

**Governing Body** 

GB.288/15 288th Session

Geneva, November 2003

#### FIFTEENTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

# Report of the Working Party on the Social Dimension of Globalization

# Oral report by the Chairperson of the Working Party, Ambassador Eui-yong Chung of the Republic of Korea

1. After opening the meeting by presenting a brief overview of the day's proceedings, Ambassador Eui-yong Chung said that the Working Party was privileged to have a special guest, Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland and Co-Chair of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, who would address it on the Commission's progress.

## World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization: Latest developments

### Statement by Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland and Co-Chair of the Commission

- 2. Mr. Juan Somavia, Director-General of the ILO, warmly welcomed Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen as the first Head of State to address the Governing Body. He thanked her for accepting the complex task of encouraging dialogue on difficult issues in a world where parallel monologues on globalization had become the norm. Social justice and equality had always been her guiding principles and she had worked toward those goals by addressing shortcomings in employment and social protection in her own country. She was recognized around the world for her work in promoting human rights and democracy and had co-chaired the historic United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000. Together with her Co-Chair, President Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania, she had shown enormous commitment to the work of the Commission. She had been an outstanding ambassador for the Commission and instrumental in creating a collegial atmosphere among commissioners by helping to promote understanding between different interest groups.
- **3.** Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen began her address by thanking the Working Party for asking her to co-chair the Commission, and congratulated them on their courage and openmindedness in setting up an independent World Commission. The work of the Commission was highly relevant not only to the ILO, but also to the rest of the multilateral system. The

Commission had held six meetings, over 30 dialogues and a number of consultations with Mr. Köhler of the IMF, Mr. Supachai of the WTO and Mr. Wolfensohn of the World Bank, among others. The report of the Commission, once approved by the Commission, would be made publicly available in February 2004. <sup>1</sup>

- **4.** Mr. Funes de Rioja, speaking on behalf of the Employers' group, thanked Ms. Halonen for agreeing to lead the World Commission and for the particular perspective she brought to the discussions. Whether one looked at globalization through an optimistic or pessimistic lens, there could be no doubt regarding the need to overcome obstacles and promote initiatives to ensure that globalization was a more inclusive process. There was no single way to do this and the unique value of this particular Commission lay in the fact that it was made up of individuals of high standing and talent, who reflected a diversity of views, cultures and situations. In discussing globalization, it was necessary to embrace that diversity.
- 5. The Employers' group concurred with Ms. Halonen on the importance of fundamental values: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. These were the necessary underpinnings of a sustainable and just market system. Employers, workers and governments needed to join forces and work together to realize the potential of globalization. The social dimension of globalization was clearly linked to development, and this was the best way to overcome poverty, marginalization and unemployment. In this regard, Mr. Funes de Rioja stressed the importance of the governance of globalization at the national and global levels. The Employers' group hoped that the report would be proactive in establishing fundamental values on which a fairer globalization could be built. The Employers also hoped that it would provide signposts to the ILO and to other organizations, and looked forward to the discussion of the report in March 2004 by the Governing Body, which would decide on future action.
- **6.** Speaking on behalf of the Workers' group, Mr. Trotman reiterated his group's support for the objectives of the Commission. Globalization had to deliver on what working people and their families everywhere aspired to: a decent job, security and a voice in the decision-making process. That meant improving access to opportunities for decent work and promoting development with social justice in the context of open economies and open societies. The World Commission might use this opportunity to recommend that the ILO's fundamental principles and rights at work be embraced by all world planners, legislators and others who influenced decisions taken in the global economy. The Workers' group welcomed the meetings that the Commission had held with the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO and hoped that those institutions would be encouraged to support the Commission's work.
- 7. The Workers' group looked forward to examining the Commission's report and its recommendations, and requested that the Director-General provide sufficient time at the Working Party in March 2004 for a full and meaningful discussion. The Workers hoped that efforts would be made to ensure that the recommendations in the report would be translated into action programmes, and requested that the Commission consider ways in which its recommendations could be taken forward to make the world a better place. It was not words and recommendations that would set the Commission apart, but the action it was able to generate among the actors concerned.
- **8.** The Minister of Labour of Cameroon, speaking on behalf of the Africa group, thanked both President Halonen and the Co-Chair from their region, President Mkapa, for their

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The statement by the President of Finland is reproduced in full in the appendix.

leadership. African countries had been excluded from the benefits of globalization. They aspired to improvements in their living and working conditions and looked forward to enhanced opportunities for investment and fairer trade. The improvement of global governance was also important to help the continent emerge from poverty and promote its own development. They hoped that the World Commission's recommendations would support those aspirations and objectives.

- **9.** The Minister of Labour of Ecuador, speaking on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean group, expressed the group's appreciation for the broad and comprehensive consultations the Commission had undertaken. These had permitted the sharing of experiences on promoting a labour and social dimension in the process of regional and subregional integration. The promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work and decent work were the foundations of an inclusive globalization. Appropriate policies were also needed to support a fairer globalization and in this regard they looked forward to the Commission's proposals on how best to integrate economic and social objectives, and hoped that the report would be available in sufficient time to facilitate meaningful dialogue at the March 2004 meeting.
- 10. The representative of the Government of India, speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group, said that the final report of the Commission could provide an important policy platform for poverty reduction and development. Globalization had presented the governments of their region with exciting new opportunities and some difficult new challenges. From that perspective, the report would make a timely and valuable contribution. As the report was also relevant to a range of other organizations at the national and international level, the Office should establish appropriate channels for the implementation of the Commission's recommendations. He looked forward to receiving information on how the debate would be structured, both in the Governing Body in March 2004 and at the International Labour Conference in June 2004.
- 11. The representative of the Government of the Russian Federation, speaking on behalf of the Eastern European group, said that the report would play an invaluable role in raising awareness and understanding of the importance of the social dimension of globalization in the international community. It would also promote the role of the ILO in the system of international organizations dealing with the issue of globalization. The report should seek to mobilize the efforts of all the players, States, international organizations, enterprises, workers and civil society institutions to limit the setbacks and expand the benefits of globalization.
- 12. The representative of the Government of Italy, speaking on behalf of the Western European group, said that there was a need to build consensus around an approach to globalization that would lead to the eradication of poverty, the achievement of social cohesion, the creation of employment, the spreading of economic growth and improved governance. That would enable everyone to benefit from globalization. The group believed that the ILO was the appropriate body to promote a substantive international dialogue with other relevant international organizations. They looked forward to the report, the discussion of its recommendations and the follow-up activities, and appealed to the Commissioners to devote some of their time to the follow-up.
- **13.** In her concluding remarks, Ms. Halonen thanked the Governing Body for their encouragement. She reiterated the Commission's commitment to a fairer globalization and called on all members to assist with the process of making this a reality.
- **14.** On behalf of the Governing Body, the Chairperson thanked Ms. Halonen for her inspiring words and for agreeing to serve as Co-Chair of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. The fact that the Commission was chaired by two serving

Heads of State had given it immense stature and enhanced the impact which the Commission's recommendations would have. He had personally been privileged to work under her leadership, and had witnessed at first hand her dedication to building consensus in the Commission and ensuring its success. He believed that the final report of the Commission would lay a firm foundation for the broad policy changes needed to make globalization a force for the betterment of all, and for this they owed Ms. Halonen a special debt of gratitude.

## Policies and social partnerships for good governance

- 15. The representative of the Director-General (Ms. Trebilcock) presented the paper "Policies and social partnerships for good governance". The paper built on the discussion of a related document in March 2003, and addressed the relevance of social partnership to broader questions of governance in the context of economic and social development, and reviewed some elements identified in the external literature on governance. Although there were many positive illustrative examples, social partnership was still not fully appreciated or universally put into practice. One basic reason was that the conditions for it to flourish were often lacking. Freedom of association and the right to engage in collective bargaining were not yet assured throughout the world. Another reason was that social partnership and the ways in which it contributed to good governance were not always fully understood. She concluded by drawing the attention of the Working Party to possible next steps detailed in paragraphs 56 to 58 of the paper.
- 16. The Employer spokesperson expressed satisfaction with the paper. In the context of globalization, social dialogue was not only crucial to deciding what direction to take, but also to making it a more inclusive process. The Employers' group believed that the principles of representative democracy should underpin the market economy. The issues of competitiveness, productivity and achieving sustainable development were all closely linked to sound social partnership and dialogue. He noted that the legitimacy of partners in social dialogue often depended on the extent to which they were representative and responsible to a broader constituency. He welcomed the country examples given in the paper and encouraged their wide dissemination. He underlined the importance of the fundamental principles and rights at work for social dialogue.
- 17. With regard to the issue of social partnership and wages, unemployment and related issues (paragraphs 13-17), the Employer spokesperson said that the right forum for those subjects was the Committee on Employment and Social Policy. While agreeing that social partnership had "the capacity to build societal consensus for controversial, and potentially unpopular, reforms", he made a distinction between short-term and long-term policies. With regard to future steps, he noted that they needed to be seen in the context of the March 2004 discussion of the World Commission's report and should be considered at that time.
- 18. The Worker spokesperson agreed with the suggestion of the Employers' group that the issues in question should be placed on the agenda of the Committee on Employment and Social Policy. He would have preferred a more critical review of the literature, which was not always consistent with the accumulated wisdom and experience of the ILO. The ILO's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> GB.288/WP/SDG/2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> GB.286/WP/SDG/3.

values and its extensive body of knowledge were not sufficiently reflected in the document. For example, governments and the social partners understood that strike action did not always represent a breakdown of industrial relations in a country. It was a legitimate expression of discontent and one which could have a cathartic effect, paving the way for a new and better understanding. Nevertheless, the subject of social partnership, social dialogue and good governance was important, particularly when it came to considering the forthcoming report and recommendations of the World Commission.

- 19. The Worker spokesperson thought it more valuable to highlight the contribution of social dialogue to poverty reduction, rather than as a means of securing wage restraint, as the paper seemed to imply. In that regard, the ILO's fundamental principles and rights at work needed to be emphasized. He welcomed the country examples provided in the paper and wished to add more from the developing world. He noted that the paper provided clear evidence about the positive economic impact of freedom of association and collective bargaining, and hoped that other international organizations would take this up in respect of their development policies.
- 20. The Minister of Labour of Ecuador, speaking on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean group, welcomed the way in which the document linked social dialogue, democracy and good governance. Promoting social partnership meant ensuring certain basic conditions, such as freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and the group supported the work of the ILO in promoting and safeguarding those rights. However, they also wished to highlight the asymmetries in the international trading system which hindered development and fuelled informality and poverty in developing countries. Lastly, the group agreed with the future steps set out in the paper, in particular the need to prepare studies on development-related issues.
- 21. The representative of the Government of India, speaking on behalf of the Asia and Pacific group, thanked the Office for a well-researched study. He drew attention to the link between national and international governance in the context of globalization. Social dialogue provided an important means of resolving conflicting issues, building trust among participants and enhancing transparency in the process of formulating policies. National positions on globalization needed to be determined as part of national policy, based on national consensus and priorities. International debates were better informed when national views expressed in those debates were formulated through national social dialogue.
- **22.** The representative of the Government of South Africa noted that South Africans had embraced social dialogue when formulating social and economic policy. In the light of that experience, they understood that for social dialogue to be effective it needed institutions for social dialogue, strong and united workers' and employers' organizations, and access to information for the social partners.
- 23. The representative of the Government of Venezuela drew attention to the experience of his country with referendums and other forms of participation intended to encourage the social partners to be more representative. With respect to the challenges of social partnership and good governance, he thought it essential to have a more detailed and transparent review of policies that exacerbated poverty, including the present international terms of trade and regional trade agreements.
- **24.** The representative of the European Commission very much welcomed the paper. The ILO should be in touch with the debate on governance. The ILO played an important role in identifying and developing the right conditions and policy frameworks for good governance in relation to social, employment and economic policies. The European Commission had undertaken a number of initiatives promoting good governance, social dialogue and the involvement of non-state actors in policy formulation at different levels.

The ILO should continue its analytical work and undertake further research, as the paper suggested. It should also play a leading role in supporting the rights and capabilities needed to fully realize the potential of social partnership.

- **25.** The representative of the Government of Belgium stressed the need to critically assess the methodology and verify the indicators that had been used in the research referred to in the paper. The contribution of social partnership to poverty reduction and socially responsible enterprises had not been given sufficient attention by the paper. He highlighted the importance of technical assistance and of enlarging North-South dialogue.
- **26.** The representative of the Government of the Republic of Korea said that the participation of the social partners was essential not only for good governance, but also for enterprise and national development. In that respect, the role of governments in ensuring that the social partners enjoyed the relevant rights could not be overemphasized. In exercising those rights, the responsibilities and duties of the social partners should also be borne in mind.
- **27.** The Employer spokesperson noted that the intervention of the representative of the Government of Venezuela was not in accordance with Convention No. 87, and recalled that respect for that Convention, which Venezuela had ratified, meant that employers and workers should be able to organize themselves freely without intervention or interference from the State.
- 28. The representative of the Director-General (Ms. Trebilcock) noted that some of the additional material mentioned during the discussion was available on the ILO web site and had therefore not been included in the paper, which had been subject to constraints in terms of length. She clarified a number of other points that had been raised during the discussion, noting that external research results were presented for information purposes and were not necessarily endorsed by the Office. The Office had wished to point out that statistical indicators were available for days lost due to strikes and lockouts, but that indicators on the positive economic impact of social partnership were lacking. The paper had sought to link the debates on governance and development to the discussion on social partnership and development. It was important to find a common language to communicate to the development community the ILO's own approach to labour market governance through social partnership. Regarding the comments on dialogue and social partnership at the international level, the discussion had proven to be a useful preliminary look at issues that would be examined in the more comprehensive discussions due to take place in March 2004 on the World Commission's report.

# Information note on corporate social responsibility and international labour standards

- **29.** The Chairperson noted that the document entitled "Information note on corporate social responsibility and international labour standards" had been placed before the Working Party in order to keep it abreast of developments in this area.
- **30.** The Worker spokesperson suggested that the issue be raised for discussion in a future session. The Employer spokesperson noted that the results of the World Commission's report also needed to be considered before a decision was taken as to how to proceed. He

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> GB.288/WP/SDG/3.

- noted that voluntary initiatives were extremely valuable, but underlined their voluntary nature. He hoped that the Office would continue to evaluate the scope of such initiatives and that they would continue to receive information.
- 31. The representative of the Government of France noted that a discussion on the issue could only contribute to clarifying an interesting but somewhat ambiguous approach. The social responsibility of enterprises (corporate social responsibility) in no way replaced the need for international labour standards to be adopted and applied, but voluntary efforts might be enriched by a discussion of how they were promoting labour standards in practice. Corporate social responsibility had to be developed on a solid base of national and international standards. This seemed to be the position also reflected in the document. He encouraged the Office to continue in this way and to be active in this field. He stressed that the report of the World Commission should be circulated to all relevant international organizations.
- **32.** The representative of the European Commission requested additional initiatives on the social responsibility of enterprises, and suggested that the topic should be given greater attention in the work of the ILO.
- **33.** The Chairperson concluded the discussion, noting that the Working Party would no doubt deal with this issue in the context of the discussion of the final report of the World Commission in March 2004, but that the Office would continue to monitor developments and make this information available to ILO constituents through various means.

Geneva, 19 November 2003.

### **Appendix**

### Statement by Her Excellency Ms. Tarja Halonen, President of Finland and Co-Chair of the Commission

(Geneva, 17 November 2003)

It is a great pleasure and a privilege to address the Governing Body of the ILO. I thank Director-General, Juan Somavia, for the kind words he addressed to me. I would also like to thank you for asking me to co-chair the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization. The almost two years have been an interesting and educational experience.

I would also like to thank and congratulate the Governing Body of the ILO for its courage and open mind in giving the Director-General the authority to set up this independent World Commission. While its work will, of course, be highly relevant to the ILO, its scope and mandate go well beyond your Organization. You have served as the base for something that aims at reaching to the whole world, and also to the rest of the multilateral system.

We are right now finalizing the report and it should be made public in February 2004. It will be provided to you in good time before the Governing Body meeting in March 2004.

It is important to notice that of course all the Commissioners have various viewpoints, due to their backgrounds, special knowledge and interests. We have tried to reflect this diversity in drafting the report. The forthcoming report is aimed at summarizing what is a broad overall view of the Commission.

We have taken our duty very seriously. The Commission has held six meetings, over 30 dialogues around the world and working sessions for example with Messrs. Köhler, Supachai and Wolfensohn. I honestly can report that the Commission has been well received everywhere. Sometimes the expectations seem to be even too great.

You know very well the background for the establishment of the Commission, so I will not dwell on that. Today, I shall concentrate on describing some of the salient points which we have discussed at length and in depth, and which are important for arriving at balanced conclusions on what to do to strengthen the social dimensions of globalization.

I wish that you do not take these views as representing agreed positions of the whole Commission, although at this stage its co-chair must have the right to make a summary of where all of us together have been going.

Our starting point in the Commission has been that in order to be sustainable globalization must meet the needs of people. Our ultimate goal is to help make globalization a resource to promote decent work, reduce poverty and unemployment and foster growth and development.

Based on this challenging goal we developed our vision, a vision for change. The main points in our vision are:

The current course of globalization must change. The present situation is not ethical, nor politically feasible. Too few share its benefits. Too many have no voice in its design and no influence over its course.

The results of globalization are what we make of it. While history and geography set the points of departure, much depends on the way it is managed and the values that inspire its actors.

We wish to make globalization a force to increase human freedom and well-being, and bring democracy and development to the communities where people live.

Globalization needs also to be in balance with the environment so that it can be a force for sustainable development.

The principles that must guide globalization should also be reflected in national institutions, rules and political systems. The basic principles are democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

### Characteristics of globalization

Globalization is a complex phenomenon that has had far-reaching effects on people everywhere in the world. Therefore, the term "globalization" does not lend itself to a neat definition.

Some see it as an irresistible and good force for delivering economic prosperity to people all over the world. For some others it is a source of all contemporary ills. These extreme views are present also in the Commission and there seems to be some truth in both views.

There is wide acceptance that the key characteristics of globalization have been the liberalization of international trade, the expansion of foreign direct investment (FDI), and the emergence of huge cross-border financial flows. This has resulted in increased competition in global markets.

New technologies have also given a distinctive character to the current process of globalization, as compared to similar episodes in the past. Markets can now be global and take in ever more goods and services. The impact of new technologies on societies will be the major theme in the World Summit on Information Society in less than a month's time here in Geneva.

Something else is also very different. Unlike earlier episodes of globalization, the current process largely excludes massive cross-border movements of people. While goods, firms and money are largely free to criss-cross borders, people are not. One could say that this is a notable discrepancy in the logic of globalization.

### Impact of globalization

Compared on a country level, there have been clear winners and losers in globalization. Among the primary winners are the industrialized countries, in spite of internal problems of adjustment that have generated losses for many workers. With a strong economic base, capital, skill and technological leadership, they have been well placed to gain benefits from increasing globalization of the world economy.

The other clear group of winners have been some developing countries – among them China and India – that have been highly successful in increasing their exports and in attracting large inflows of FDI. There are also some other examples of this in all other parts of the world, with the exception of Africa. Winners are for the most part countries that had relatively favourable initial conditions in terms of prior industrialization, the level of human resource development, transport and communications infrastructure, and the quality of economic and social institutions.

At the other extreme, the exclusion of the least developed countries (LDCs) from the benefits of globalization – and even the whole process of globalization – remains a reality. The LDCs are trapped in a vicious circle of interlocking handicaps, including poverty and illiteracy, civil strife, geographical disadvantages, poor governance, and economies largely dependent on a single commodity.

In order to assess the social impact of globalization it is essential to go beyond aggregate economic performance and examine what has happened to employment, income inequality and poverty over the past two decades of globalization.

Employment performance over the past two decades has varied across countries and regions. It seems that there has not been drastic improvement or worsening of open unemployment in the world during the era of globalization.

Income inequality has increased in some industrialized countries. There seems to have been less solidarity when the additional wealth, made possible by globalization, has been distributed.

Outside the industrialized countries, there has been a mixed picture on changes in income disparity. A large majority of countries have experienced a rise in income inequality and many perceive this to have happened because of globalization.

There are contradicting views on how globalization has affected poverty reduction, which is one of the Millennium Development Goals. The number of people living in absolute poverty worldwide has declined significantly from 1,237 million in 1990 to 1,100 million in 2000. Most of this improvement is accounted for by the changes in China and India. In sub-Saharan Africa poverty has increased considerably and in other parts of the world the change has been smaller.

The economic benefits and social costs of globalization are not evenly distributed among social groups. Even in the industrialized countries some groups of workers have been adversely affected by trade liberalization and the relocation of production to other countries.

### Governance of globalization

Successful participation in globalization is bound up with national capabilities and policies. I will reiterate the three basic principles for a modern State: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Countries which do not subscribe to these principles will not in the long run be able to provide benefits of globalization for their people.

People living in well-governed countries with strong social justice and education systems, income distribution mechanisms and social safety nets are more likely to gain from globalization.

For these reasons it can be said that the response to globalization begins at home. It is also a good reason to make the nation State a stronger entity.

Regional integration and cooperation can promote a more equitable pattern of globalization in many ways.

By effectively increasing the size of domestic markets, integration increases the capacity to withstand external economic fluctuations and can help build the capabilities needed to take advantage of global opportunities.

In addition, when social goals are built into regional integration, it provides a starting point for building them also into the wider global economy.

Increasing globalization has given rise to a broadening range of issues that can be effectively dealt with only through concerted global action. Examples of these include the problems of financial contagion, communicable diseases, cross-border crime, tax havens and tax competition.

The response to these new challenges so far has been unsystematic. We need a more coherent approach to these challenges. This could be done under the leadership of the UN.

In the fields of economic and social development, also the actions of the Bretton Woods institutions could be better balanced. Besides economic growth and stability, there should be enough emphasis on social justice and employment. All countries share the goal of better employment, whether rich or poor.

#### Fair rules

In order to make globalization a positive force for people it is important that the rules governing it are fair. We have today a global economy, but not a global society. The governance and rules are clearly lacking behind the economic developments.

The rules of the global economy need to be fair, both in creating opportunity and determining outcome. They need to reflect the diverse situations of peoples and countries.

The rules of the global economy need also to be applied more equally and fairly, so that multilateral rules for trade, investment, intellectual property and labour adequately reflect the common interest.

Of course the members of the Commission have also discussed the question of the role of labour standards in globalization processes. On this matter, you in the ILO have at your disposal a number of tools, and in particular the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. There is a crucial role for the ILO to promote and ensure a situation where basic rights at work are effectively respected all over the world, without exception.

### Better international policies

Action to achieve fairer rules also needs more coherent and equitable policies at the international level. This is essential to ensure that the benefits of globalization are more widely distributed and common goals are realized.

We need international solidarity to raise capability and security. We also need to make decent work a global goal. Policies and action at the international level need to embed fundamental rights

at work; realize the goal of full employment; support national social protection systems, and facilitate social dialogue among representative workers' and employers' organizations in global production systems.

The key to better international policies lies in the integration of social and economic goals. Besides national governments, also multilateral institutions need to direct their policies towards achieving these common global goals.

### International cooperation

The Millennium Summit, the Monterrey Summit on Financing for Development, the Doha Meeting of the WTO and the Johannesburg Summit on sustainable development were all recent high points of the international community's commitment to solve common challenges together.

Since those meetings there have been setbacks, most recently in Cancún. It seems that when the expectations become very high, the negotiators become inflexible as they try to respond to these expectations. And this does not apply only in the WTO but in other international organizations as well.

However, I am a strong believer in and determined supporter of the multilateral international system. The challenges and opportunities before us require participation of all nations. No one can respond to challenges like globalization, international terrorism or environmental deterioration alone and no one should be left alone to do so.

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For my own country, Finland, globalization is an everyday reality, not just theory. In most of international comparisons we seem to be doing fine. This is certainly true so far, but also in Finland we feel very strongly the uncertainties of present-day globalization.

Tax competition, relocation of businesses, unemployment, protection on foreign markets and efforts to attract foreign investments are issues with which we deal on a daily basis. It is not enough to be successful today; we want be successful also tomorrow.

If there would be only one issue to concentrate on, it would be education. In order to fare well a small nation of 5 million inhabitants needs to educate all. This is what we have done and are going to do in the future also. Education provides for innovation and capacity for successful adjustment. And globalization is about constant adjustment to new challenges.