

the most hopeful signs of leadership. Well, of course, I have to say right back here in Canada. But we also have to say that the new administration in the U.S. is probably, from the point of view of the issues we dealt with at Rio, the most hopeful thing that has happened. I think we are going to see some important and positive consequences from that.

In the longer term there is, in my view, a real basis for hope that the Earth Summit has laid the foundations for the changes in public attitudes and the political mind set necessary to achieve the transition to sustainable development.

If there is little encouragement to be drawn thus far from the response of governments, there is a great deal of promise in what is happening at the grass-roots level. Seminars, conferences and new initiatives in follow-up of Rio are proliferating. I have had literally hundreds of invitations myself, and I know that this is only a fraction of what is actually going on.

People throughout the world who came to Rio, or participated in this process, are going back home now, fired with the determination to keep the flame of Rio alive and to hold their leaders accountable for the agreements they reached there.

It seems that Rio has produced a broad and growing constituency throughout the world, committed to fulfilment of the hopes and expectations it engendered. I believe that this grass-roots movement will infuse the political process with new energies that will, I hope, lift us out of the politics of the status quo in which we are still largely mired.

The momentum generated at Rio must be maintained if the global partnership required to forge a new world order is to be realized. The main elements of this global partnership are, first, a new economic regime. Rio was a conference primarily on the need for economic change. The economic system that has produced such unprecedented levels of growth and prosperity for the societies of the industrialized world, which were the first to modernize, has also produced severe imbalances and disparities that are simply not compatible with a secure and sustainable world order.