

contained in the Declaration of Rio and the ensuing action program incorporated in Agenda 21?

It has to be acknowledged that the short-term signs are not particularly encouraging. There is a tendency to lapse back to business as usual, particularly in light of the immediate and pressing political and economic concerns with which virtually all governments are preoccupied. When the leaders of the world got back from Rio they found their "in baskets" full of "urgent" tags. Obviously they have had to respond to these, and at the Group of Seven (G-7) meeting, the World Bank meeting and some of the other meetings that have followed Rio, there has not been the degree of commitment to implementing the agreements at Rio that I had hoped.

In particular, the large-scale commitments of new and additional financing resources required for implementation of Agenda 21 will be difficult to come by. A number of donor countries have recently cut back on their official development assistance. I have to say that this includes Canada, which, at the same time, however, has announced significant support for implementation of Agenda 21.

The simplistic "jobs versus environment" rhetoric in the United States election campaign and resurgent parochialism in most industrialized societies tend to erode the political commitment to the environment at home and prospects for increases in foreign assistance. It clearly would not be realistic under these conditions to expect the kind of fundamental changes in the existing order called for at Rio to emerge quickly or easily from the current situation. However, the election of a new administration in the United States promises a renewal of its leadership, which was so much missed at Rio and will be so necessary for implementation of the agreements reached there.

Of course, we can move quite a distance without U.S. leadership. We showed that when more than 150 nations signed the biodiversity convention to which the U.S. took strong objection.

On the other hand, we all recognize that you cannot really have effective agreements at the international level without the United States in the final analysis. I was asked the other day where I see