

"And I would like to point out that Habitat is integrally tied to both Bucharest and the environment conference in Stockholm. It was there, under the leadership of a great Canadian, Maurice Strong, that the interrelationship between environment and human settlements was recognized and the groundwork laid for Vancouver. And here in this room I would like to convey my thanks to Mr. Strong for the tremendous help he has given us in all the preparatory work that has brought us to where we are today.

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"If world population is to double in the next 30 years, as was seen at the Bucharest conference to be almost inevitable, then we must exponentially increase all else: the number of housing units; schoolrooms, hospital beds, transport lines and every other necessity of the modern community.

"But only to double our facilities will not be enough. Hundreds of millions of people live today in literally subhuman conditions. If we do no more than double the present infrastructure, we will simply compound the degree of human misery.

"If mankind seriously pledges to create minimum conditions and standards for all, then we are entering the greatest era of physical construction in all history, a time without any precedent. Yet that is what we must pledge and must achieve.

#### Start needed now

"The Conference on Human Settlements can and should be a new start, and we must begin now. The pre-conference period is absolutely vital to our hopes of success. Through committees such as yours in each country, we must begin the study of our best techniques, the awakening of public awareness, and the process of debate over what we really want and what must be done to achieve our goals.

"At Vancouver, we will be coming together for a global exchange of ideas, techniques and systems for solving specific problems. Our demonstration projects, if they are well chosen, will be the pilot models for the future. And in the years that follow they must be duplicated a hundred and thousand-fold around the world.

"The material and physical aspects of human settlements at the conference



*Enrique Peñalosa*

will be very important. It is these that will show graphically what can be achieved. But even more important at Vancouver will be the economic, social and political considerations. Ideas must come before bricks. Social structures must change.

"Above all we must come together prepared to adopt new priorities, prepared to change our past ideas, prepared to cast off obsolete institutions, and prepared to discuss rationally the options, the trade-offs, the sacrifices that may be required to preserve our civilization.

"This is not an idle dream. This is what the world's peoples are asking and even waiting for. Habitat must touch on every aspect of our community life as we know it today and as we expect it in the very near future — not only in major cities but also in relation to the smallest rural villages; not only in terms of housing, but adequate provision of all community services, facilities and cultural needs; not only technology, but the marshaling of the political and social will to take action; and, finally, not just what we need, but what we want.

#### Not a doomsday conference

"Above all we must think and talk in terms of solutions rather than problems. Habitat must not be a doomsday conference. We must bring to all people a message of hope. We must show governments that the decay of the urban environment is reversible, that they can meet the future needs of their peoples. Delegations must go home from Vancouver with new ideas and practical

plans, eager to apply what they have seen and learned.

"Vancouver, although it is our immediate goal, must not be the end but a new beginning. In the next 20 months we must awaken a sense of urgency and anticipation. At the conference we must create a consensus on the need for action. After the conference, we must begin the implementation of new programs.

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"Each country, regardless of its wealth, geographic location or social system, should come to Vancouver to teach and to learn. Each country will benefit in proportion to its own commitment and interest. But implementation of the ideas and solutions developed at the conference will be entirely in national hands.

"Obviously we do not intend to discourage international aid to countries for their settlement improvements. The opposite is true. We hope that the very definition and acceptance of human settlement policy as a central and explicit government concern will be followed by a similar rethinking and reappraisal by intergovernmental and international organizations of all kinds, especially the banking institutions.

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"In all the development plans that I have seen or heard about, there are considerations for separate settlement factors such as housing or health. But what governments must do in the future is to have an over-all policy of human settlements taking all these aspects together. And this should be an integral part of national development planning.

"What I hope to see come out of Vancouver, and what I am certain was envisaged by the General Assembly of the United Nations when this conference was first conceived, can be summarized in three simple points:

(1) To elicit from every nation a pledge to improve the quality of life in all its human settlements through a new recognition of need.

(2) To show every nation how it can attack its human settlement problems within the context of over-all development planning.

(3) To assure every nation willing to act that it can count on the cooperation and support of the international community...."