



STATSMINISTER GRO HARLEM BRUNDTLAND

EUREKA Ministerial Conference

Lillehammer, 15 June 1994,

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Your Majesty,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Haakon's Hall where we are assembled today was one of the main arenas for the Olympic Games last winter. So far this is one of the largest post-Olympic events to be held in Lillehammer.

I hope that some of the spirit of those exciting winter days remains and will inspire this Ministerial Conference and the accompanying program.

Nine years have passed since President Mitterrand took the initiative for the first Eureka Ministerial Conference, which was held in Paris. Eureka was created at a time when Europe seemed to be facing an overwhelming technological challenge. The United States had launched its Strategic Defense Initiative. Japan seemed more successful than ever, and was filling the European market with ever more advanced products. The term "Euro-sclerosis" was frequently heard. The Eureka initiative filled a need, based as it was on a market-oriented approach in which industry itself took the lead. This "bottom-up" principle has proved successful, as shown by the steadily increasing number of projects.

Advantages to be gained from Eureka are far greater than the mere sharing of costs. The speed of technological advances, the increasingly multidisciplinary nature of research and development, the need for access to a wider knowledge base, and of course improved market access are all good reasons for international cooperation.

As we can see from Eureka, the spirit of competition does not act in isolation and cannot be separated from other factors like the spirit of cooperation. Market competition alone is self-defeating in a context of competing nations. If everyone competes with everyone, competitiveness ultimately loses its value, and sooner or later the system will collapse. An efficient system of competition between firms seems to be best served by a cooperative framework between nations. When so many of the forces influencing our future are operating at the international level, and the power of the individual state is being eroded, we need to raise public and democratic decision-making and governance to this level as well.

There is an unacceptable discrepancy between the economic globalization process set in motion by business and industry and the explosive social, economic, environmental and political problems arising in so many

countries and regions of the world. In order to make progress, new forms of cooperation between government, business, and society are required. We need clear, agreed frameworks for action and incentives that will inspire industry to develop sustainable technology and speed up the developments which are already within reach. On the road to global governance, the process of regional political integration is of crucial importance.

We have every reason to view this process of further cooperation with hope and optimism. It is not a question of sacrificing anything, or relinquishing national sovereignty, but of welcoming new opportunities, opportunities that will help us solve the problem of unemployment and reduce the strain on the environment.

By mobilizing our collective resources, we shall be able to promote the transition towards sustainable development. Given the extent of our knowledge and the scope of modern technology, we should have a real chance of succeeding. Although investment in physical capital may yield diminishing returns, there is no reason to believe that investment in new knowledge is subject to such limitations. On the contrary, the fact that general access to education has coincided with so many technological breakthroughs, suggests that we may only be seeing the beginning of a whole new era of technological change. The best prospects for our future seem to lie in the inexhaustible potential of the human mind.

In this overall process, there is no final, detailed blueprint. Only by combining vision with down-to-earth practicality can we develop a process that will meet the urgent demands of the present, while remaining viable and providing direction for the future. This should be our guiding principle in Eureka.

In this respect, I would like to commend the increased attention being paid to the environmental aspects of Eureka projects. Every project should in some way contribute to sustainable development. I welcome the Eureka ministers' intention to adopt "the Lillehammer Statement" on environmental awareness and environmental aspects of technological development.

Eureka is a flexible and dynamic model for cooperation, which is able to respond to the challenges that our economies are facing. Eureka enables projects to be initiated at short notice, to take advantage of the latest research results and technological developments, and to be targeted at short term market opportunities.

In my view, part of the reason for Eureka's success is the annual rotation of the chairmanship. The new chair country feels obliged to make its own mark on Eureka by introducing new ideas into the cooperation. This makes for a vital and dynamic forum. At the same time we must

remember to exercise caution. The basic nature of Eureka must be preserved.

It has become a tradition for Eureka ministers to meet each year in June to take stock of the cooperation and to approve new projects. This provides a good opportunity to discuss the general issues of technological and industrial development as well as the broader perspectives which I have summarized here. The social side of these meetings has also become a tradition. I hope that you will also enjoy the arrangements which we have made in this respect and that you will have fond memories of your stay here in Lillehammer.