

growth of small and medium-sized companies, as well as vocational training and education within these companies, and considered how we might benefit from these successes. Best practices in our countries could also be useful examples for developing and transition-market economies, as development of small and medium-sized enterprises favors creation of jobs and social stability, disseminates entrepreneurial capacities and helps to promote and diversify exports. We will pursue our work in other areas.

Global Issues

11. Even as global integration and rapid advances in communications and transportation have spurred economic growth, these same trends have exposed us to complex problems that defy unilateral solutions. In recent years our Summits have devoted increasing attention to our cooperative efforts to confront these problems.

Environment

12. This is a pivotal year for efforts to promote sustainable development and protect the environment. We are determined to address the environmental challenges that will affect the quality of life of future generations and to enhance public awareness, especially among our youth, of the importance of advancing sustainable development goals.

UN General Assembly Special Session

13. We discussed the progress that has been made since the 1992 Rio Earth Summit in defining and promoting sustainable development, and we commit ourselves to taking action in areas critical to advancing this agenda. Sustainable development demands the full integration of environment, economic and social policies; should be based upon democratic governance and respect for human rights; and should have poverty eradication as one of its ultimate objectives. In this connection, we reaffirm the vital contribution of civil society. We urge the United Nations General Assembly, at its Special Session to be held next week, to reaffirm and give impetus to the Rio commitments, to take stock of implementation since Rio, and, most importantly, to develop a manageable list of priority issues to address in future work on sustainable development.

Climate Change

14. Overwhelming scientific evidence links the build-up of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere to changes in the global climate system. If current trends continue into the next century, unacceptable impacts on human health and the global environment are likely. Reversing these trends will require a sustained global effort over several decades, with the involvement of all our citizens, and changes in our patterns of consumption and production.

15. We are determined to take the lead and show seriousness of purpose in strengthening international efforts to confront climate change. Our ultimate goal must be to stabilize atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gasses at an acceptable level. This will require efficient and cost-effective policies and measures sufficient to lead to a significant reduction in emissions.

16. International cooperation will be essential. At the Third Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Kyoto we must forge a strong agreement that is consistent with the Berlin Mandate and that contains quantified and legally-binding emission targets. We intend to commit to meaningful, realistic and equitable targets that will result in reductions of greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. The agreement must ensure transparency and accountability and allow Participants flexibility in the manner in which they meet their targets.