

All members of this conference must participate in seeking solutions if we are to meet the challenge which faces us. It is our hope and expectation that, as a result of our efforts, the commissions we shall have established will be able to approach their tasks with confidence and will find that they can bring the full benefits of ingenuity and realism to bear on the four sets of issues before them.

We believe that this ministerial meeting must give urgent consideration to a number of crucial procedural questions so that the substantive work of the conference can proceed in the commissions in the best possible way. In the few days we are here together, we shall not be able to settle everything, but we shall be able to deal with the essentials; we shall not reconcile all diverging views, but we must ensure that in the dialogue we thus begin most conflicts can be resolved. We shall not create a universal utopia, but we must see to it that each country's hopes can be reconciled with a quest for progress by the world community as a whole.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

It is with determination and an acute awareness of the responsibilities involved that I assume the role you have entrusted to me. I know that my distinguished colleague and I shall be able to count on your assistance and understanding in directing the proceedings of this conference, but I also ask for your indulgence. The uniqueness of our task is bound to give rise to unprecedented puzzles to your co-chairmen, whether of substance or procedure. Let us bring to bear on them not only our intellects and ingenuity, but also a genuine spirit of goodwill. I consider myself fortunate to be sharing the chairmanship of this conference with so distinguished an international statesman as Dr. Manuel Pérez Guerrero, and I look forward to our work together. Again, let me express to you, Mr. President, and to the Government of France, our indebtedness for the important role played by your country in giving birth to this conference and for acting as its host.