

**SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY AHMET NECDET
SEZER AT THE WORLD SUMMIT ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
(Johannesburg, September 2, 2002)**

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Honourable Representatives,

I would like to begin my remarks by congratulating the Government of the Republic of South Africa for successfully organizing this summit with a very large attendance. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for the valuable contributions of H.E. Thabo Mbeki, President of the Republic of South Africa and H.E. Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations to the organization of this Summit. Furthermore, I would like to thank the Government and the people of the Republic of South Africa for their warm reception and hospitality.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio in 1992, was an historical step which marked the adoption of a series of guidelines that have led international economic and environmental activities. These guidelines, known as the "Agenda 21" have illuminated our way in the last ten years and the international community has deployed intensive efforts to reach the goals determined in Rio.

However, when we look back at the last decade, we can see that our expectations have not been fully achieved. The fight against poverty is still the primary item on our agenda. In order to steer globalisation, which is threatening some nations and some sectors of our societies, in the right direction to the benefit the entire humanity, we need a more comprehensive cooperation and more effective mechanisms at the national and international levels.

When we assembled in New York two years ago for the Millenium Summit, we set out our commitments for the eradication of poverty, preservation of our common environment, human rights, democracy and good governance.

The commitments and requirements embodied in the Millenium Declaration are still valid today. Being the countries who have adopted the Millenium Declaration, we must pursue incessantly our efforts to reach the goals inscribed therein. Because, if we fail to take determined steps towards these goals, we can neither close the gap between wealthy nations and those who are suffering from poverty, nor can we provide the future generations with a livable environment.

Therefore, here, our assignment must be to take steps to reconfirm our commitment to the principles of Rio and to strongly establish the relation between economic and social development and protection fo the environment.

We can reach the goal of reducing in half the population with a daily income under 1 US Dollar and suffering from hunger by the year 2015, which we adopted in the United Nations Millenium Summit, only through the efforts and contributions we will make within the framework of our common but varied differentiated responsibilities.

The evaluations that we have made during our national struggle against poverty have shown us that the correct answer to why and how the poverty emerges, determines the way to struggle against it. These assessments indicate the necessity of a wholistic approach to the structural changes and democratic and participatory mechanisms.

The priority of globalisation must be abolishing the existing inequalities in the income distribution among the nations of the world. The wide income gaps make the underdevelopment of the poor more persistent, while underdevelopment, causing isolation from the international economy, provides a suitable environment for terrorism to flourish.

The international conference on the financing of development held in Monterrey, set an important milestone for providing the financial sources needed for consistent and sustainable development.

Another result of the Monterrey conference is the conclusion that good governance will be one of the important conditions of the international cooperation process which will be established in the sustainable development process. For this reason, in the following years, the adoption and implementation of national decisions in a democratic environment with the participation of the individuals forming the society and the nongovernmental organizations will be the

basis of this process. International good governance, on the other hand, depends on the promotion of transparency in the functioning of international organizations.

The realization of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in this important metropole of South Africa is a valuable opportunity to attract the attention and interest of the international community on the problems that Africa has been facing.

Africa has been undergoing a difficult era. Especially in the south of the continent, the famine threatening 13 million people requires urgent solution. Besides, more effective measures are needed to be taken against AIDS which is currently one of the severest problems affecting Africa. In this regard, we think that the call made by the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan is positive and well-timed and that the efforts of the United Nations must be supported.

Turkey is situated at the intersection of the Black Sea, the Mediterranean Sea and the Caspian Sea, three of the environmentally most sensitive regions of our globe. Surrounded by seas along three sides, possessing environmental sections needing special protection such as the Turkish Straits and large river systems and rich fauna and flora, Turkey pays special attention to the development of environmental awareness both at national and international levels.

The fact that we signed the United Nations Convention on Biodiversity, one of the two major conventions concluded during the Rio Conference on its opening to signature and that we put it into force shortly afterwards is an indication of the importance we attribute to international cooperation in the field of environment protection.

We have taken the necessary steps to accede to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, despite the burdensome obligations it brings along, in order to contribute to the process. Following the acknowledgement of Turkey's special conditions in 2001, the national legislative procedure for accession to this convention has been accelerated. In the meantime, Turkey has closely followed its implementations and has been working, with the support of international financial institutions, to harmonize its national implementations with the convention's provisions.

The Kyoto Protocol will provide the conditions for taking the important steps needed for the reduction of the green-house gases that cause global warming. In this context, it is essential that the industrialized nations fulfill their obligations. Therefore, the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the efforts to be made by the countries of the world for its entry into force have been gaining ever more importance in the last years.

I would like to shortly mention the work Turkey has been carrying out in the last decade in connection with the implementation of the conclusions of the Rio Conference.

In Turkey, in the first place, we organized a meeting among our concerned institutions and government bodies, where we adopted a National Agenda. The Rio conclusions have been reflected into our five-year development plans. We adopted a National Environment Action Plan with the participation of all concerned national institutions and organizations, in particular the non-governmental organizations, on the basis of which we have started working to enhance the quality of life, to develop environmental awareness and consciousness and to provide sustainable economic, social and cultural development.

In view of the goals adopted at the United Nations Millenium Summit, the results of the World Trade Organisation Conference held in Doha and the Monterrey Conference on financing of the development, I believe that Johannesburg Summit will be an important milestone and that it will mark the beginning of a new era rather than the conclusion of the preceding decade.

I wish that the forward-looking action programme that we are going to formulate on the basis of the conclusion we will reach during this Summit, contributes to our efforts for preserving the global environment, preparing secure and healthy living conditions without poverty for the future generations and raising the education and welfare levels of all nations.