

I can certainly confirm, Mr. President, that we in the North respond in the same way. I think this was very clear in our messages from both the OECD Ministerial Meeting and the Williamsburg Summit. At the former, we gave ourselves two tasks in relation to our approach to this conference - first, to ensure that all countries would benefit from the economic recovery now getting underway; and, secondly, to recognize that recovery would not in itself have sufficient automatic benefits for the Third World, and that we needed to work together to promote development and tackle the structural problems of underdevelopment and poverty.

In Williamsburg, also, we paid considerable attention to what we appreciated was the increasingly important Third World dimension of our economic issues. You will notice, therefore, that in our 10-point economic declaration from Williamsburg, the problems and interests of developing countries are mentioned in the majority of items. The theme advocated for this conference by our distinguished Secretary General - "recovery and development" - could not, therefore, be more appropriate. It seems to meet admirably the needs of this moment and sums up the dynamic interdependence which we all accept. The responsibilities lie with each of us, whatever our wealth, stage of development or political system, to contribute to this global goal. The key question, however, is how we translate this theme into our work over the next few weeks.

There is no question in my mind that UNCTAD has an important role. When I last spoke to an UNCTAD audience, at the 4th Conference in Nairobi in 1976, I applauded this institution as having established itself as an indispensable element in the system of mechanisms created for the deliberation of international economic issues and the search for solutions. Since then, UNCTAD has continued its quest for a better and more equitable world order and, through its continuing machinery, has become an accepted and established point for regular discussion and pursuit of further understanding and action on the pressing issues of trade and development in the North/South context. Yet, if we want to be frank with each other, I think we have to admit that the reputation of UNCTAD would improve if as member governments we treated our deliberations with greater respect for the institution and conducted ourselves with greater restraint. The fault, of course, lies not with the institution but ourselves as member governments. Too often we tend to come together to show off our rhetoric, speak to the galleries, play our word games, pass meaningless resolutions, blame each other for our misfortunes, inject extraneous issues, and go home with mistaken satisfaction that our words have somehow contributed to a better world.