

With the break-up of the Soviet Union and the rejection of Communism, many saw the dawn of a new era in which the demands of national security would give way to economic and social security and to democratic progress. The most optimistic spoke categorically of the end of History. Others spoke, too hastily, of a new world order. The tragic events in Somalia, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia have shown us a more painful reality.

The new international environment is reminiscent of the bloodbaths of what we thought were bygone eras. Despite the similarities, the basic facts of the current situation have radically changed. Allow me to outline the most important of these facts, which affect all of our countries:

- 1) The end of bipolarity has transformed the nature of power in international relations. The number of stakeholders has increased and military force has lost its significance in favour of economic strength.
- 2) Technology and communications have speeded up economic globalization and increased the pace of deregulation. Until recently, economic policy was exclusively a matter of national jurisdiction. It must now be considered in conjunction with a range of external factors.
- 3) Thus, problems that transcend national boundaries are erasing the dividing line between domestic and foreign policy.
- 4) Problems formerly identified with the effects of war, such as mass migration and environmental destruction, to name only two, have become factors of instability and conflict.

The power of emerging nations now stems from the vitality of their economy, the influence of their culture and values, and the commitment of all stakeholders in civil society to the conduct of public affairs. To develop this participation, it seems to me that nations must promote national unity based on equality for all and respect for political, economic and cultural diversity.

The enemy that threatens us is no longer the other side. The enemy lies within. In my opening remarks, I talked about the new situation with regard to international peace and security. Human security is clearly the very foundation of real peace. Peace and security now depend on the ability of nations to promote the economic and social development of all citizens, both women and men, with respect for differences and for the environment. Factors such as soil depletion, deforestation, and desertification have been left out of the security equation for too long. They now dramatically remind us that we are threatened by far more than flags and firearms.