

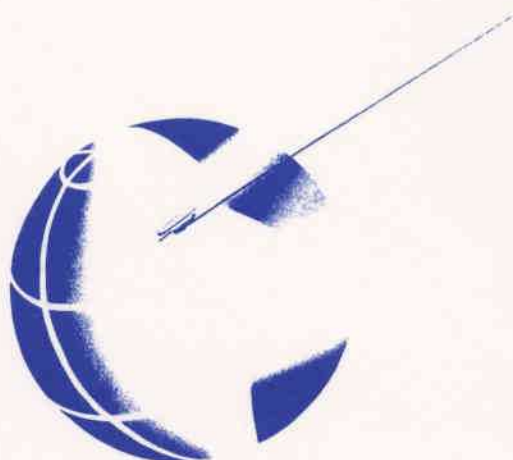
# *POPULATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE* *INDEPENDENT COMMISSION*

Statement  
by

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President of the Independent Commission  
for Population and Quality of Life

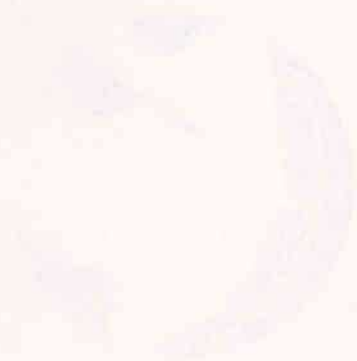
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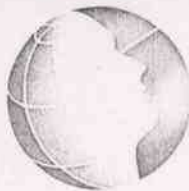
*Fundação Cuidar o Futuro*  
**International Conference  
on Population and Development**



Cairo,  
5-13 September 1994

# Fundação Cuidar o Futuro





STATEMENT

BY THE

*INDEPENDENT COMMISSION FOR  
POPULATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE*

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

at the

International Conference  
on Population and Development

Cairo, 7 September 1994





# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Cairo, 7 September 1994

Statement by

The Independent Commission for Population and Quality of Life



## I. POPULATION/DEVELOPMENT/ENVIRONMENT

### Population: the Human Factor

The reason why we are gathered here in Cairo is not to control population, but to enhance the lives of the people of the world.

The ultimate goal of population and development, the central theme of this conference, is to accord an improved quality of life to the people of the world. The aim is not to count people but to ensure that people count in development; that *both their material and non-material security must be the first priority of development*. The Commission has held consultations across all the major regions of the globe to ask the people their views on quality of life, and this has been the message that they have strongly conveyed to us.

We must recognize that we cannot write one simple equation which encapsulates population and quality of life for all the world's people. Clearly, quality of life is a subjective notion, as all individuals have different characteristics, and their own dreams and aspirations determined by their life experiences and their socio-economic circumstances which are seldom directly comparable. That said, in the same way that the international community today accepts the existence of universal and basic human rights, we have to recognize that quality of life can also be measured by objective and universal characteristics.

These objective characteristics are not just the material, basic needs to which we paid a great deal of attention in past decades, but also include the essentials of human resource development: improved education and health, and, for the young adults in particular, better employment opportunities. The concept "quality of life" also embraces a wider awareness of, and better measures to combat, the widespread uncertainties and insecurities that many people feel unable to banish from their lives.

Material progress to date has typically been achieved by a more and more intense exploitation of nature, thereby making the problems of development even more complex. Today, the evidence of environmental deterioration throws into disrepute any paradigm based on the unlimited exploitation of natural resources. The planet's frontiers are finite.

Modes of production and consumption are currently leading to a significant reduction in the world's fertile zones, in the water reserves in aquifers, in biodiversity and in non renewable resources. Beyond this, human activities have resulted in environmental pressures leading



to toxic emissions, and to changes in the atmosphere. Given the current rate of exploitation of natural resources, both the ecological balance and the survival of the most vulnerable populations have already been put at risk.

For at least thirty years, however, the international community has been attempting to formulate policies which would permit a full scale attack on what is a complex problem: how to permit the world to develop, yet to protect its environment, and at the same time to improve the quality of life of its population. The emphases to date, however, have been on programmes directed towards achieving economic growth, rather than towards the improvement of the quality of life of people. To allow people the development they need and to respect the environment requires an holistic approach, yet one which is also focused.

These attempts have been made more difficult because they have been introduced at a time when the world has grown from 3 billion to 5.5 billion; a further 3 billion will have to be cared for, as we try to make room for another human world. It should be remembered, however, that proportionately the growth of the world's population will come more and more from the huge generations already born and living among us. The distribution of these cohorts is far from even. In 1990, with less than a quarter of the world's population the North was the home of almost half the globe's elderly. Against that four fifths of the world's children were in the South.

These constitute an interlinked series of problems which are central to this conference. To address them in a focused way, we must review three issues:

- The urgent questions of population and quality of life to which we must seek solutions.
- The scope and coherence of the policies which may provide these solutions.
- The structural and ethical questions surrounding the immediate issues we are dealing with here.

### **The Urgent Questions of Population Balances**

This conference has most appropriately emphasized the urgent issue of population growth. In its draft plan, it has also provided a detailed set of strategies with which to address these questions, which very much relate to quality of life.

This emphasis on population growth may, however, have masked other population changes which could well be equally - if not more - important for quality of life in the longer run. In particular, radical changes in population composition are now becoming evident, and are impinging seriously on the quality of people's lives.

Some of the changes in composition have been produced, among other things, artificially by the misapplication of new technologies. In some countries the sex ratio at birth has been grossly distorted by such means, a state of affairs this conference must deplore.





There are other changes that are due to more natural processes, most notably the fact that women out-survive men. There is a need, of course, to ensure that women maintain and improve their levels of survival, but at the same time we must attempt to decrease the sex imbalances at older ages by improving male survival.

Perhaps most importantly there are other major shifts in age structure which are due to past successes with family planning and health programmes. Most notably among these shifts is the fact that the world is currently facing what might be termed a 'youth wave'; one-fifth of the world's people are within the narrow range of ages between 15 and 24 years. The impact of this wave is not evenly distributed; it is currently falling most heavily on the Asian and Latin American countries that have already seen significant fertility declines. More than 22 per cent of Mexicans and Thais were at these ages in 1990. But the pressure on these countries will start to diminish within a decade or so, by which stage the proportion at these ages will have dropped by almost 20 per cent.

The heaviest pressures will then be felt, instead, by those countries with continuing high fertility, often the very poorest, as in sub-Saharan Africa, whose continuing high proportions at these ages will actually increase early next century. In 2010, 21 per cent of all Nigerians will be at the youth ages, seeking employment and starting their families.

By contrast, early next century, the rest of the world, much of Asia, Latin America and the developed countries, will then see a process of middle-ageing.

As we leave Cairo, we must implement policies and programmes which relate to three urgent but more or less sequential sets of problems. In order of urgency, these are:

- First, **growth**, which the ICPD programme of action already addresses.
- Second, **the youth wave**, this decade and next.
- Third, **middle ageing** which will follow on from the youth wave.
- (**Real ageing** is in fact a distant fourth, which will become critical two or three decades into the next century.)

Interacting with all of these shifts are other compositional changes. Among these are the divisions between those people who are economically active and those who are dependent on them, a distinction extending even to persons of working ages, and today, made more apparent in the North by the erosion of the welfare state. There are also other cultural and ethnic differences, including those produced by the large-scale migrations we are seeing today. *For policy makers, these increasingly complex population dynamics must be taken into account in all aspects of planning for improvements in quality of life.*







## II. POPULATION POLICIES

In order to address these urgent issues, and particularly the youth wave, and middle ageing, we must first develop a new approach to population policy. In the past, population policies have often been viewed as singular interventions to limit growth or population movement. This was a mistaken view of what population policies should be.

Today it is accepted that they must also deal with issues which are less directly related to demographic change: the labour market, education, health, social security, and the like. Moreover, they must also deal with responses which relate to adjustments to demographic change, notably to the youth wave, to middle ageing, to ageing and to the integration of immigrants.

### The Role of Individual Attitudes and Choices

Fortunately, in the Cairo document, we have passed well beyond the stage of seeing population policy simply as some form of population control. Instead it addresses issues of quality of life. *The Cairo Conference constitutes a landmark in another sense: its underlining of the importance of individual rights.*

In fact, as is evident in the Cairo Draft Programme of Action, what is critical to population policies is the issue of individual attitudes and choices. The women's movements deserve a great deal of the credit for raising these issues. Many of those involved with population activities realised that they had to become more responsive to people's needs; that enabling people to have better choices is the best means of achieving the ends they were seeking.

The Cairo Programme of Action is at its best in stressing people's choices as the central concern in relation to fertility, reproduction and sexuality. But it is misleading to talk of "people's choices", and not at the same time to recognize the pervasive and persisting discrimination against women throughout the world. For many, such discrimination has been life-long, from the cradle to the grave.

The term "people's choices" in relation to reproduction and fertility, above all, has to mean that women should be able to realize their choices. Here gender equity is not the same as equality. There are circumstances where women's reproductive choices should count for more than those of men. These concern in particular the health and social risks which women, and only women, encounter as a result of childbearing.

Empowering women in relation to their reproductive choices cannot be viewed in isolation from the rest of their lives. The "enabling environment" - as a woman at the Commission's second consultation in Mali called it - has to be much broader and deeper. This requires addressing the customary and other laws that determine a woman's property and inheritance; the social rules that shape what she can, and cannot, aspire to achieve in her life; the manner in which she is treated in the community, and by governments and other service





providers; the employment opportunities she can seek; the help - if any - she can call on in caring for her children. There is a need to move from rhetoric to reality in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Of course, the international community must realize that its implementations implies virtually a political and social revolution in many, indeed most, societies.

Reproductive choices is one example, perhaps a rare example, where *individual attitudes, values and decisions have been accorded a central role in a paradigm of development which sees the quality of life of the people as its prime focus*. The issue is to find a balance between the private nature of reproduction and its public consequences. For too many couples in the world today, reproductive choice is not an option (their only hope is that "God will provide"). It is the duty of this conference to provide mechanisms by which to make choice a possibility.

Unfortunately, all too frequently today our inability to deliver effective means of contraception has a terrible consequence: too many women are forced to seek an abortion, too often at the hands of some backstreet dealer in unhygienic and illegal abortions. It is this traffic which must be stopped, but the key question is how? Certainly, attempts to abolish illegal abortion have failed, even when enforced through the imposition of horrific punishments directed at the victims, the women themselves.

### Carrying Capacity and Caring Capacity as the Frame for Population Policies

We are, however, addressing other issues which go far beyond questions of reproduction. For these we must develop a fresh vision. What we now need are policies which start from two substantive problems: from the carrying capacity of the world's natural resources, and from the caring capacity of the world's human communities. By caring capacity we mean not only socio-economic development, but something more. It is a process which mobilizes the state, the classical agent of public policy, plus the other social actors in these domains, the family, the community, the voluntary agencies and the private sector. We must assess global carrying and caring burdens, and then mobilize to respond to these burdens.

Because of the declarations produced at the Rio Summit, we are more aware of the limits of economic growth and some of the problems of carrying capacity. Indeed policies directed exclusively to economic growth have been shown to have eroded the carrying capacity of the eco-system.

Unfortunately, we are less aware of the problems of caring capacity. One must hope that the Copenhagen Summit will bring these issues as firmly to the attention of the World community, as the Rio Summit did for environmental questions. In the meantime, however, the macro-economic policies put in place to overcome the financial costs of many development programmes have placed stresses on the caring capacities of both the state and its prime partner, the family.



Some of the carrying and caring burdens come from rapid population growth. But increasingly, it is the change in composition, along with jobless economic growth, which will shape caring burdens. Most immediately, it is the burdens associated with the youth wave which are emerging this decade.

*Both caring burdens and carrying burdens have direct implications for quality of life, which must be the most central goal of development. The capacity to respond to these burdens is the role of public policy.*

Our singular concern until now has been over growth, over the fact that we have had "more and more mouths to feed", a demographic factor which has threatened both carrying and caring capacity. Today, however, not only are we facing the prospect of a series of waves, but even growth itself is increasingly coming from the progress of huge birth cohorts through the age structure. As these massive birth cohorts reach critical life cycle phases they will place heavy burdens on those areas of public policy which address these stages - education is directed at the young, employment policies at youth entering the labour market, housing at parents, and so on. The problem is, however, that because of the waves, public policy will itself have to be very flexible in order to respond to the fluctuating levels of need these imply. To add to this, the profile of waves is going to change from one decade to the next. The old planning models of more and more of the same thing must be retired and a rolling plan approach introduced.

Formulation and implementation of public policy should not be the preserve of the state alone. In many countries, in fact, much of caring capacity is provided by the family or the local community. Good public policies focused at particular sectors should aim at either providing this caring capacity, or facilitating other agencies, such as the family, to perform this role. Equally well, good public policy must ensure that strategies being implemented in narrowly economic domains do not undermine the caring capacity of the family and the local community.

At the same time, we must re-activate and re-energize public policies, which care for people: housing, jobs, health, education and security, in all their physical and material manifestations. The pursuit of such integrated social policies has to be valued in its own right - and not as a counter-balance, or afterthought, to macro-economic stabilization programmes. As a result of the decreasing child dependency we are facing, but before age-dependency becomes a major issue, the youth wave effect, and the follow-on of middle ageing, offer us a valuable breathing space. The opportunity has to be taken, above all, to upgrade education and health services.

### **Population Policies as Integrated Policies**

To attend to the massive tasks involved in implementing efficient policies, directed at improving quality of life, we must attempt, once again, to formulate and implement





integrated policies. But integrating population policies into the wider development context forces us to face two major challenges:

- at a technical level with the problems of developing a **holistic approach** - but one with coherent goals, strategies, and planning across sectors - and with people as the central focus of development;
- changing political processes in order to gain **political commitment**.

The ICPD, like UNCED before it, has been notable for the nature of participation of many disparate groups, which have helped to shape political commitment. The way in which such groups outside government have been able to have their voices heard has been a significant factor in developing the programme of action. The women's movements have made an especially vital contribution.

Turning to the more technical level, the integration of policies and programmes has proved extremely difficult everywhere. Perhaps in the past we were too ambitious, our planning too comprehensive and centralized; perhaps recent shifts in planning perspectives towards more flexible approaches afford us some possibilities for a reinvigorated attempt to have population integrated into planning.

Facing us is a demographic challenge, which also provides us with the opportunity to overcome some of the past problems. As a result of the youth wave, there is an urgent need to develop an integrated policy package for youth. These young people present three interrelated major challenges, all of which place burdens on the world's caring capacity, and are central to the quality of life of future generations. As a result, an integrated policy approach is required spanning three interrelated areas of their lives: (a) most immediately, employment - this rich human capital resource must be directed constructively towards general development; (b) young people's geographical mobility, for, above all, this is the dislocated generation, the major component of the world's floating populations; (c) parenting, for facing us is the fact that, at 15-24 years, most of these young people are entering the key reproductive ages; they are the parents of the future, although, let it be said, by 15 years many young women may already be wives and mothers.

Each of the issues of employment, migration and parenting is the responsibility of a different sector. But a substantive focus on youth forces us to attempt to integrate across the sectors to provide the caring capacity to meet their needs. Until now we have viewed the problems of youth, their mobility, parenting and unemployment, very much as either social pathologies or fiscal burdens. Even their contribution to the economy through their work has been viewed mainly from the perspective of demand for labour, not the supply. But across the different sectors that deal with youth, there is one factor in common: that they deal with people, not some abstract construct such as the economy.

What is required is a new view of public policies, one in which population policies are not seen as exogenous or even relating to a marginal sector, the concern only of family planning





or health professionals, but one in which *the central aim of public policy is to create the context for, but not to command, a better quality of life for all the population.* For the integration of population in public policies, an essential start is to recognize that if population is a macro-economic variable, then it is the most important. It is the people and not the economic system, who save, invest, consume, and produce. But that logic has perversely been reversed. In structural adjustment programmes people have become the vehicles by which economic systems can be stabilized. Instead, it must be the economic system which is the servant of the population, not its master.

Placing people, that is population, at the centre of the development agenda requires an holistic inter-disciplinary response. It demands action at multiple levels, taking full advantage of cultural diversity. To give just a few examples: employment policies cannot be dissociated from education, training and social welfare. Public health must be linked with housing and urbanization. The fight against poverty is a problem of redistributive justice and land reform at the national level. Internationally, the terms and structures of trade and financial flows need to be transformed, in addition to development assistance.

Equally well, the integration of population into public policy must take account of sub-national diversity: regional, cultural, religious. We must be able to think and plan nationally, but with such a degree of flexibility that we can rethink and reformulate locally. Of course, this has the advantage that much of the on-the-ground implementation will be local. But it also has the advantage that it is more efficient, as it draws on the rich diversity of experiences and aptitudes present in a country or region, and more effective as it is more likely to be accepted by minorities than would a national-level policy which applies the same formula across the board, willy-nilly.

Co-ordination locally, and at both state and intergovernmental levels, will depend on planning and implementing the different sectoral approaches, in a coherent and democratic way, in order to achieve the improvement in quality of life we are all seeking.

### **Development Co-operation and Population Policies**

What then has been the response of the international community? The last decade of development co-operation can at best claim limited success. In many of the poorest countries, poverty has deepened or become more widespread. The reasons for this lack of success are well known and need not be rehearsed here. One could quote, for example, the low level of contribution to development by the North and a lack of co-ordination between agencies both at the national and international level.

The inequalities between rich and poor have widened. This includes both inequalities in wealth and income, and in opportunities and choices. It has been the poor who have arguably lost the most by way of room for manoeuvre - and the rich who have made least of their greater scope for leadership and action.

International development co-operation has been pre-occupied with getting the macro-economics right - forgetting that the real purpose of development is to enable people to attain an improved quality of life.

History may well judge this era as "the decade of missed opportunities". The most efficient and effective sphere of international development assistance is aid for the social sectors - education, health and family planning. There are the results which bear testament to this in the form of the improvements in survivorship across the entire world, and the widespread adoption of family planning throughout much of Asia and Latin America. And yet it is these sectors which have suffered gravely from the undue emphasis on macro-economics.

This in the longer term may be the real tragedy of debt and structural adjustments. By seemingly casually jeopardizing the fabric of society, these have diminished what are often already very low levels of confidence that people have in the political leadership and other institutions, including the international development agencies - thereby lessening in turn what policies can achieve.

The Bretton Woods institutions have a special responsibility before this conference; that is to assure all present that future structural adjustment programmes will be pursued in such a way as to enhance the attainment of the aims collectively agreed here. This is absolutely essential to establish the right basis of security for future actions.

Imagine if, rather than highlighting issues such as debt, there was an increased focusing of aid on other population concerns through the integration of population into public policies. *International development co-operation could take as its prime emphasis the responsibility of providing and nurturing the enabling mechanisms to allow states and communities to meet population and quality of life goals.* It would also probably assess more realistically the utility of large scale capital projects which have dominated assistance programmes in the past, and were responsible for much of the incurring of current debt.





### III. REVERSING THE LOGIC

Underlying all the issues raised above is another set of more profound ethical problems, which in turn have very significant political implications. Essentially, we have to reverse the logic which has been propelling human interactions and development over the past decades. No one should pretend that this is an easy task or that the implications are anything less than fundamental to our survival as a race. But the Commission is calling here for a revolution which is even more profound; we are calling for a plan of action to improve caring capacity so that human quality of life can be vastly enhanced. This is the message the Commission will also be carrying to Copenhagen and to Beijing, and accompanying that will be the simple point which is central to this conference and to the Commission's work; that *the key to development which can enhance quality of life is the integration of population into development.*



#### Specific Strategies Against Poverty

As we know, whatever efforts are being made to reduce world population growth, the number of people on earth will increase dramatically over the next 30 years. They will have to be fed, housed, educated, cared for, and brought into the labour market; their modes of production and consumption will have an impact on the planetary environment.

No-one can predict the outcomes of these changes or the socio-political and institutional responses that will be made to the challenges they would seem to pose. We have to assume however, that in order for humanity to survive they will be accompanied by far reaching transformations in modes of production and consumption, and hence in lifestyles.

In this massive reversal of the logic of development we do have some advantages. Today we understand better that *the improvement of material well-being through economic growth is not the sole aim of development, but also important is the quality of life of the people.* This is a process requiring socio-cultural conditions which permit the full development of human creativity. In the present circumstances, specific strategies against poverty, which are aimed at the actual existence of 1.3 billion human beings, are an absolute priority for development.

Specific strategies against poverty are not only a necessity in an ethical sense, but are also a must politically. Hunger, limited access to drinking water, to sanitation and health services, and the deterioration of hygiene and of housing, constitute the lot for a growing proportion of people living in most of the regions of the world, notably in the mega-cities. It is not just the fact of appalling misery and deprivation for fellow humans which we must recognize here, but the continuing threat to the economic and political evolution of those societies.

Many of the specific strategies have already been spelt out and even tried in various places: strategies such as the political and institutional recognition of the role of the informal sector,





land redistribution, or credit for small-scale enterprises. What we need now is the political commitment to make these work, or the elimination of bureaucratic restraints to allow such initiatives to work. Let us be clear about these strategies. They are central to the entire question of population and development.

The extension of the long-term aims of development to encompass objectives which go beyond the purely material, and which are not incorporated in simplistic notions of economic growth, as are measured by increases in GNP, also forces us to focus on strategies against poverty. These latter strategies must integrate inherent social factors, such as the youth wave, into the desired outcomes of development.

To reach out to youth, and to plan for a better quality of life for all, we have first to search for more efficient alternatives to the current development ideologies, which favour macro-management over social policies, which are prepared to risk social and political stability in order to achieve financial stabilization, and which see a role for money, but no role for people - and especially young people - in the macro-economy. *We must redesign macro-management policies by recognising that it is population rather than capital which is the central macro-economic variable.*

We seem to have forgotten that it is the population which supplies the workforce, which produces fiscal burdens, which furnishes fiscal capacity to meet these, and that it is not money, but people who save, invest, produce, consume, and require caring services; in short, it is people who create the market, money merely one of its instruments. In our macro-economic development strategies, we seem to have given precedence to the instruments over the objectives.

In doing so, we appear to have lost sight of the central objective of development, to improve the quality of life of people. Instead, all too often, its results degrade rather than enhance it. But, increasingly, people are reacting to mis-conceived and mis-managed development strategies, and as a result, this path to under-development has had severe political repercussions. Instead, social policy reforms must be considered as productive investments. After all, they improve the quality of the urban environment, they create jobs, they involve investment in the fields of education and training, and they create and recreate the mechanisms for material and non-material security.

Education and training are critical public investments. Modern production systems have more and more need for a well qualified work force, having at its disposal a background of education and training which permits it to adapt continually to the constant transformations in these systems. As a result social polarization reflects more and more disparities in access to education and training. Access to knowledge-bases has become the principal comparative advantage of individuals, institutions and nations.

Over the last decades it has been argued that market forces, and by implication the discipline of the free market, would provide the most efficient mechanisms by which to manage development. But for a market to be truly free, there has to be equal access to knowledge



and information. Where then are the companion programmes to structural adjustments providing access to the information essential for real development? And does this imply, in fact, that we must argue strongly for a return to crash programmes of education, so that there is equity in terms of capacity to absorb and use this information? Today the youth of the poorest countries are educationally pauperised. In Africa, for example, it is only a small minority of women aged 15-19 years who have any secondary education at all, let alone the training to exploit information technologies.

### New Patterns of Production and Consumption

There are other areas of our life which involve a massive reversal of logic. As the depletion of resources and the accumulation of wastes are a result of the combined effect of population and consumption growths, production and consumption patterns have to be shifted in new directions. It is now fully obvious that "more of the same won't do".

Even though humanity seems to progress along a path marked by scientific and technical breakthroughs, we know that our patterns of production and consumption are incompatible with the limits imposed by the globe's environment. The dream of unceasing material progress has been shown to be a false utopia.

To put economy, in all its dimensions, at the service of human beings is obviously a task for economists and politicians. But it is also a challenge for all citizens, as it requires self-assertive, value-based lifestyles. It means initiative to think and to act in new ways and to run the risks entailed. It means breaking the conformism of the "always more" pattern. It means for those who have nothing, to take matters into their hands and to make themselves visible in their efforts; for those who have more than enough, to cope honestly with the question, "Can I do with less?".

Even in developing countries there are already enormous numbers of consumers demanding the sorts of goods people in developed countries typically enjoy. This form of consumption has important consequences: the contribution of developing countries to global pollution is growing fast. We thus have a double problem, that of population, well known to us, and that of consumption. The Commission does not think we can, or should attempt to stop the consumption explosion in the South, but we must influence technology through new economic measures. We must also insure the transfer of clean technology to the South, as well as imposing environmental regulations and green trade restrictions worldwide, though none of these will be politically easy to put in place.

Neither the market nor infinite growth in the production of material goods can resolve these contradictions. In determining the end products of development, it is necessary to ensure that inherent social factors are integrated in a coherent manner. The creation of employment and increases in productivity are obviously central elements of development. The achievements of these objectives require broad scale institutional and cultural changes.





The dominant economic paradigm no longer works. It has emphasized production; it has treated the exploitation of natural resources as if it were a form of income backed by an inexhaustible investment fund, whereas the appropriate metaphor is that of drawing on capital reserves; it failed to account for environmental degradation by reflecting its costs in pricing structures; and it assumed that higher consumption implied proportionately enhanced welfare. This model has been uncritically adopted by newly-industrializing countries. The main error arises out of the simplistic belief that GNP is an adequate index of welfare, whereas it is merely a measure of the total goods and services produced in a country, and material goods do not automatically signify quality of life. It could be argued, that growth of GNP may actually lead to a lower quality of life. This in turn requires increasing diversion of resources to the so-called "defensive expenditures" (pollution control, repairing the damage caused by our consumption patterns), which are a paradoxical by-product resulting from affluence. By implication, a re-direction of efforts away from materialism and towards service and non-material aspects is indicated.

The argument will be raised, and justly so, that this is a critique that does not lead to a set of constructive recommendations. However, throughout the Commission's consultations we have attempted to solicit answers to this central question from economists and others: *"How do we formulate a new, social and economic paradigm which truly addresses the major problems of population and quality of life?"* We are now convinced that we need to recommend the **convocation of a multi-disciplinary task-force** to respond to this question.

## Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

### IV. TOWARDS A CONCLUSION

Our work at this conference is to confront a number of major challenges with realistic solutions. The Commission has presented you with a number of urgent issues, but only one major solution - we must leave Cairo determined that the quality of life of the population be the focus of development. Those of you who were at Bucharest will argue that this was exactly the message which came from that meeting, and you would be right. The problem was that we quickly forgot that declaration - at least in deed, if not in hollow word - and the eighties were essentially a lost decade in which people were pushed far back, behind the development issues of that decade which revolved around macro-economic stabilization. What the Commission is calling for is a return to the cry that came from Bucharest, abandoning the naive hopes and avoiding the cynical implementation of population and development programmes. Since then, while we have frittered away our opportunities, we have gained another 1.8 billion people on earth; ten years from now we will have another billion. The hope of the Commission is that their quality of life will be much better than ours today.





# Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

*POPULATION AND QUALITY OF LIFE  
INDEPENDENT COMMISSION*



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