public interest in what governments are doing, or not doing. Equally important, these groups will not only present demands to governments, they will also tell the world what they are doing themselves, as concerned partners in the efforts to save our common future.

Governments cannot do the job alone. They will need support, participation and pressure from the people. The opportunity to mobilize this invaluable resource now exist.

#### Global governance

We need a stronger United Nations. The UN and our global institutions were given their mandate in another time and age, when the world community was simpler than it is today. Today the world is much more fragmented, while the problems facing us are more interlinked.

Those of us who as a matter of policy have always supported the UN also have an obligation to stress the need for continued UN reform.

We need a more dynamic United Nations with clearer aims and which bases its priorities on present needs. But reform will be hampered if the financial basis of the UN remains uncertain. Multilateral cooperation is undermined by a unilateral withholding of contributions.

In some regions - particularly in Europe - there is a new willingness to establish new and stronger international authority to regain political control of the management of a more interdependent reality. Nations are learning that they must cede some parts of their formal sovereignty to regain more sovereignty over processes that transcend national frontiers.

We need to establish stronger international authority to ensure more effective implementation and monitoring of environmental legislation and regulations. We need to develop global policies in which environmental concerns are better integrated into the mainstream of the emerging global economy. We need to develop an international public sector, based on existing institutions, which can ensure that a new world order will have an institutional capability to act more forcefully to save our common future.

We need global governance, nothing less. At a meeting in Stockholm last April, it was proposed that a World Summit on Global Governance be held in the mid-1990's. I support this proposal.

We now see a increasing opportunity, indeed a historical opportunity, to change the way the increasing interdependencies are met. This opportunity must not be lost. Nations must seize it. They must live up to their common responsibility to determine the future of humankind.