

lion; some estimates suggest that there will be around ten billion people on earth by the end of this century.

If we look, in this context, at the culture of excess that modernity has spawned, we see that we are in deep trouble indeed. While it is true that the “limits” of the planet have not yet been reached, our planet’s resources are not infinite. As our population grows to 10 billion, and as prosperity finally spreads throughout the developing world, we will have a critical problem if consumption continues to grow at the same rate and with the same pattern as it has over the past 150 years.

It is my desire that we have not just sustainable development but a sustainable prosperity. Modern society’s culture of excess—which was spurred by the confidence of the past—must give way if we are to achieve this goal. Building wealth is an objective all nations can share, but this process needs to be undertaken with a conscience if it is to bring truly sustainable prosperity. Choices will have to be made.

For instance, the production of just one kilo of beef requires 2,000 square feet of land and 100,000 litres of fresh water, a precious and scarce natural resource. In comparison, the production of one kilo of soy—which yields comparable nutritional value to beef—requires less than one percent the amount of land and less than one percent the amount of water.

Under current conditions, how can we persist in our dietary habits? And, if we are going to have one billion cars and SUVs on the planet with all the pollution that this entails, we have another problem.

Development is a product of confidence, but we also need to develop a conscience to enlighten our consumption and assure that it does not become unrestrained.

I am very committed to the WTO’s role in achieving sustainable prosperity. I believe that the current round of WTO negotiations—which is referred to as the Doha Development Agenda—will help to spread development and prosperity and the rule of law. But we must also make certain that this progress occurs in a sustainable manner.

Confidence is important in an economic sense, but there is more than that to our common humanity. We need an ethic of