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WELTUNION DER KATHOLISCHEN FRAUEN ORGANISATIONEN

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SECRÉTARIAT :

98, rue de l'Université, 75 Paris-VII<sup>e</sup>

Téléphone : 705-22-21

Compte Bancaire : CRÉDIT LYONNAIS

Ag. X (51.843 W)

C. C. P. PARIS 7587-28

323 East 47th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10017

June 3, 1971

His Excellency  
U Thant  
Secretary-General  
United Nations, New York

*2/6*

Dear Mr. Secretary-General:

The non-governmental organizations accredited to the UN Office of Public Information are deeply appreciative of your address to them on the occasion of the annual OPI/NGO Conference.

As you so well know, the NGOs are committed to promoting the "three major recipes" for achieving the objectives of the Charter, as well as to being "good believers in the United Nations." Your moving words to us, and especially your expression of friendship, will remain a source of great inspiration and encouragement to all of us as we keep working for the goals to which you have contributed, and are contributing so much.

With grateful best wishes,

*Alba Zizzamia*

Alba Zizzamia  
Chairman, 1971  
OPI/NGO Conference

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ANNEX II

TEXT OF ADDRESS BY SECRETARY-GENERAL U THANT AT ANNUAL

OPI/NGO CONFERENCE, UN HEADQUARTERS, 22 MAY 1968

I am very happy indeed to have this opportunity of meeting with you and sharing some thoughts on some of the major problems facing the United Nations and, for that matter, the human community.

I understand that the theme of your Conference this year is "Trade, Aid and People in an Inter-Dependent World". In my view, no theme could be more relevant to these tense times than the one you have chosen.

First, I want to express my very sincere thanks to all the NGO's, to all of you, for your dedication to the principles of the Charter, for your identification with the aims and objectives of the United Nations, and for your consistent efforts to disseminate information on the activities of the United Nations and its sister agencies. You will of course agree with me that the increasing interest taken by the peoples of the world in the activities of the United Nations is due in no small measure to your constant endeavours to perform your functions as outlined in your respective Constitutions.

I believe that the difference between the Charter of the United Nations and the Covenant of the League of Nations is worth recalling. The Covenant of the League of Nations used the words "The High Contracting Parties". The Charter of the United Nations uses the words "We the Peoples of the United Nations". In my view, that is a very significant difference. All the NGO's represent, without any doubt, the peoples of the United Nations. When, twenty-two years ago, the founding fathers said that the United Nations was to be established to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind", they were not addressing themselves to the Governments alone; they wanted the peoples of the United Nations also to contribute towards that great task of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war. When the founding fathers said that one of the primary objectives of the United Nations would be to "promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom", they were not addressing themselves exclusively to the Governments. In my view, they wanted the peoples of the United Nations also to be closely involved in this great task.

Since the theme of this year's Conference is "Trade, Aid and People in an Inter-Dependent World", I hope it will be relevant if I make some brief ob-

servations on the Development Decade, which will soon come to a close, and on the endeavours and arrangements being made by the United Nations and its sister agencies to launch a second Development Decade.

I want to draw your attention to the report submitted to the entire membership by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, Dr. Prebisch, on the Second UNCTAD Conference which took place in New Delhi earlier this year. I would commend that report to your consideration. I am sure you will agree with me that it would not be proper for me to assess the results of UNCTAD II, held in New Delhi, inasmuch as the Secretary-General of that Agency has himself done so. I would, however, wish to give you a brief idea of my thinking on the subject of the Development Decade.

The first Development Decade, launched in 1961, has given us an inspirational impetus, has defined the issues clearly and set the priorities. Opinions may differ about the success or lack of success of the first Development Decade, but in my view it has set humanity on the right path and has cleared the ground for launching the second Development Decade. In order to launch the second Development Decade successfully, some basic principles and guide-lines must be borne in mind.

First, the second Development Decade must be based on the concept of a global strategy, a strategy which recognizes that this small planet of ours -- despite its divisions into North and South, into developed and developing, into rich and poor -- is in fact an indivisible entity. That fact must be recognized. This global strategy must also recognize that humanity, despite its divisions on the basis of race, creed or religion, is an indivisible whole. I think it is essential for all of us to recognize that basic fact.

Secondly, we have to remember that the national interest of any country cannot remain within the boundaries of its own territory. I repeat: the national interest cannot remain tightly inside the national boundaries. The future of every nation depends primarily on international security, international peace and the development of international resources. In my view, that is a very important principle which all of us must bear in mind.

Thirdly, humanity has now reached the crossroads of human history. This is a time when both the developed and the developing countries have to make a choice: either to come together to plan for a prosperous future to their mutual benefit, or to lead humanity to an unplanned society and to a chaotic future.

That is the choice before both the developed and the developing countries. If common sense prevails the choice of both the developed and the developing countries will, I am sure, be to plan collectively for mutual prosperity.

These are my observations in relation not only to the launching of the second Development Decade, but also to the general subject of the human situation today.

At the risk of repetition, I should like to make some remarks that I have already made on several previous occasions.

In my view, there are four major causes of tensions in the world today. First, tensions are caused by political differences -- in other words, by differences due to political ideologies or convictions.

Secondly, tensions are caused by the disparity between the rich countries and the poor countries, between the developed and the developing, between the North and the South. It has been common knowledge for some time now that we are apt to think of the world as divided into East and West, on the basis of ideological differences. In my view, that division is on the way out. Humanity has to coexist peacefully in spite of differences on political ideologies. Humanity has to coexist peacefully in the same way that, as I have said before, all the great religions have to coexist peacefully. But what is most important and most significant, and in the long run what is most explosive, is the widening gulf between the rich and the poor. As everyone knows, since the end of the Second World War the rich countries have become richer and the poor countries have become poorer. The trend is still in the same direction. The gulf is still widening. It is one of the primary tasks of the United Nations and its sister agencies to try to narrow the gulf. It is one of the primary functions of the United Nations and its family of agencies to try to raise the living standards of the peoples, particularly of those in the developing countries. This great task of narrowing the gulf cannot wait for the solution of some of the economic problems faced by some of the industrialized countries. It cannot wait for the end of political conflicts. It cannot wait even for the termination of the armed conflicts. The problems are urgent and the remedy must be sought urgently. If both the developed and the developing countries do not come to realize that the widening gulf will lead humanity from one crisis to another, more serious crisis, I am very pessimistic about the future of humanity. This widening gulf is, in my

view, the most potent and most important source of tensions in the world today.

The third cause of tensions in the world today is, I believe, related to what is called discrimination on the basis of the colour of the skin. Racial discrimination in any part of the world -- or what is sometimes called apart-  
heid -- is one of the very serious causes of tensions in the world today, as it will be in the world tomorrow. This also has to be tackled, not only by the Governments but also by the peoples of the United Nations.

The fourth cause of tensions in the world today is, I think, related to what I would call the legacy of colonial systems, the remnants of colonial systems. We are witnessing problems, particularly in Africa, which I would relate to the colonial past. They are still causes of tensions in the world today.

Of those four causes of tensions in the world today, your deliberations now and in the days to come will be related primarily to the second cause; tensions due to economic disparities, between the rich and the poor, between the developed and the developing countries. In that great task of narrowing the gulf, the attitudes of the Governments are, of course, of primary importance; but the attitudes of the peoples of the United Nations will also have very great significance. I think that the basic attitude which all of us should have, either in the political field or in the economic field or in the social field, is related primarily to education. We belong to the old generation, more or less. The hope for the future lies essentially with the new generation. As you know, I was involved in the educational development of my country for a number of years before the war. Although I have been out of the education service of my country for some years now, I continue to take a very great interest in educational developments, in educational concepts and in the philosophies behind those concepts. I am increasingly convinced of one thing: the educational systems in many parts of the world need a thorough overhaul. I am sure that some of you will remember some observations I made on this point on a previous occasion. I likened education to the food we eat. Those of you who know something about dietetics know that if we are to grow, the food we eat must contain three essential ingredients: proteins, carbohydrates and fats. I think that this is recognized by the medical community. In the same way, in my view there should be at least three essential ingredients in the education we impart to our young boys and girls, so that the next generation will be able to shoulder its responsibilities effectively.

The first ingredient in a sound and sensible system of education is what I would call the vocational aspect. I think it is necessary for all educational systems to train a boy or girl in how to do a job. We have to train the young children to become doctors, or engineers, or lawyers, or teachers, or bankers or politicians. They have to be trained for a certain type of vocation. That is a must.

The second essential ingredient in a sound and sensible system of education is what I would call the social aspect. In other words, we have to train our young boys and girls in how to be good citizens -- that is, education for citizenship. And when I say that, I do not mean that a child should be trained to be a good citizen of only New York City or New York State or the United States, or any other country. He must be trained to be a good citizen of the whole human community. I think that is essential in these times, particularly when we are living under the shadow of the hydrogen bomb.

The third essential ingredient of a sound and sensible system of education is related to what I would call a certain scale of values; what is best in all of us, what could be regarded as the key to all the great religions. In other words, this aspect of education is related to the moral and spiritual development of man. I think our children must be trained to value and cherish the moral and spiritual virtues or qualities, such as humility, modesty, compassion, love, the philosophy of live-and-let-live, and the desire to understand the other person's point of view. Those, in my opinion, are the basic teachings of all the great religions of the world.

Those three essential ingredients must be ingrained in any system of education anywhere. Only then will the next generation be able to face the future with hope and confidence.

In conclusion, I want to share a thought with you which I have shared with many other friends in the past when I have dealt not only with economic problems but also with political and social problems. I refer to the paramount importance of the human factor. I think that the human factor is much more essential to our approach to problems than the political factor or the military factor or any other factor. And when I say that the human factor is important, I mean that we have to have a revival of humanism in our hearts. I would say this to illustrate my point: A dead child in the arms of its grandmother is my child. A wounded soldier -- whether American or Vietnamese or Jew or Arab -- a wounded soldier

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with inevitable thoughts of his home, his family, his village, his town, his country, is my son. That is my approach to all problems.

Ladies and gentlemen, I thank you once again for your patient attention.

TO: The Secretary-General  
A:

FOR ACTION		POUR SUITE A DONNER
FOR APPROVAL		POUR APPROBATION
FOR SIGNATURE		POUR SIGNATURE
PREPARE DRAFT		PROJET A REDIGER
FOR COMMENTS		POUR OBSERVATIONS
MAY WE CONFER?		POURRIONS-NOUS EN PARLER?
YOUR ATTENTION		VOTRE ATTENTION
AS DISCUSSED		COMME CONVENU
AS REQUESTED		SUITE A VOTRE DEMANDE
NOTE AND FILE		NOTER ET CLASSER
NOTE AND RETURN		NOTER ET RETOURNER
FOR INFORMATION		POUR INFORMATION

You may wish to have this  
information.

✓

Date:  
18 May 1971  
CR.13 (11-64)

FROM: V. P. Pavlichenko  
DE: Director, ERD/OPI *VP*

Background Note

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE FOR THE  
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

25 and 26 May 1971  
Conference Room 2

United Nations Headquarters

Theme of the Conference: "The United Nations and the Human Environment"

The two-day Annual Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations is arranged by the Office of Public Information in co-operation with the non-governmental organizations listed with OPI.

The aim of this year's Conference is to stimulate NGO thinking and action in support of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. The NGO Conference will focus on the international dimensions of the environment problem; the activities already undertaken by the UN family of organizations in this field, and the potential for future international co-operation.

Following the Secretary-General's address, there will be a speaker on the international dimensions of the environment problem; and a panel discussion on development in relation to the environment. Workshops will be held in the afternoon to provide participants with substantive background information on major subject areas to be discussed at Stockholm.

On the second day, there will be an address by Mr. Maurice Strong, and a panel discussion, in which Dr. Margaret Mead and Mr. Elvis Stahr will participate, on techniques for information, education and action by NGOs on environmental issues.

There will also be a Conference luncheon at which Mr. Probyn Vivian Marsh, Deputy Permanent Representative of Jamaica, will speak on the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

The closing address will be given by Ambassador Edvard Hambro (Norway).

..... Attached are copies of the provisional agenda and of the Secretary-General's  
..... last three addresses to the Annual OPI/NGO Conferences.

These Conferences bring together international and national representatives of influential business, industry and trade union organizations, religious and women's groups, professional organizations, youth groups, veterans and service associations. Most of these organizations have either part-time or full-time representatives at UN Headquarters.

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