



The President
of the
Economic and Social Council

**Statement by the President of ECOSOC
Ambassador Dr. Ivan Šimonoviæ
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the UN
at
the High-level segment of the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee
for the World Summit on Sustainable Development**

Bali, Indonesia
June 5, 2002

Mr. Chairperson,
Excellencies,
Dear Colleagues,

It has been ten years since the international community gathered for the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. At that epic gathering, and with the adoption of Agenda 21, a blueprint for sustainable development was conceived. Both rich and poor agreed on a document that provided a common vision for a better world. However, we know that many of those expectations have not been met.

We are facing many difficult problems. Over the past few decades, development has helped us advance, but at the same time has also placed a heavy toll on our planet and its resources. Development may soon cease to be sustainable, even for those who have benefited from it, let alone the vast majority of mankind which live in conditions of deprivation and squalor. This was recognized by the world leaders two years ago at the Millennium Summit, who set a number of targets-the Millennium Development Goals-to work towards reducing global poverty by 2015. Furthermore, they resolved to “free future generations from the threat of living on a planet irredeemably spoiled by human activities”.

There can be no undertaking of greater importance to all our nations, and to coming generations, than the eradication of poverty and the sustainable development of all countries and peoples. The tasks facing us now, as we prepare for the World Summit for Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, are: to forge a global partnership to achieve the objectives of sustainable development; to reconfirm and build upon a strategically focused approach to the implementation of Agenda 21, and to address the main challenges and

opportunities faced by the international community in this regard. Our purpose, as we meet here, must be to further focus the will and resources of the international community to meet people's needs as in accordance with obligations undertaken in the Millennium Declaration.

We have witnessed some important advances in recent months, released to the Monterrey Consensus. We must build on the increased concern for the issue of financing for development, and achieve a similar consensus in support of sustainable development. The Economic and Social Council has been assigned a key role to ensure all stakeholders stay engaged in implementation of the agreements and commitments of Monterrey Consensus. Similarly, ECOSOC has a vital role to play in ensuring that the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental – are fully addressed and implemented. A massive effort is required to mobilize better cooperation for development and to build an international economic system more conducive to the needs of the poor.

The World Summit for Sustainable Development preparatory process, from the beginning, has seen an unprecedented involvement of all key stakeholders and diverse, specialized communities. The United Nations and other international organizations have done much to prepare the conference. Civil society and the private sector have joined the discussions, sharing their own perspectives and putting forward bold ideas and initiatives. There is a great sense of commitment and anticipation as we meet here in Bali.

However, there are still many open issues. We will gather at Johannesburg for the World Summit for Sustainable Development very soon and there is a lot to be done meanwhile. During this preparatory process, the final one before Johannesburg, it is imperative that we work together with vigour, and adopt a common vision of what we want to achieve at the Summit. We must agree on practical ways to balance the challenge of improving the lives of all human beings while at the same time protecting the environment. We must come up with a strong and meaningful programme of action, one which takes into account the interests of both, the rich and the poor, and interests of future generations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have a great responsibility to make the outcome of this conference a success. Let us deliver on our Monterrey Consensus promise: “Our resolve to work together is stronger than ever”.

Thank you.