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## ADDRESS AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE

*Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Excellencies,*

We all should thank Prof. Djurović, President of the Montenegrin Academy of Sciences and Arts, organizing this important meeting with a really challenging topic. “Transition to a new Society”. This means change and we should focus and consider on elements, how we as Academicians can contribute toward a new society.

When we are speaking on a transition toward a new society, what is a transition? The transition is nothing else what we experience ourselves in our lifetime. The transition is a typical form of life. When we attended yesterday our schools and when we are looking forward for tomorrow, we experience many changes for the next years.

Everybody faces a lot of challenges and possibilities during his life. But when we are looking positively to a transition then we find three major points which I would like to elucidate positively. Why I say positive. That’s also the idea of Prof. Djurović, to make a positive pointing out of it. Because mostly our colleagues have a negative connotation for change and expecting transition. That’s is a typical problem of aging. I am old enough knowing that elder are hesitating looking in the eyes of a transition. But this is natural, but a challenge. Why? First at all we have an enormous progress, and with all our knowledge, with all our possibilities in the sciences we indeed are capable to change entirely the picture of the whole world. To a better? – That is the question. A small detail: Yesterday when I was droven from my home to the Vienna airport I said to the driver: “When I was a young boy there was on the site of the Channel of the Danube not one building existing. Today it’s full of big houses and a refinery.” That is for example a change in my life.

We have a fantastic progress. This is fantastic due to communication and information technology. It is really fascinating what we can do and I see how quickly the kids are learning the information technology. I was really surprised when my small grandson sent me an e-mail. He is 7 years old, and said me to my birthday,

“Hello, Opa, all the best!” And I responded via e-mail in a new way of communication in the family.

On the other hand side I will look to progress due to fantastic research, with all the positive inventions. On the other side we have terrible weapons. This makes me afraid and where I have many concerns. I am pretty sure that many wars are started due to too much available weapons and the war industry is cruel enough to start a war only to sell their own weapons. That’s a negative site of all our information and technology. And you have today weapons which can kill instantly thousands people with one bomb only. I would say that’s the negative effect from our progress.

The second, we have due to medicine, due to the sanitation, due all the hygienics an aging society. In a new interdisciplinary course, on Social Gerontology, we can address aging people who are retired over 65 years. In my country it was usual, when somebody had his hundredth anniversary it was clear that the Major congratulated and this was mentioned in the newspaper. But we have now in Austria 1.500 people over hundred years and among them we have 80 people over 110 years. 110! Ladies and Gentlemen, you see, when you arrive in a god state your 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, then you have a fantastic chance to survive more than 25 years. But this has an enormous implication to our society, to everything in our society, with the working problem, with the youth. We have a birth deficit, which effects our pension system. The aged people are in a really good health situation. I recall very good when I started cardiac surgery 40 years ago it was an exclusion criteria to a heart operation when the patient has been 60 years old. We had’nt operated him in the 70 ies. Today the health status is such as good that we operate up to 100 years. My eldest patient was 98 years old. Don’t believe what is written in the newspapers on health, all the junk what is unhealthy and so on. But under the line, with all our unhealthy environment we are aging, and becoming elder.

I see a problem with migration too. Ladies and Gentlemen, migration was always and in small details within families you are witnessing marriages of our children, where one part is coming from one part and the other from another part of your country or continent, this is small migration. But the real migration is starting when you have it on a larger scale. There are severe problems in our country with immigrating people outside of Europe. This is the reason why we have a lot of right minded people fighting against immigrants. This effected Switzerland that the Swiss voted against uncontrolled migration, they would like rather to have a limited contingent. But on the other hand, Ladies and Gentlemen, migration is a natural thing. I would say physiological. Immigrants are bringing other cultures, other possibilities, another knowledge and it’s good for our total culture. And today we see another effect of migration. Many immigrants are not integrating in our society. Without speaking the language which is spoken in the guest country gives a lack of integration to a country. And we have, I will say it by name, we have the severe problems with religions too, some religions are really giving some problems too.

But, Ladies and Gentlemen, the transition is a form of a life. Charles V was always saying “Plus Ultra” and the Plus Ultra fits to our modern time until now. Today we have to be more careful with Plus Ultra. We face a population bomb, over 7 bil-

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lion people living on this planet and I was calculating a little bit, which problems we give to the whole planet. It's starting with our own breathing, how much CO<sub>2</sub> we put into the air, then 7 billion liters of urine we are producing daily. We are very effective in spoiling our planet. And therefore it's necessary to have a look on sustainability of our doing and how we can manage the whole problems. This is a problem of our global society on this planet and everybody can contribute.

What can an Academy do? I would say the simplest is that we are starting in our own families. That we are starting with the education of our young generation, of our grandchildren, show them the essence of the whole problems in life. One thing is very very important, this is education and stressing out the values. We are speaking a lot on values and mostly secondary values are addressed. The highest value is the life itself. And we have to train, starting from the basis of our society and not from super institutions, from the basis where you reach your grandchildren, your children, further your neighbours up to the society. That's the way to show them the quality of life in sense of the values. All our doing is serving life as highest value, leading to the question of God, our creator. But all is a radical change. We are leaving an imperialistic exploitation of our earth and our persons. To overcome this, motivation, cultivation of our planet is mandatory. We have to keep in mind that everything what we are doing must be a service to man.

And in this sense, I thank Prof. Djurović with his team for organizing this meeting. You see, we start in a positive connotation. We have a lot to do and we have not to make lamentations. We have to start for our grandchildren immediately. The time left is short for us.

Thank you!

