

HUNGARY

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the President of the Republic of my country Hungary, permit me to convey to you the greetings of the citizens of a country, who living in the Carpathian-basin with their Central-European neighbors only play a lesser role in shaping the process, that they are significantly threatened by: global climate change.

The Carpathian-basin is Europe's ecological base, one of the most beautiful and most flourishing lands on Earth.

Lying at the heart of it is Hungary, which has a unique culture of water management and is the home of thousands of healing water sources.

Our people are not only known for their hospitality but also for their creativity.

Let me just mention now two examples.

You, who are now jotting notes with a ballpoint pen, are holding in your hands the invention of a Hungarian man, László Bíró.

All those working on their laptops, are probably not aware of the fact that the person who invented the principles of the computer was the world acclaimed Hungarian-born mathematician, Janos Neumann.

With respect to the topic on our conference agenda today, permit me to call your attention to the thought of another Hungarian-born Nobel Laureate physicist, Gábor Dénes.

He said "until now humanity has had to struggle with Mother Nature itself, from now on, it will have to struggle with human nature."

This thought could even be the motto of our conference.

It is now our common responsibility to overcome our sometimes selfish human nature and come to an understanding on the elementary issues of sustainable development.

Therefore, when conveying the message of Hungary to you, I am also calling on the conscience of my fellow politicians, because the questions which were already known twenty years ago are still towering over us today.

I call on our common conscience, because the question marks of twenty years ago have straightened up in front of our own eyes to become exclamation marks.

Let us ask ourselves the question, have we done we can?

The facts present an alarming picture.

Over the past five decades, humanity has consumed more resources than it did during its entire existence before that.

Since the end of 1980s, the ecological footprint of humanity has exceeded the biological capacities of Planet Earth.

Earth's growing population, the global development of our industrial civilization cannot be maintained in its current form.

And because today our thoughts revolve around sustainable development, let us ask ourselves, what is "sustainable development" about?

It is about our lives.

The lives of those around today and those still to be born in the future, about the chances and the quality of life of our children and grandchildren.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our problems are well known.

We possess most of the knowledge and technologies required to solve them.

There is nothing left, but to get down to action.

Hungary is therefore on the opinion that we do not need declaration after declaration any more, what we desperately need are executable, implementable programs.

We Hungarians think that one of the greatest issues of our common future is going to be water.

Therefore we propose to also concentrate our attention and resources around it.

Water is the source of life.

It is like air or like freedom, which we take for granted when we have it, but die if we are deprived of it.

Yet, what we see is that we are not confronting ourselves with the true weight of the issue.

This problem is not knocking on tomorrow's door; it has already become part of our lives today.

According to UN surveys more than one billion people today live on Earth without access to safe drinking water.

Ten thousand children under the age of five are killed every day by diseases stemming from contaminated waters.

Half of all hospital beds in the world have patients suffering from diseases caused by bad quality drinking water.

Do we have the time to wait?

If we don't do something about it, the situation will deteriorate further.

We have to protect our water resources.

We have to protect waters around us that breathe life.

We Hungarians are ready to contribute our share to this work and to share with others the experiences of our developed water management culture.

Therefore I propose that we hold a UN Conference on Water and Sanitation to continue the work started in Rio in the autumn of 2013 in Budapest, the capital of Hungary.

Because the words of Nobel Laureate Dénes Gábor are indeed true.

From now on it is not Mother Nature that we have to struggle with, but our own human nature.

Thank you, your attention was honoring for me.