

**Welcome Speech by Pr. Dominique Belpomme**  
**In memory of Lorenzo Tomatis and Stéphane Hessel**  
**In tribute to James Loevelock**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the fourth Congress of the Paris Appeal. We are celebrating today its tenth Anniversary.

First of all, please let me remind you of the three key articles of this appeal, signed in 2004 by numerous scientific key players worldwide, all the Medical Associations of the then 25 European Member States, 1,500 NGOs and 350,000 European citizens:

Article 1: Most diseases are caused by chemical pollution;

Article 2: due to this pollution, children are in great danger;

Article 3: Should we go on polluting the environment as is the case today, the Human race itself is in great danger.

Ten years have gone by. The time has come to assess what this Appeal has changed.

It has no doubt contributed decisively to the implementation of the European REACH regulation, which, as you already know, has introduced control measures to market chemicals.

In France, it has also undoubtedly contributed to the promulgation of the Environmental Charter of 2004 in the form of the constitutional law of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2005.

It has also redirected medical research in the field of the environment in Europe and in different places across the world. This has been quite noticeable in France, in particular, with the spectacular turnaround of INSERM that now focuses on demonstrating the links between cancer and the environment.

And finally, it has contributed to raising civil society's awareness as regards the dangers of pollution and the need to protect nature.

Unfortunately, many highly detrimental downsides remain:

- the absence of a coherent policy in terms of environment and public health, with notably the fact that the environmental issue in the emergence of today's diseases and affections is definitely not addressed,

- the absence of environmental prevention which results from it,

- a health situation which, despite WHO's analyses and recommendations, is degrading all over the world, with notably the striking rise of the incidence of cancers, Type 2 diabetes, obesity, Alzheimer's disease, psychiatric affections, which are as many worldwide public health scourges, and in children, the increase in congenital malformations and autism. Today, in so called developed countries, one child out of 100 is autistic! A record high!

To this, we should add the persistence in the world of infections, such as paludism and tuberculosis, which had been wrongly said to be stemmed thanks to medical advances during the creation of WHO in 1948, and the onset of entirely new viral infections, such as AIDS or else the Ebola epidemic, infections that are here to remind us that the rape of nature comes at a human cost, that medical advances have their own limits and that prevention remains the only way to avoid such public health scourges.

- And finally, the denial of public and political authorities faced with current scientific data, proving unequivocally that the degradation of the environment harms our health, whereas "polluters-don't-pay" continue to pollute without restraint and pollution victims have actually become the "polluted pay".

The current fight must thus essentially place itself at the moral and judicial level and it is not without significance that this fourth congress is taking place here at UNESCO, in the country of human rights. In accordance with articles 2 and 3 of the Paris Appeal, it is indeed obvious that any pollution, any destruction of nature, because they result in attacks on health, life and the survival of future generations, must be considered as a crime and is therefore liable to prosecution.

In that respect, the contacts that I have had with some and other people, and in particular with the International Criminal Court, have led me to believe that a solution can be found by considering pollution and the destruction of nature as a public health crime, and even, as suggested by some countries around the world, a genuine crime against humanity, when the crime involves the survival of a whole people, and this in accordance with the principle of

integrity of future generations and thus the survival of the human race. For the damages caused today impact planet Earth as a whole and what is at stake here is humanity's fate.

This Congress will thus have three sessions: the first one dedicated to taking stock of current scientific knowledge; the second one, to contemporary societal and political drifts; and the last one, to legal considerations aimed at matching the law with current societal evolutions and scientific considerations.

And yet, in its necessary evolution, the law could easily be sidetracked, if considering only concepts and ideologies, it neglected unbiased percepts fundamentally provided by science, in other words the natural laws of physics, chemistry, biology and finally medicine. For unlike any philosophy or even, in a way, human societal laws, the laws of nature as recognized by science are fully determined and thus cannot be modified and adapted to the human law. They are coercive. Hence the urgent necessity to bring together law and science, law specialists and scientists, and more specifically in terms of health, law specialists, biologists and medical doctors.

During this congress, two amendments to the Paris Appeal will be proposed and submitted to vote:

- Extending the Appeal to physical pollution, in particular, electromagnetic pollution and microbial pollution;
- Extending the Appeal to the legal field, by stipulating that the most severe pollution and destruction actions of nature are actually a criminal offense liable to prosecution.

And to conclude it is under the aegis of scientific truth, the independence of research and ethic that this Congress is held, within the framework of an international assembly of researchers, law specialists, NGOs and politicians.

I would like to thank all of you for supporting this new initiative.

Pr Dominique Belpomme