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INTRODUCTION SPEECH – BIOVISION ALEXANDRIA 2004

As President and Co-Founder of the World Life Sciences Forum BioVision, I am especially pleased to witness the steady development of BioVision Alexandria, with a challenging programme, keynote speakers and participants of great quality.

When we launched the World Life Sciences Forum initiative in 1998, with the former Prime Minister Mr Raymond Barre and the Permanent Secretary of the Academy of Sciences, Prof. François Gros, we knew that, more sooner than later, the concept would grow and expand. We also knew that, finally, BioVision would become more global and encompass as a matter of priority the North-South and South-South issues.

To see today, very concretely, the results carried out here in Alexandria, thanks to the steady involvement of our Vice Chairman Prof. Serageldin and his team does, indeed, in retrospect, give us pride and hopes for the further development of this essential platform.

Life Sciences are clearly the fastest and most challenging path towards shaping the 21st Century, to the benefit of all stakeholders involved. However, this development will only occur, once again to the benefit of **both** developed and developing countries, under the key following conditions:

- Dialogue is of the essence: a proper public perception leading to the shared understanding of threats and opportunities is essential. Progress cannot be forced upon Society at-large and a continuous flow of objective communication around key issues is the only way forward.
- Bioethics should be enhanced at all stages, to facilitate the acceptance of fascinating new fields of activities.
- Concrete actions should be given top priority, especially with regards to North-South relationships. An adapted regulatory environment, along with a real involvement of the Pharma and AgroFood industries must lead to concrete partnerships. Foundations like ours and many others are here to catalyse and cement these priorities, with a growing understanding that a progress **not equally shared** is a step backward more than anything else.

The future is no longer what is used to be: putting together on an equal footage Science, Society and Industry is the "Secret Recipe" of BioVision ... and we count on your active participation during the coming days, here in Alexandria, to start building up the necessary network leading to concrete actions. And please, during your many contacts in the next days: no fiddling around, you certainly do not have to agree on everything with everybody; but however, please keep in mind at all time that you have huge responsibilities regarding the future and it is everyone 's duty to address doubts, reduce disagreement, define priorities and underline precautions to be taken. Diversity in opinions and cross-breeding of ideas will lead to unexpected opportunities, again to the benefit of both the developed and developing nations.

We do not only have the moral obligation of preparing the future, but also the duty of repairing the past: Wealth & Health in a secure environment are at stake, and the development of Life Sciences will contribute to this evolution, if not this Revolution...