

26 June 2009

**Statement of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,
President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly,
on the Adoption of the Outcome Document of the United Nations
Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its
Impact on Development**

Excellencies,
United Nations Colleagues,
Representatives of Civil Society,
Brothers and Sisters all,

We have come to the middle of the third day of this historic United Nations Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development. I congratulate you all for successfully initiating the global conversation on the economic crisis that continues to unfold around us and for beginning an in-depth, unprecedented review of the international financial and economic architecture.

The world has had the opportunity to hear the voices of the G-192. All the Members of the General Assembly have had and continue to have the chance to express their points of view. Today our efforts have culminated in the adoption by consensus of an outcome document that represents the first step in a long process of putting the world on a new path towards SOLIDARITY, stability and sustainability.

The United Nations General Assembly, the G-192, has now been established as the central forum for the discussion of world financial and economic issues, and this in itself is a major achievement. In addition, the General Assembly has been asked to follow up on these issues through an ad hoc open-ended working group.

The issues to be followed up range from crisis mitigation - including global stimulus measures, special drawing rights (SDRs) and reserve currencies - to topics such as the restructuring of the financial and economic system and architecture, including reform of the international financial institutions and the role of the United Nations; external debt; international trade; investment; taxation; development assistance; South-South cooperation; new forms of financing; corruption and illicit financial flows; and regulation and monitoring.

At the same time, it has been recognized that the financial and economic crisis must not delay the necessary global response to climate change and environmental degradation through initiatives for building a "green economy".

The G-192 has proved itself capable of reaching consensus on the convening and modalities of this Conference and on a substantive outcome document that addresses issues of great importance to

humanity. It has also been able to chart a course for carrying the process forward on the basis of the lines of action set out in the Conference outcome document.

We have had three days of very successful work and, now that the outcome document has been formally adopted, it is only fitting that we salute each other's efforts and, in particular, that we congratulate the two facilitators, Ambassador Frank Majoor of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Ambassador Camilo Gonsalves of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Of course, we also express our warmest thanks to the President's Commission of Experts, which was so ably coordinated by Professor Joseph Stiglitz.

We are happy but not content, or rather, not completely satisfied. Other crises loom on the horizon, such as the clean water, global warming, food, energy and humanitarian crises affecting millions of our brothers and sisters, especially children suffering from hunger and thirst.

We must all join forces to confront these crises. The proposals we have adopted today point in this direction. But much remains to be done.

We are heartened by the expressions of political will to shoulder our shared responsibility to cooperate, but we will not be content so long as these pressing issues remain unresolved.

My role as President of this General Assembly, which brings together representatives of all the world's peoples, is to invite you to look beyond today's economic concerns and to hold out hope for the common future of the Earth and of humanity.

We may well ask, what next? Not necessarily in terms of the economy, but in terms of humanity. Where are we headed? At this point it is unlikely that anyone, however wise, can answer this question with certainty. But even without having the answers, we can all seek and build together the consensus that will lead us towards a more hopeful future for us all and for Mother Earth.

This reminds me of the vision of the great French scientist, archaeologist and mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. In China, where he carried out his research on "Homo pekinensis", he had something like a vision.

Looking at the advances in technology, trade and communications that were shortening distances and laying the foundations for what he liked to call planetization, rather than globalization, Teilhard de Chardin was already saying, in the 1930s, that we were witnessing the emergence of a new era for the Earth and for humanity.

What was about to appear, de Chardin told us, was the noosphere, after the emergence in the evolutionary process of the anthroposphere, the biosphere, the hydrosphere, the atmosphere and the lithosphere. Now comes the new sphere, the sphere of synchronized minds and hearts: the noosphere. As we know, the Greek word noos refers to the union of the spirit, the intellect and the heart.

Where are we headed? I venture to believe and hope that we are all headed towards the slow but unstoppable emergence of the noosphere. Human beings and peoples will discover and accept each other as brothers and sisters, as a family and as a single species capable of love, solidarity, compassion, non-violence, justice, fraternity, peace and spirituality.

Is this a utopia? It is undoubtedly a utopia, but a necessary one. It guides us in our search. A utopia is, by definition, unattainable. But it is like the stars: they are unreachable, but what would the night sky be without stars? It would be nothing but darkness and we would be disoriented and lost. A utopia likewise lends direction and purpose to our lives and struggles.

The noosphere, then, is the next step for humanity. Allow me a small digression: if, in the time of the dinosaurs, which inhabited the Earth for more than 100 million years and disappeared some 65 million years ago, a hypothetical observer had wondered what the next evolutionary step would be, he probably would have thought: more of the same. In other words, even bigger and more voracious dinosaurs.

But that answer would have been wrong. That hypothetical observer never would have imagined that a small mammal no bigger than a rabbit, living in treetops, feeding on flowers and shoots and trembling at the possibility of being devoured by a dinosaur, would eventually become our ancestor.

From that creature, millions of years later, emerged something completely new, with qualities totally different from those of the dinosaurs, including a conscience, intelligence and love: the first human beings, from whom we who are gathered here are descended.

And so it was not more of the same. It was a break, a new step.

I firmly believe that today we are once again on the threshold of a new step in the evolutionary process: a step towards a human family that is united with itself, with nature and with Mother Earth.

I am tempted to echo the words: "I have a dream!". It is, indeed, a dream. A glorious, beautiful, happy dream.

The main focus of this new step will be life in all its forms, humanity with all its peoples and ethnic groups, the Earth as a mother with all its vitality and an economy that creates the material conditions for making all this possible. We will need the material capital we have built up, but the focus will be on human and spiritual capital, whose most wholesome fruits are fraternity or brotherhood, cooperation, solidarity, love, economic and ecological justice, compassion and the capacity to coexist happily with all our differences, in the same shared home, the great and generous Mother Earth.

They say that Jesus, Buddha, Francis of Assisi, Rumi, Tolstoy, Gandhi, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King and many other great prophets and teachers of the past and present, of which every country and culture has an exemplar, were ahead of their time in taking this new step.

They are all our most formative teachers, our lodestars, who fan the flame of hope that assures us that we still have a future, a blessed future for all of us.

As our dear brother Joseph Stiglitz aptly put it: “The legacy of this economic and financial crisis will be a worldwide battle of ideas”.

I firmly believe that new ideas, new visions and new dreams will galvanize our spirits and our hearts. The old gods are dying out, and new ones are emerging with the vigour of newborn infants. My reflections are meant to bring energy and enthusiasm to this battle of ideas and visions.

If we humans are to take a qualitative leap forward, we must give up our quest to become the lords and masters of creation, forgetting that we are not owners but only caretakers, which, after all, is no small thing.

Only when we accept the fact that we are caretakers and not owners and that we will one day be held to account for our stewardship will the grandeur of our humanity shine forth.

Thank you.