

EVERY DAY THE FACE OF THE WORLD IS TRANSFORMED - POLITICALLY, ECONOMICALLY AND PHYSICALLY. AT TIMES, CHANGE IS ABRUPT AND CONSPICUOUS. MORE OFTEN IT IS EVIDENT ONLY WITH THE PASSAGE OF TIME. WE WELCOME IT FOR THE BENEFITS IT CAN BRING BUT FEAR IT FOR THE HAZARDS IT CAN POSE.

HOW CAN WE NOT WELCOME THE DIMINISHED TENSIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST OR THE STRENGTH OF THE DEMOCRATIC IMPULSE WE SEE GROWING IN THIS CONTINENT? HOW CAN WE NOT WELCOME THE DYNAMISM AND COMMERCIAL SUCCESS OF THE NEWLY INDUSTRIALIZING ECONOMIES OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC?

SIMULTANEOUSLY THOUGH, WE ARE JUSTIFIABLY CONCERNED BY THE INCREASINGLY EVIDENT DAMAGE INFLICTED ON OUR ECOSYSTEM AND BY THE THREAT TO DEMOCRACY IN DEBT-BURDENED NATIONS OF THE THIRD WORLD.

WELCOME OR NOT, RAPID OR SLOW, CHANGE IS INEVITABLE. WHAT IS NOT IS HOW WE RESPOND TO IT. CHANGE CHALLENGES US ALL, AS INDIVIDUALS, AS GOVERNMENTS, AS MEMBERS OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS SUCH AS THIS ONE. RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY DEMANDS OF US IMAGINATION, INNOVATION AND INITIATIVE AND MORE THAN EVER GLOBAL INTERDEPENDENCE REQUIRES US TO RESPOND COLLECTIVELY SO THAT WE MIGHT TOGETHER MANAGE PROBLEMS BEYOND THE CAPACITY OF ANY ONE GOVERNMENT TO RESOLVE SUCCESSFULLY.