



ADDRESS

**by the President of the Republic of Croatia
Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović**

**at the
United Nations General Assembly 2018**

**"Making the United Nations relevant to all people:
Global leadership and shared responsibilities
for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies"**

New York, 26 September 2018

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,
Madam President (María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés),

We live in times of great opportunities and serious challenges. We are more interconnected than ever, yet the world remains divided in many ways.

Technological developments have enabled our world to truly become a global village. Our citizens have become global citizens and are well informed and strongly driven by developments around the world. They expect global leadership in these times of rapid changes and great complexity and look for inspiration in all of us.

What is it that people are looking for today? What is it that they expect of a leader? Mighty words? They don't really matter much anymore. Mighty deeds? Yes, indeed. But, foremost, what they expect of us are the simplest of gestures that bring us together, that show our compassion and respect for each other. They expect integrity and inspiration.

This summer – of all things – football triggered a global response, uniting us for a moment in our common aspirations for excellence.

After the success of the Croatian national team, I have received so many congratulatory letters and messages from all corners of the world. From China, Australia and Saudi Arabia, from France, to Trinidad and Tobago and Nepal. I thank everyone for their kind words.

"Team CROATIA really played well... they won our hearts", kindly said Vishal Bagale of India, and Shabbir Allam wrote in Croatian: „SVI KAO JEDNO!“ – „We're all like one!“

Gilberto Castillo of Colombia pointed out: "(Final) Muy merecida para un país que se supera como gran ejemplo, después de las duras situaciones históricas vividas. Todo un ejemplo a seguir".

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Opshori Nondona, a 14 year old girl from Dhaka, Bangladesh, was especially persistent in getting her message through: "This year, the whole world has recognized a small beautiful country – Croatia – through the passion and the power of football. Now the world knows how powerful a small beautiful nation can be."

This is just a fraction of such messages and what most of them had in common, what I could read through each of them, is that Croatia – a country not big in the size of its territory or the number of its population or its economic means – has thus become a metaphor for all of these kind people, of what a country can do to inspire others and to arrive on top of the world, winning the hearts of people worldwide, and rousing enthusiasm that each of their countries can do the same.

"The value of a nation is not measured by its size," underlined Bernard Stern of France. And, indeed, to excel you don't need physical size; you need heart and persistence, and above all, you need to share a vision and to work together to make it happen. It is not the size of one's territory that matters; it is the size and quality of ideas. Magnitude is not measured only in volume, but even more in determination to reach the goal.

Individual players might have shown great skill and technique in the field, but the reason that they triumphed was because they played together as a team.

Excellencies,

The United Nations is a place where we must show our willingness to act together and play together as a team. Our adversaries are many: poverty, hunger, terrorism, extremism and instability, lack of education, gender inequality and exclusion of women in many societies, environmental hazards, endangered security and trampled human dignity. We – the leaders – should think of ourselves as a team that needs to work together, to take advantage of our strengths and to

address our weaknesses in order to make our world a better place and to inspire excellence globally.

We should lead not only in managing crises and solving problems, but in spreading hope and optimism as well. We must demonstrate our humanity, solidarity and compassion. In doing so we must, above all else, respect each other. Respect is the most valuable asset that we have in interpersonal and international relations.

It is our responsibility as UN Member States to maintain the relevance, the effectiveness, and the efficiency of our Organization and to be up-to-the-task for whatever challenge that may arise.

However, raising awareness on the most pressing issues is not enough. We must also push for the adoption of the necessary instruments and frameworks and, most of all, secure their implementation. Without such an approach this podium will remain merely a self-serving global stage. Just words without deeds.

Throughout the years, we have learned, often the hard way, that governments and international organizations alike have their limits. This has also taught us of the value and importance of inclusiveness and of the important role that the private sector, academia, civil society and brilliant individuals can have in many different fields.

Croatia has many a Luka Modrić, and not only in sports. Our people excel in so many areas: Marin Soljačić who is a modern day Nikola Tesla and develops a wireless transfer of energy; Iva Tolić with her breakthrough work in molecular cell biology; Ivan Mrvoš, developer of smart city furniture for the cities of future; Mate Rimac with his electric cars, to name just a few among the countless others.

Let us push formal limits of our organizations away from us! Let us embrace talent that is abundant around us!

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring the integrity of the financial statements and for providing a clear audit trail. The text also mentions that proper record-keeping is essential for identifying and correcting errors in a timely manner.

2. The second part of the document focuses on the role of internal controls in preventing fraud and misstatements. It highlights that a strong internal control system is necessary to ensure that all transactions are properly authorized, recorded, and reviewed. The text also notes that internal controls should be designed to be effective and efficient, and should be regularly evaluated and updated as needed.

Let us inspire through science and innovation, through our brilliant individuals at home and in our well established, hardworking diaspora around the world. Let us inspire through our dedicated and tireless work in the United Nations. Deeds, not words. Inclusion, not exclusion or isolation. Empowerment. Motivation. Those are all keys to success.

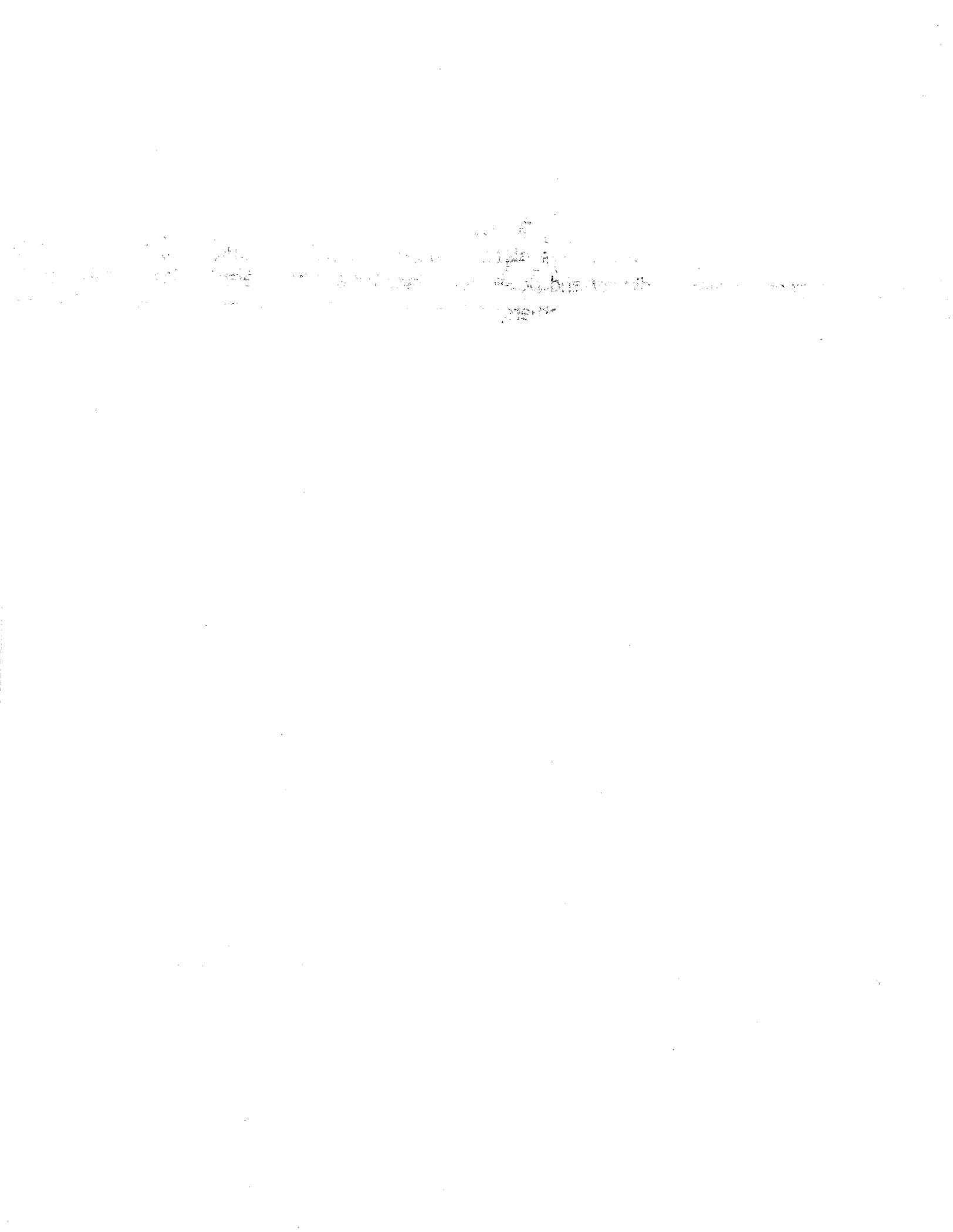
We are the global village, but more often than not, we tend to miss the opportunity to bring the global agenda to our homes, to our communities and our families. Likewise, we forget to include our homes, communities and families on the global agenda. It takes great tragedies caused by catastrophes, global crises, wars and climate change, to remind us of what we all stand to lose.

In today's world, such an approach embodied in multilateralism is under ever-increasing strain. This is of particular concern since the most important issues for the mankind cannot be resolved by any state single-handedly, or in isolation. Multilateralism is indispensable, but I would agree with those who call for changes in the multilateral system. We should not be complacent, and we need to rethink decades old mechanisms and instruments in order to adapt them to the modern times and contemporary needs.

Excellencies,

As we celebrate two very important anniversaries this year – 70 years of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and 25 years of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action – it is a fitting occasion to remember that respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law has always been a precondition for long-term stability, peace and development.

We should not forget the 70th Anniversary of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide either. We must learn from the tragedies of Srebrenica and Rwanda, "a shame for United Nations" as described by the great Secretary-General Kofi Annan, to whom I pay a special tribute. These darkest hours must never be forgotten.



Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year Croatia marked its fifth year of membership in the European Union. Croatia is a telling example of the transformative force of the EU membership, of the benefits of accession to the area where peace, freedom, human dignity and prosperity are standards, not mere ideals. For these reasons, among others, Croatia strongly supports further EU enlargement to our south-eastern neighbourhood.

Resolving all outstanding legacies of war, while constructively engaging in regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations is essential. Within this framework we will continue to focus especially on the rights of minorities, missing persons, war crimes jurisdiction, victims of war, and domestic processing of war crimes.

Good and mutually beneficial neighbourly relations depend on a large degree on the words coming from across the border. For inflammatory and revisionist rhetoric, spurred by the need for domestic political needs, takes just a moment to be spoken; however, to repair the damage caused by takes much, much longer.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, our closest neighbour and a country of utmost importance for Croatia, we see a risk of legal uncertainty and political and institutional instability after the upcoming October elections, due to the failure to amend the electoral framework so that it fully respects the rights and equality of the three constituent peoples – Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs – in line with the Constitutional Court decision on the legitimate and proportionate representation of constituent peoples at all levels of government, including the Presidency.

Although the Belgrade-Priština dialogue is for the two sides to resolve, we should be cautious and extremely careful when it comes to proposals with potential regional implications, most notably the ideas regarding territorial (ex)changes. Otherwise, we may (re)open the Pandora's box

of potential new territorial claims, potentially provoking serious instability and security threats.

There are inspiring developments demonstrating brave leadership as well. We warmly welcome the signing of the agreement on the name issue which has been recently reached between Skopje and Athens and hope that the referendum this Sunday will represent a crucial impetus for the country's successful continuation of its Euro-Atlantic integration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

By adopting the 2030 Agenda, along with the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, we have sent a powerful message that there is hope for a brighter future.

However, to succeed in our endeavours, we need to mobilize all partners to work together. This way we can achieve social progress, protect the environment, create economic growth and build a more just, stable and peaceful world.

Runaway climate change is one of the most serious threats that we regularly witness – from heat waves and forest fires, no longer contained to California or Mediterranean, but also in places such as Scandinavia – to historic typhoons in Japan or in the Philippines, and the melting of ice sheets on the Planet's poles.

No country can shield itself from the negative effect of climate change. Croatia is no exception to that. With over one thousand islands, islets and reefs and a rich history of Mediterranean heritage, implementing goals of the 2030 Agenda now is crucial for Croatia's future.

All over the world, Croatia included, we are recording changes in sea temperature and have witnessed unprecedented and irreversible changes in ecosystems. In Croatia's beautiful Adriatic Sea, one of the cleanest in the world, we have already registered more than 20 new

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species of tropical fish, some of them extremely invasive that can irreparably shift the environmental balance.

Soon we may be exposed to the danger of rising sea levels, which is already a question of existence for many small islands around the world. It is estimated that the sea level in the Adriatic will rise by almost half a meter by 2100, submerging parts of world heritage places and treasures like Split, Trogir or Dubrovnik. This is why climate action is not an abstract issue, but a serious matter requiring our constant and undivided attention.

One of the most important climate action and sustainable development issues for Croatia is reversing demographic trends on our islands. They are turning into places where schools are without children, and churches record funerals rather than baptisms and weddings.

And yet, the problems that many of these islands face are common globally. We need to improve affordable transportation and connections between the islands and the mainland. We need to resolve water supply and provide clean water and sanitation. We need to invest in education, technology, science and innovation so that societies and families will once again flourish on the islands.

Blue Growth could be a solution. It is a long-term strategy to support sustainable growth in the marine and maritime sectors as a whole. Seas are drivers of the economy and have great potential for innovation and growth, set to grow at twice the rate of the mainstream economy by 2030.

Growth is especially welcome in a number of areas, such as: sustainable coastal tourism, new health benefits, better connectivity of islands, sustainable blue growth and jobs, marine biotechnology, renewable energy, managing maritime ecological threats and preserving ecosystems and biodiversity, but also improving safety and security in terms of maritime traffic and cross-border maritime pollution.

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One of the issues that I would like to emphasize today in particular is marine litter, a problem of increasing concern that threatens marine life in all the world's oceans, impacting more than 600 marine species. The Croatian coastal areas are severely affected by poorly managed waste from our Southern Adriatic neighbours.

We have to address the rising problem of plastic pollution in our seas and oceans urgently if we want to leave a liveable world to future generations. Plastic debris – and each year around eight million tons of it ends up in our oceans and seas – is particularly worrying because it is resistant to environmental breakdown.

Plastic pollution does not only impact sea life, it also carries toxic pollutants into the food chain with us humans on top of it. We can solve this problem and we can start by educating and engaging everyone in a conversation to rethink plastic, by challenging society's perception that this indestructible substance can be treated as "disposable".

Particular attention should be given to The Ocean Cleanup project in this regard. It is designing and developing the first feasible method to rid the world's oceans of plastic and its first mission to remove 50% of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch in just five years started several weeks ago. In the media they have called it Pac Man, referring to a popular old videogame.

The young man behind the invention is a brilliant scientist of Croatian origin living in the Netherlands Bojan Štat, and he well deserves to be given credit here today, beneath the UN logo, which clearly shows our oceans.

My country is already actively preparing for the fulfilment of its obligations under the Paris Agreement.

Excellencies,

This was the year of UN reforms in more ways than one; not only through results achieved in the pivotal sectors of peace and security,

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is essential for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. It highlights the need for consistent data collection practices and the use of advanced analytical techniques to derive meaningful insights from the data.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of technology in data management and analysis. It discusses how modern software solutions can streamline data collection, storage, and processing, thereby improving efficiency and accuracy.

4. The fourth part of the document addresses the challenges associated with data management, such as data quality, security, and privacy. It provides strategies to mitigate these risks and ensure that the data remains reliable and secure throughout its lifecycle.

5. The fifth part of the document concludes by summarizing the key findings and recommendations. It stresses the importance of a data-driven approach in decision-making and the need for continuous monitoring and improvement of data management processes.

development and UN management, but also in the transformational nature of our mutual efforts to make our Organization fit for the 21st century. The world has changed profoundly since 1945 and the birth of the UN. In our reforms it is essential that we strike the right balance between the maintenance of the basic framework based on the UN Charter and the flexibility required by new realities and contemporary needs. In pursuing UN reforms we must not lose sight of the 2030 Agenda.

We need a UN capable of coping with unceasing changes and growing challenges in the international arena, be it in the field of regional security, conflict management, threats to the environment, human rights, or frontline technologies that transform profoundly the fields of labour and disarmament alike.

I use this opportunity to highly commend the Secretary-General and his team for their tireless reform efforts. There is still a lot of work ahead of us, but we should be content with the results and trajectories established in 2018.

Ladies and gentlemen,

If we want to move forward, and leave no one behind; if we truly strive to make the UN more relevant and, in doing so, more effective, we also need to realize that the UN is and should be much more than just New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi, or any conference location.

Multilateralism starts from our own homes and in our own minds. It must not be an annual event. It needs to be our daily routine, a way of doing business in the world.

Everything that we want to achieve globally, everything that we have agreed so far under this dome, will be easier to accomplish with the understanding and support of our citizens.



In order to face all the adversities and adversaries that I mention in my speech, both as delivered in the more complete, written version that you have received, we must show determination to take on the risk of decision-making. We must open ourselves to new ideas. And we must show emotion, empathy and, above all, enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is contagious!

As Nelson Mandela (Madiba), whose centenary we celebrated two days ago, said, "*it always seems impossible until it's done*".

Thank you.