

Africa and elsewhere, cannot be ended solely through trade and help from developed countries. It will require sound national economic and development strategies. And the governments of the developing countries have a more direct responsibility to their own people to achieve progress.

Mr. President, I said we must devote the energies freed by greater security to two equally pressing problems. One is poverty. The other is the environment.

The world is facing an environmental crisis of unparalleled magnitude. Nature is sending us an urgent message that we ignore at our peril. The signs of this crisis are all around us -- shortages of timber, exhausted soil, desertification, depleted fish stocks, seals dying in the North Sea, beluga whales washing ashore in the St. Lawrence river. Some even maintain that we have reached a point where the survival of mankind is at risk.

Prime Minister Brundtland, Chairman of the World Commission on Environment and Development, has said that the threat to our environmental security is "second only to nuclear war". Having lessened the likelihood of global nuclear war we now face invasion by rising seas, polluted air, and encroaching deserts.

There is a growing awareness that the environment, the economy, and human health are inextricably linked. At the same time as we in the North suffer the effects of our industrial society's disregard for the environment, the South suffers from the environmental degradation engendered by poverty, by population growth, and by pressure for immediate economic development.

Destruction of the rainforest in Brazil, deforestation in Sub-Saharan Africa, or the pollution of drinking water in the sprawling cities of the developing world are the consequences of people in poverty seeking the means to survive. Without improved development opportunities, we cannot expect them to do other than search for such fuel, shelter and livelihood, as best as they can.

We must help them to protect these precious resources. We require a new era of economic growth, but we need growth that sustains and expands the resource capital of our planet, not growth that poisons the air we breathe and the water we drink.