



United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Seminar “Human Security and Science and Technology”

Inauguration Statement of the UNIDO Director-General
Mr. Carlos Magariños
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I consider today's discussion on human security and science and technology to be very important and relevant. In preparation for the seminar I have looked through a big number of materials on human security. I found a lot on peace and human security, human rights and security, environment and human security, gender and human security, human security and development, globalization and human security etc., but nothing on human security and science and technology. It somehow demonstrates how new and unexplored in fact the topic is. This makes our discussions today even more important. In this context, and I feel myself rather free in addressing the issue.

The issue of human security and science and technology is very broad. I would like to make some observations in this regard through the prism of economic development and industry in particular, with reference to some of UNIDO activities.

I believe that the term human security is closely connected with stability and sustainability, another words with economic security. I would even say that stability and sustainability are the integrated parts of human security. One cannot promote human security without promoting socio-economic stability and sustainable development. To address the issue of human security properly, one should not neglect the economic security.

It is becoming more and more evident that a stable and healthy industrial sector is essential for social stability and peace. It is industry that eventually creates a stable, peace oriented middle-class. Successful industrial development can provide a sound base for sustainable growth in incomes and employment and thus promote national stability and security. It is also through industrial development that more skilled jobs are created. And it is industry that both pushes back the frontiers of scientific and technological development and uses it to the betterment of mankind in general.

From the mid-1980s to the early 1990s, a number of economists developed the new endogenous growth models. Their basic finding was that technical progress is an endogenous factor and that this factor is influenced not just by market forces but also by policy. Finally, they postulated that technical progress is at the core of the process of economic growth.

Manufacturing industry is the main vehicle for *technological progress* – the application of science to production and for the use of technology in productive

activity. Governments and economists have long considered this to be the main benefit of industrialization.

In recent years, modern information- and communication-based services have also attracted significant innovative activity; however, this has been possible only because of technological advances in the hardware of information processing and telecommunications. Thus the chain connection: industrial development – sustained economic growth – economic security – human security is quite obvious.

Of course the industry not only creates opportunities and advantages but also problems. One of the major problems that directly refer to the human security is environment and energy. Throughout history all systems for the production of goods have entailed some form of environmental deterioration. What is absolutely unique is the scale that this problem has reached in our times. Some of our outmoded production techniques have generated a global threat to the ecological stability of the planet.

The most disturbing problems in this area can be broken down in two groups: climate change and changes in the biosphere. Climate change is already a matter of public concern and debate.

The international community probably cannot afford to continue lengthy negotiations on these matters for much longer. It has to find the way, to the extent possible, to factor these variables into the price system in order to generate incentives to develop clean technologies in all areas including energy. In my view, the fact that this is very much a problem of intergenerational welfare should be better recognized in the Development Agenda.

Environmental security is very much connected with the food security. All the principal changes in the earth's physical conditions – eroding soils, shrinking forests, deteriorating rangelands, expanding deserts, acid rain, stratospheric ozone depletion, the building of greenhouse gases, air pollution and the loss of biological diversity – are affecting food production negatively. Although the phenomenal increase in yields in worldwide agricultural production can be traced back to modern technological package, numerous problems are associated with it. Green revolution technology includes heavy use of pesticides, fertilizers, hybrid seeds that increases the dangers of persistent contamination of food and water supplies. Another aspect of the green revolution is the use of biotechnology, which is a great opportunity for the

development and at the same time big challenge. One should guarantee that its application in food and agricultural industry is not detrimental for human health and environment. Here a sufficient attention should be paid to standardization and quality of the products which is one of UNIDO's priorities. UNIDO is also addressing the issue through regulation of biotechnology, access to proprietary technology and support for strategic research.

I would also like to say some words about the role of private sector. It is in strengthening the capacities of the private sector of developing countries to mobilize resources – skills, capital and knowledge – where we see the biggest promises of public policy. International organizations need to continue finding the best means of assisting Governments and the private sector to design and implement institutions and policies that will facilitate the mobilization of resources for growth.

The complexity and rapid changes in technology demand careful attention by both policy makers and enterprises. The new global economy has strong knowledge and technology base. This requires availability and creation of infrastructure that would support technology usage, adoption and innovation. UNIDO with its global role and outreach has been active in this field and is in a position to provide assistance in meeting the challenge.

Technology – its transfer, up-take and adaptation to local needs – will be crucially important in the years to come. UNIDO is an organization that has a lot of experience with technology transfer. We intend to harness this experience to demonstrate leadership within the UN system by orchestrating, together with major partners of the private sector, a Global Technology Transfer Needs Assessment. This assessment would be an action-oriented study and consultation process intended to break new ground. I believe that the whole issue of the role of science and technology for sustainable development should be properly reflected in the Development Agenda.

And finally I would like to make a following remark. The terrible terrorist acts in New York and Washington divided our lives in two parts: what have been before and what will be after. To defeat the evil we must not only eliminate the roots of terrorism but also the soil that supports it. And that is poverty and instability. Through the prism of industrial development I tried to demonstrate the role of science and technology for sustainable development and poverty alleviation and thus for human security.