

**Presentation of Fannie Munlin, Speaker, 56th Annual DPI/NGO Conference,
Human Security and Dignity: Fulfilling the Promise of the United Nations
Monday, 8 September 2003, United Nations Headquarters, New York**

**56TH ANNUAL DPI/NGO CONFERENCE
WELCOMING REMARK FANNIE M. MUNLIN
CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCE
8TH SEPTEMBER 2003**

THANK YOU MR. UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR GIVING ME THE FLOOR.

**AND THANK YOU TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL, MR. KAVAN, MR.
CARDOSO AND MS. BLOEM FOR YOUR INSPIRING WORDS.**

**DEAR COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS, GOOD MORNING. IT IS A GLORIOUS DAY IN NEW
YORK TODAY. IT IS MY PLEASURE, AS CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCE, TO FORMALLY
WELCOME YOU ALL TO THE 56TH ANNUAL DPI/NGO CONFERENCE. I EXTEND A
SPECIAL WELCOME TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE JOINED US THROUGH OUR LIVE
WEBCAST ON THE INTERNET AND BY VIDEOCONFERENCE.**

**I WOULD LIKE TO BEGIN BY GIVING THANKS TO THE DEDICATED MEMBERS OF THE
CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE, OVER 30 OF WHOM GAVE UNSELFISHLY OF
THEIR TIME AND EFFORT TO HELP MAKE THIS EVENT POSSIBLE.**

**OUR THANKS ALSO TO MR. PAUL HOFFEL, THE CO-CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCE
PLANNING COMMITTEE, AND HIS STAFF, AND THE 23 INTERNS, WHO WORKED
TIRELESSLY WITH OUR COMMITTEE TO HELP PLAN THIS CONFERENCE OVER THE
PAST NINE MONTHS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR EFFORTS. PLEASE STAND - AND
LET'S GIVE THEM A ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR THEIR WORK.**

AS I GAZE OUT UPON MANY FACES REPRESENTING MANY FACETS OF OUR GLOBAL SOCIETY, I AM FILLED WITH GREAT HUMILITY AND JOY TO REPRESENT YOU AS CHAIR OF THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE.

IT WAS LAST NOVEMBER THAT OVER 200 OF OUR NGO REPRESENTATIVES HELD A TOWN MEETING TO DISCUSS WHAT THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE SHOULD BE. AFTER MUCH DEBATE, IT WAS AGREED THAT WE WERE DETERMINED TO REFOCUS ATTENTION ON THE TRUE MEANING OF SECURITY IN A WORLD WHERE OUR WELLBEING IS BEING ERODED.

THUS THE THEME "HUMAN SECURITY AND DIGNITY: FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF THE UNITED NATIONS", WAS ADOPTED TO REFLECT OUR COMMON COMMITMENT TO THE PRINCIPLES EXPRESSED IN THE PREAMBLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER:

TO SAVE FUTURE GENERATIONS FROM THE SCOURGE OF WAR; TO REAFFIRM FAITH IN FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS – IN THE DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE HUMAN PERSON; EQUAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND MEN; AND TO ESTABLISH CONDITIONS FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. THESE ARE PRINCIPLES THAT REMAIN RELEVANT.

THIS THREE-DAY GATHERING PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO BUILD UPON THOSE PRINCIPLES, TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES THAT ENABLE US TO PROMOTE PEACE IN OUR COMMUNITIES; AND TO STRENGTHEN OUR DETERMINATION TO ENSURE INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY THROUGH PROGRAMS AND POLICIES THAT BUILD A BETTER WORLD FOR ALL PEOPLE. THERE ARE THOSE WHO BELIEVE THAT HUMANKIND WILL NEVER OVERCOME ITS TENDENCY TOWARD

VIOLENCE, OPPRESSION, BIGOTRY AND POVERTY. THOSE OF US GATHERED TODAY IN PERSON, VIA THE INTERNET AND VIDEOCONFERENCE KNOW THAT THERE IS A BETTER WAY, AND I BELIEVE THAT WE HAVE THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE ON OUR SIDE.

WE AS NGOs ARE COMMITTED TO BECOMING AGENTS OF CHANGE THROUGH THE SHARING OF INFORMATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNERSHIPS. ALSO WE ARE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS WITH THOSE OF GOVERNMENTS, OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS TO HELP PROMOTE THE SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT OF ALL PEOPLES.

LET US NOT FORGET THAT OUR GREATEST DEBT OF GRATITUDE IS OWED TO YOU, THE PARTICIPANTS, WHO HAVE COME GREAT DISTANCES FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD, AT CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE TO YOURSELVES AND YOUR ORGANIZATIONS. FOR THOSE WHO WERE UNABLE TO FINANCE THEIR VISIT AND OR TO SECURE VISAS WE HAVE MADE THE EFFORT TO PUT THE CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS ON THE INTERNET.

MORE THAN 2,800 NGO REPRESENTATIVES FROM 99 ORGANIZATIONS REGISTERED TO BE WITH US TODAY. I THINK THESE FIGURES DEMONSTRATE THE REMARKABLE SOLIDARITY OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS WORLDWIDE FOR WHOM THE CALL FOR HUMAN SECURITY AND DIGNITY ARE NOT MERE WORDS, BUT REAL FLESH AND BLOOD ASPIRATIONS HELD BY PEOPLE, BOTH RICH AND POOR, YOUNG AND OLD, FROM THE GLOBAL NORTH AND THE SOUTH. WE WILL NOT BE DETERRED AND WE WILL NOT LET THE UNITED NATIONS BE DETERRED IN THESE ASPIRATIONS. LET US WORK TOGETHER OVER THE NEXT THREE DAYS TO

ENSURE THAT THIS CONFERENCE MAKES A SUBSTANTIAL CONTRIBUTION TO OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE TASKS THAT LAY BEFORE US AND HELP US IN PRACTICAL WAYS IN OUR QUEST FOR BETTER LIVES FOR ALL.

I LOOK FORWARD TO OUR TIME TOGETHER, THANK YOU.