



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

President of the Republic of Croatia
Address at the UN Climate Change Summit
22 September 2009
(video message)

On behalf of the Republic of Croatia let me welcome and support the initiative for the world summit devoted to global climate changes under the auspices of the United Nations. The global organization is the right, I would even say the only place for discussing a problem which is fully and in the true sense of the word a global issue, whether we are aware of that or not.

Current discussions on whether the climate in the world is changing are totally superfluous, not to say ridiculous. Climate is definitively changing, it has already changed, and the cause of these changes is man. However paradoxical this may sound at first, it is a fact that it was accelerated technological development, which is or should at least be the basis for the progress of mankind, that brought along changes, in the form of collateral damage, which involve a fatal potential capable of threatening not only progress but also the very existence of the human species.

Today we are in a tight spot, faced with a dilemma which actually should not exist. I have in mind the question of whether to persist in development regardless of the cost or agree to slow it own - of course, in this regard I only have in mind the most developed countries - in order to reduce as much as possible the cost we are already paying.

We are faced with yet another dilemma - renounce profit at any cost or consciously agree to reduce our profit today in order to have everybody reap the benefits tomorrow. I do not think any details are necessary and that the meaning of my words is quite clear. And any

meeting devoted to climate changes and the response of specific stakeholders to requests for more radical steps focused on environmental protection in order to reduce global warming, among other things, confirm the existence of such dilemmas.

But, let me reiterate: these are dilemmas that are not and should not be dilemmas. Humankind, the human species, not individual states or nations, but humankind assembled through its representatives in the United Nations, needs to establish a sequence of priorities in which the preservation of the Earth, of its plant and wildlife, the prevention of further climate changes affecting the face of the Earth, must incontestably be first and foremost.

Everyone has something to say about climate changes - everyone, because sooner or later everyone will feel their effect. Of course, the most determinate moves and the clearest standpoints - but in the interest of all - are to be expected from those who contribute the most to such changes. At the same time due sympathy and understanding is required with respect to those whose responsibility is the smallest because of their underdevelopment, but who already are or will become the major victims of such changes.

We need a new global platform for a determined and coordinated struggle against further deterioration in terms of global climate changes. We also need, of course, awareness of the fact that if we renounce something seemingly benefiting a third party today we shall actually be doing ourselves an invaluable favour - but tomorrow.

I hope and believe that the United Nations climate change summit will point in the right direction, and that we shall not have to wait a long time for concrete results.