

in a vast range of areas. There is perhaps a risk that it has taken on too much and lost sight of what is essential and concrete. The United Nations and its Member States often seem at a loss when the principles upon which the Organization were founded are at stake. Let us never forget what underlies these principles: the equal rights of people and the equal rights and sovereignty of nations. They are embodiments of the lessons of history, which has been a painful story of oppression, foreign domination and conflicts.

Together we must decide which path we want to take. Do we want to continue squandering our strength on issues of secondary interest? I believe that we should strive, here and now, to reaffirm and live out the values of the United Nations. Let us commit ourselves to achieving a peaceful world in which people and nations enjoy equal rights and are of equal value — a world in which right prevails over might. It is up to all of us here in this Hall to do all in our power to achieve that goal. Let us start without delay.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Swiss Confederation for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Ueli Maurer, President of the Swiss Confederation, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. José Mujica, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

Mr. José Mujica, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. José Mujica, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Mujica (spoke in Spanish): I come from the South. At the conjunction of the Atlantic and the River Plate, my country is a gentle, temperate plain where livestock graze. Its history is one of ports, leather, salted beef, wool and meat. There were dark decades of lances and horses until finally, with the outset of the twentieth century, we were at the forefront of social,

education and governmental affairs. I would say that social democracy was invented in Uruguay.

For nearly 50 years, the world saw us as a kind of Switzerland, but in reality in economic matters we were the bastard children of the British Empire. When the empire ended, we experienced the bitter and terrible terms of trade and we yearned for the past for almost 50 years, remembering Maracanã. Today, we have re-emerged in a globalized world, having learned from our pain.

My personal story is that of a boy — because I once was a boy — who like others wanted to change his times and his world and dreamed of a free and classless society. My mistakes were in part the results of my era. Obviously I take responsibility for them, but sometimes I cry: “If only I had the strength that I had when we enjoyed such utopia!”

However, I do not look towards the past because what we have today was created from the fertile ashes of yesterday. On the contrary, I am not on this planet to settle scores or to reminisce. I am greatly anguished by the future that I will not see, and to which I have committed myself. Yes, it is possible to have a world with more humanity, but perhaps today the main task is to save life.

I am from the South and I have come from the South to this Assembly. I share with the thousands of poor compatriots in cities, in the jungles, in the plains, in the pampas and the canyons of Latin America the common fatherland that we are creating. I bear upon my shoulders the indigenous cultures, the remains of colonialism in the Malvinas, and the futile and regrettable blockades of Cuba under the Caribbean sun. I also bear the consequences of the electronic surveillance, which does nothing but create the distrust that poisons us needlessly. I also come with a huge social debt and with the need to defend the Amazon, the seas, and our great rivers of America. I also have the duty to fight for all on behalf of my fatherland and so that Colombia can finally regain peace. I have the duty to fight for tolerance for those who are different and with whom we have differences and disagreements. We do not need tolerance for those with whom we agree. Tolerance is the foundation of peaceful coexistence, understanding that we are all different in this world.

I fight against the illicit economy, drug trafficking, theft, fraud, corruption — the contemporary scourges unleashed by an opposite set of values and by those

who maintain that we are happier when we are richer, no matter by what means. We have sacrificed the old, immaterial gods and we are now occupying the temple of the Market God. This god organizes our economy, our politics, our habits and our lives, and even provides us with rates and credit cards and the illusion of happiness. It seems that we have been born only to consume, and when we can no longer consume we are overcome by frustration, poverty and self-loathing.

It is true that today, in order to spend and to bury our garbage in what science calls the carbon footprint, if in this world we aspired to consume like the average American, we would need three planets in order to be able to live. In other words, our civilization has mounted a deceitful challenge, and as we go on it is not possible for everyone to achieve that goal. Indeed, our culture is increasingly driven by accumulation and market forces. We are promised a life of spending and squandering; in fact, it is a countdown against nature and against future humankind. It is a civilization against simplicity, against sobriety, against all natural cycles; worse yet, it is a civilization against freedom, which requires time to experience human relationships and the most important things: love, friendship, adventure, solidarity and family. It is a civilization against free time that does not pay, that cannot be bought and that allows us to contemplate the beauty of nature.

We have destroyed the real jungles and sown anonymous cement jungles. We have tackled a sedentary lifestyle with walking, insomnia with pills, solitude with electronics. Can we be happy when we are so far from the human essence? We have to ask ourselves this question. Stupefied, we have rejected our own biological imperative, which defends life for life's sake as a superior cause, and we have replaced it by functional consumerism and accumulation.

Politics, the eternal mother of all human endeavours, has remained shackled to the economy and to the marketplace. Going from one adventure to another, politics achieves little more than perpetuating itself, and as such it delegates its power and spends its time bewildered, fighting for the Government. Out of control, human history marches forward, buying and selling everything and innovating in order to negotiate what is, in a way, non-negotiable. Marketing exists for everything: cemeteries and funeral services, maternity wards, fathers, mothers, grandparents, uncles, secretaries, cars and vacations. Everything is business. Marketing campaigns deliberately target children and

psychologically influence older children to reserve safe territory for the future. Abundant evidence exists of such abominable uses of technology that sometimes induce mass frustration.

The average city dweller wanders between financial institutions and tedious office routines, sometimes moderated by air conditioning. He often dreams about vacations and freedom. He dreams about having the ability to pay his bills until one day his heart stops and he is gone. Other such soldiers will fall prey to the jaws of the marketplace, sharing in material accumulation.

The crisis really rests in the powerlessness of politics, which is incapable of understanding that humankind cannot and will not escape nationalism, which is practically etched into our DNA. Today, it is time to fight to prepare a world without borders.

The globalized economy has no other driving force except that of the private interests of the very few, and each nation State seeks only to maintain its own stability. Today, the great task for our peoples and our humble way of seeing things becomes the be-all and end-all. As if that were not enough, truly productive capitalism is a prisoner of the banks, which are at the summit of global power. More clearly, the world is clamouring for global regulations that respect scientific achievements, which abound, but it is not science that governs the world.

Today, we need a lengthy agenda of definitions. We must define working hours throughout the world. We need to have convergence among currencies. We need to finance the global struggle for water and against desertification. We have to figure out how to recycle more and how to counter global warming. What are the limits of each human task?

We must achieve a broad planetary consensus to unleash solidarity among the most oppressed and to punish and tax waste and speculation by mobilizing the large economies not to produce disposable goods, but rather useful goods without planned obsolescence or excess, which would help the world's poorest peoples. Useful goods could stand against world poverty. Turning to a useful neo-Keynesianism on a global scale in order to abolish the world's most flagrant embarrassments would be a thousand times more profitable than making war.

Perhaps our world needs fewer global organizations, organized forums and conferences, which serve only to aid hotel chains and airlines; perhaps no one really

benefits from their decisions anyway. We must return to what is old and eternal in human life, along with science that strives to serve humankind, and not only the rich. With scientists, the counsellors of humankind, we can create agreements for the entire world. Neither the large nation States nor transnational companies, not to mention the financial system, ought to govern the world of humanity. Yes, lofty politics combined with scientific wisdom — it must come from science, which is not attracted by material gain but looks towards the future and tells us about things we may not foresee. How many years ago did they tell us in Kyoto about certain facts linked to climate change?

We have finally learned that intelligence must be at the helm, guiding the ship to port. Actions of this nature and others that we cannot name, yet which we believe to be crucial, require life and not acquired wealth. Obviously, we are not so naïve; these and other things like that will not come to pass. Many pointless sacrifices still lie ahead of us. We still must deal with the consequences and not tackle the causes. Today, the world is incapable of establishing global regulations for the planet, due to the failure of lofty global politics, which meddles with everything.

For a time, we were protected by more or less regional agreements, established to create a deceitful so-called free trade that in the end constructed protectionist, supranational barriers in some regions of the globe. In turn, important branches of industry and services dedicated to saving and improving the environment will arise. We will be comforted by that for a while. We will be distracted.

But of course, the accumulation will continue unabated, to the delight of the financial system. Wars and fanaticism will continue until nature calls us to account and makes our civilization non-viable. Perhaps our vision is too crude, not compassionate enough, and we view man as a unique creature, the only one on Earth capable of acting against his own species.

I reiterate that what some call our planet's ecological crisis is the result of the overwhelming triumph of human ambition. This is our triumph and our defeat, given our political impotence to fit into the new era that we have helped to build without realizing it.

Why do I say this? The numbers tell the story. The truth is that the global population quadrupled and gross domestic product grew by a factor of at least 20 over the past century. World trade has doubled

approximately every six years since 1990. We could continue to list numbers that clearly establish the march of globalization. What is happening to us? We are entering a new era, and rapidly, but with our political bodies, cultural accessories, parties and young people all reduced to old age before the horrific and accelerating changes that we cannot even grasp. We cannot manage globalization because we do not think globally. We do not know if this is a cultural limitation or we are reaching biological limits.

The portents of revolution are present in our age as in no other in the history of humankind, yet our age does not have a conscious direction or even a basic instinctive direction, and still less organized political direction, because we do not have even the beginnings of a philosophy with which to face the speed of oncoming changes.

The greed that has been such a negative force and such a driver of history has also pushed forward the material, scientific and technical progress that has made our era and our time what it is and has enabled a phenomenal leap forward on many different fronts. At the same time, this very tool — the greed that pushed us to domesticate science and transform technology — is paradoxically pushing us over the edge into a shadowy abyss, towards an unknown fate, an era without history, and we are left without eyes to see or the collective intelligence to continue to colonize and transform ourselves.

If there is one thing that defines this tiny little human creature, it is that it is an anthropocentric conqueror. It seems that things come alive and submit to men. Glimpses of these things abound everywhere, glimmers that should allow us to discern these things, or at least make out the direction in which things are headed, but it is clearly impossible to make collective, global decisions about the big picture. Individual greed easily triumphs over our species' greed. Let us be clear. What is the big picture of which we speak? It is the system of global life on Earth, including human life, with all the fragile balances that make it impossible for us to continue as we are.

On the other hand — and this is less contentious and more obvious — in the West in particular, because we are indeed from the West, though we are also from the South, the republics arose to make the claim that men are equal, that no one is better than anyone else, and that Governments should represent the common good, justice and equity. Often, these republics become warped

and fall into the habit of ignoring ordinary people, the man on the street, the common people. Republics were not created to outgrow their constituents, but instead are historical phenomena designed to function for their own people. They must therefore answer to majority and must fight for its interests.

As for the traces of feudalism that persist in our societies, or the domineering classicism, or the consumer culture that surrounds us all, in the course of their existence republics often adopt a way of daily life that excludes and holds at arm's length the common man. In fact, that common man should be the central cause of the republic's political struggle. Republican Governments should increasingly look like their respective peoples in the way they live and the way they deal with life.

The fact is that we tend to cultivate feudal anachronisms, spoiled affectations and hierarchical distinctions that undermine the best feature of republics — the fact that no one is better than anyone else. The interaction of those factors and others keeps us living in prehistory, and today it is impossible to renounce war when politics fails. Thus, economies are strangled and resources wasted. Every minute in the life of our planet, we spend \$2 million on military budgets around the world — \$2 million a minute. Medical research on all manner of diseases, which has made huge advances and is a blessing that promises longer life, receives barely a fifth of what is budgeted for the military. That process, from which we cannot escape, perpetuates hatred, fanaticism and distrust, fuels new wars and wastes fortunes.

I know that it is very easy politically to criticize ourselves at the national level, and I think it naive in this world to propose that resources that could be saved and spent on other, useful things. Again, that would be possible if we were capable of making global agreements and working on global prevention and world policies aimed at ensuring peace and offering the weakest among us guarantees that do not exist. Enormous resources would have to be cut to address the most shameful things on Earth, but one question suffices. Where can humankind as it is today go without those guarantees? Thus, each wields arms commensurate with his size.

And that is where we are today, because we can barely reason as individuals, let alone as a species. Global institutions, especially today, languish in the

shadow of the dissenting great nations. Clearly, such nations wish to hold on to power. They block action by the United Nations, which was created in the hope and with a dream of peace for humankind. But what is even worse is that they have cut it off from global democracy. We are not all equal. We cannot be equal in a world where some are strong and others weak. As a result, our world democracy is wounded, and we face the historical impossibility of reaching a global peace agreement. We patch up diseases when an outbreak occurs as one or other of the great Powers wishes, while we look on from afar.

It would be difficult to invent a force that is worse than the chauvinistic nationalism of the great Powers. Nationalism, a force that liberates the weak through the process of decolonization, has become a tool of oppression in the hands of the strong. The past two centuries are full of examples. The United Nations is languishing and becoming increasingly bureaucratic from lack of power and autonomy, above all of recognition of democracy for the weak of the world, who are the majority.

By way of a very small example, our little country is in absolute terms the largest Latin American contributor of soldiers to peacebuilding missions, and we go wherever we are asked to go. But we are small and weak, and in the places where resources are distributed and decisions made, we cannot go even to serve coffee. In our heart of hearts we long to help humankind emerge from prehistory — and people who live with war are still living in prehistory, despite the many artifacts they can build — but as long as we do not emerge from prehistory and retire war as a resort when politics fails, that is the long march and challenge we have ahead of us. We say that in full awareness; we are familiar with the loneliness of war.

Such dreams, however, require us to fight for an agenda of world agreements that can begin to steer our history and overcome life's threats, step by step. Our species should have a Government for all humankind that supersedes individualism and creates political leaders who follow the path of science and not merely the immediate interests of those governing and suffocating us. At the same time, we must understand that the world's poor are not from Africa or Latin America; they are all part of humankind, and that means that we must help them to develop so they can lead decent lives. The necessary resources exist. They can be found in the waste of our predatory civilization.

A few days ago a tribute was delivered in a fire station in California. An electric bulb had been turned on for 100 years. It had been on for 100 years! How many millions of dollars have they taken from our pockets deliberately creating junk so that people will buy and buy and buy? But globalization means a brutal cultural change for our planet and for our life. That is what history demands from us. The entire material basis has changed and it has changed man. In our culture, we act as if nothing had happened. Instead of us controlling globalization, it controls us.

Almost 20 years ago, we discussed the humble Tobin tax, which could not be applied at a global level. All of the banks with financial power rose up against it. Their private property and who knows how many other things would be harmed. However, that is the paradox. With talent and collective work, with science, step by step humankind can make deserts green; humankind can bring agriculture to the seas; humankind can develop agriculture that lives with salt water.

If the power of humankind is focused on what is essential, it is infinite. Here we see the greatest sources of energy. What do we know about photosynthesis? Almost nothing. There is a great deal of energy in the world, if we work together to use it properly. It is possible to eliminate poverty from the planet. It is possible to create stability. It will be possible for future generations, if they begin to reason as a species and not just as individuals, to bring life to the galaxies and pursue this dream of conquest that we, human beings, have in our genes.

But if those dreams are to come true, we will have to control ourselves or we will die. We will die because we are not capable of being at the level of the civilization that we have been developing with our efforts. That is our dilemma. We should not spend our time merely correcting the consequences. Let us consider the deep-rooted causes, the civilization of waste, the present civilization that is stealing time from human life and wasting it on pointless matters.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Let us remember that human life is a miracle. Consider that human life is a miracle, that we are alive as a result of a miracle, and that nothing is more important than life. Our biological duty is, above all, to respect life, promote it, take care of it, reproduce it and understand that the species is our being.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay for the statement he has just made.

Mr. José Mujica, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Uganda.

Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Museveni: In the year 2000, we met here and agreed on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2015. They are: Goal 1, the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; Goal 2, achieving universal primary education; Goal 3, promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women; Goal 4, reducing child mortality; Goal 5, improving maternal health; Goal 6, combatting HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; Goal 7, ensuring environmental sustainability; and Goal 8, developing a global partnership for development. As we can see, they cannot be sustainably achieved unless we achieve socioeconomic transformation. That means building a new society comprised of the middle class and the skilled working class out of the pre-capitalist societies that characterize underdeveloped countries.

Our old society of traditional Africa had and has to undergo socioeconomic metamorphosis, just like the insects do, taking on new forms of life — egg, caterpillar, pupa, adult butterfly or other insect, and so on — of the same organism. That means fewer people in agriculture than in industry and services, more people in urban centres than in rural areas, no illiteracy, and modern agriculture rather than subsistence traditional agriculture or uneconomic colonial cash crops that bring in little for the affected families. I hope that no one had imagined that we could sustainably attain the MDGs while maintaining a backward economy.