

WELCOMING ADDRESS OF B. IVANOV

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
Nairobi, Kenya

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the executive director of UNEP, Dr. M. Tolpa, to address this important world congress. The fact that the 9th World Fertilizer Congress is being held in this beautiful city is a clear demonstration of the contribution that Hungarian agriculture has made at both the national and international level.

Because of the importance of this meeting to the objectives of the United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP felt that it should be represented.

As you know Mr. President, UNEP was established as a result of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, which met in Stockholm just over 12 years ago in June 1972, to consider the need for a common outlook and for common principles to inspire and guide the peoples of the world in the preservation and enhancement of the human environment. That important meeting noted that in the long and tortuous evolution of the human race on this planet a stage had been reached when, through the rapid acceleration of science and technology, man had acquired the power to transform his environment in countless ways and on an unprecedented scale. Subsequently, the protection and improvement of the human environment was seen as a major issue which affects the well-being of the peoples and economic development throughout the world. The Stockholm Conference therefore formulated an "Action Plan for the Human Environment", based on a number of recommendations and comprised of three broad types of action – a global environmental assessment programme, environmental activities and international measures to support the national and international actions of assessment and management. To carry out this programme, the General Assembly of the United Nations decided in December 1972 to establish a small secretariat based in Nairobi, Kenya. UNEP thus became the first UN body to be located in a developing country.

In addressing the question of agrochemicals, the Stockholm Conference had this to say:

"The existing international activities for the exchange of information and cooperative research and technical assistance to developing countries should be strengthened to support national programmes with particular reference to basic research on ecological effects of pesticides and fertilizers and on dose and timing of fertilizers application and their effects on soil productivity and the environment."

The Stockholm Conference, as indeed all the great debates of the 1970s, came out with one clear, persistent message: that in all efforts to maximize the production of man's basic needs including food, the ecological basis on which that very production depends must not be destroyed. This message has now become the guiding factor within which development strategies of the 1980s can and are being shaped. The International Development Strategy for the 3rd United Nations decade puts it this way: "There is need to ensure an economic development process that is environmentally sustainable over the long run and which protects the ecological balance."

It is gratifying to note that long before the Stockholm Conference, indeed for half a century, the International Scientific Centre of Fertilizers has continuously worked on improving plant production and quality through the proper use of fertilizers. The fact that CIEC has devoted the 9th World Congress to "The Role of Fertilizers in World Plant Production at Present and in the Future" is yet another demonstration of the important role CIEC is playing in world agriculture. In addressing this topic, this meeting is tackling an issue of crucial importance because the world food situation is continually deteriorating; by the year 2000, demand for food production will have doubled in developing countries and the global population will