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AS WRITTEN

ADDRESS By SIR SHRIDATH RAMPHAL

TO THE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

ON BEHALF OF

THE COMMISSION ON GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

AND THE EARTH COUNCIL ,

CAIRO, 6 SEPTEMBER 1994.

Mr Chairman, members of the Conference:

While I speak in two capacities, I shall not do so in double time.

On behalf of the members of the Commission on Global Governance and my Co-Chairman, Ingvar Carlsson, I thank the organising authorities of ICPD - and most specially the Conference's committed and courageous Secretary-General, Dr Nafis Sadik - for inviting the Commission to address the Conference.

The mandate of the Commission on Global Governance is a large one encompassing all the issues that have brought us to Cairo. When early next year - the year of commemoration of the U.N.'s 50th Anniversary - the Commission presents its Report concerns about population and development of the kind that have been aired in this Plenary will be among the matters that we address in the context of global governance. By then the fortunes of this Conference - both its conclusions and the process by which they were reached - will be part of our own data. I hope that we can commend them as examples of enlightened global governance - of how our world should be facing up to crucial issues and acting on them with wisdom and effectiveness. The outcome clearly can be positive on both counts; but it is what happens here in Cairo in succeeding days that will provide the answers.

If those answers are to be truly positive the Conference will have to make determined efforts on several fronts. The first is in relation to process. Our Commission recognises that the world is becoming a

global neighbourhood. Certainly we are no longer just a world of nation states; decisions about the future will not be taken by governments alone. An international civil society exists and must be an actor in the governance of our global community. I commend the ICPD therefore in advancing beyond the first steps taken for the Earth Summit in opening up the preparatory process and this Conference itself to national and international NGOs.

Particularly in this very special area of population - where whatever governments or spiritual leaders say it is people who will determine the outcome - it could be a futile exercise for official delegations to make the final compromises - unless in doing so they listen closely to the voices from the grass. The Commission on Global Governance is addressing this question of a larger role for international civil society in the management of the affairs of our global neighbourhood and will look closely to the lessons of Cairo.

I commend, too, the emphasis of the Conference on the values, principles, ethics that must underpin global responses to issues of population and development. Over the wider terrain of global governance our Commission has found that that is the only sure way to move forward. Whatever we say on promoting security - of people, of states, of the planet; on managing economic interdependence; on reforming the UN; on strengthening the rule of law world-wide - will be rooted in an ethical basis of human survival. I hope, therefore, that you are not deflected from the primacy you give to quality of life issues and to the rights of women in relation to them. There will be no progress on population and development issues unless there is clear direction on these fundamentals. Shading language will not do; overwhelming sentiment must prevail. But you will have to do more.

The Commission on Global Governance has recognised that the global neighbourhood would be an uncaring place unless rights were balanced - and in some cases, as with population and development, complemented - by responsibilities. One relevant set of responsibilities is in the area of consumption which is many times more culpable than population growth in relation to the break-down of Earth's life-support systems and therefore of human survival. I will say a word more about this on behalf of the Earth Council. The point I make here in relation to global governance is that we have been concentrating our efforts so much on single issue conferences at a time when several issues have become so interlocked as to be inseparable that we sometimes allow crucial elements in problem solving to slip from our grasp. So at Rio we talked about environment but not about population. At Cairo we are talking about population but not about consumption. It could be a self-defeating process. This is not a plea for open-ended global negotiations; but we must not err by being too craintive either.

As self-defeating will be the failure of this Conference to reach firm conclusions on the resources by which the values, principles, ethics, the rights of women elaborated in the Programme Action, are to be translated into reality - the reality of development that will sustain their realisation. In the end, there were no real 'new and additional resources' for Agenda 21.

It will be as great an insult to our humanity were this Conference to say to the women of the poorer countries deprived of the bread of basic sustenance that after Cairo they now have the right to the cake of a higher quality of life, of education, of health care, of the assurance of reproductive health. And to do no more. It is not only immoral, it is provocative, to present starving people a glossy cook-book but no

ingredients to cook.

Will resources prove to be the real 'Achilles' heel' of Cairo too? Will industrial countries who carry so large a responsibility for human impact on the planet, take up their responsibilities for contributing to the resources which alone can make the Conference's conclusions a genuine Programme of Action? The 20/20 Initiative for Achieving Universal Access to Basic Social Services for Sustainable Human Development can help involving as it does contributions by developing countries themselves. But more has to be done. The Commission on Global Governance will face this issue over a wider area and make some suggestions for global resources for global purposes. It is one this Conference cannot avoid in the context of agreement to act.

And developing countries must not let slip the possibilities of genuine South-South cooperation in this crucial area of population. The real success stories are in the South; the experience is there to be transmitted. Donor countries and the UN system must help, and it is heartening that there are initiatives in this direction.

The Commission on Global Governance believes that with enlightened leadership at all levels and a spirit to move forward shedding the baggage of the past and adapting both policy and process to global neighbourhood values we can yet fulfil our trust to future generations. It believes strongly that ICPD must not be overwhelmed by doctrinal divisiveness and rancour, but be imbued with that spirit of solidarity and common responsibility for which H.E. President Mubarak called at the Opening Session.

So let me turn to my message on behalf of the Earth Council. Maurice Strong should have been here himself; he cannot be; but his

heart is in Cairo. The Earth Council which was born out of Rio feels a special duty to identify with the purposes of this Conference and its first message is that to which President Mubarak gave expression at the Opening Session - a 'spirit of solidarity and common responsibility' with Cairo and ICPD.

The Earth Council has prepared for ICPD and will circulate to members a special paper entitled 'CONSUMPTION: THE OTHER SIDE OF POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT'. The objective of the paper is to present the importance of consumption vis-a vis population and development and to discuss their direct linkages. It draws on the Vallentyne 'demotechnic' index to combine and interrelate population and consumption. By doing so the Council is able to adjust population by consumption, obtaining estimates which allow fair comparisons of countries in terms of their global environmental stress.

The conclusions obtained from these estimates of population adjusted by consumption seriously question the assumption that countries with larger populations pose a greater environmental risk. They show, for example, that the U.S. and the former U.S.S.R. each with relatively low populations, have 'consumption adjusted populations' that dramatically surpass those of the more populated but less developed countries of China and India.

Sustainable development, the Earth Council emphasises, is premised on a balance between population and consumption within the overall limits imposed by nature. It has become clear to the Council and it is central to its message to this Conference that not only population but also consumption have to be reduced if sustainability is to be achieved is premised. What is needed, the Council's presentation concludes, is

rolling back consumption levels in the North and reducing population growth in the South.

Which brings us back to the need for ICPD to be imbued not with a special spirit of solidarity and common responsibility.

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