

BIOPOLITICS AND GOVERNMENTAL POLICY

[The Honorable Dogancan Akyurek](#)

Minister of Environment
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Madam Chairman and distinguished delegates, I would first like to extend my gratitude to you for organizing the Biopolitics International Organisation meeting in my country this year. I strongly believe this meeting will be of great benefit to the people of today and the future.

Mr. Minister of Tourism has just referred to my very deep personal interest regarding any environmental topic that exists. As he said previously, the economy and the environment should go hand in hand. Let me add to this and go a little further by saying that the economy and the environment are like husband and wife. They marry according to Catholic rules where divorce is out of the question. Therefore they have to get along with each other for a life-time.

If one looks at the recent history of the world, for instance 500 years ago, the world's human population was around 300 or 400 million, maybe less. The European population was about 40 or 50 million. The Greater Roman Empire numbered 60 million, the population of Turkey today. From there on everything gets bigger and larger. Technology is also being changed. Today we are close to 5.4 billion in the world and at the end of the century, just before the third millennium, the world population is predicted to pass 6 billion and reach 10 by the year 2010.

Everything gets bigger and larger but only one thing remains as it is, the globe, the world. Therefore, we have to decide how to fit in this world together with the flora and fauna. We have to use everything in the world with extreme caution. Today no one can just say "this is my house, whether I keep it clean or I pollute it". No one can say that "this is my table" or "this is my country", since everyone has a relationship with the neighboring countries, cities or states. Therefore we have to act together and make our solidarity stick accordingly.

We can explain what the environment is by saying that it is to keep the balance between ecological factors such as water, earth and animal life. For this purpose, the second World Environmental Summit will be held in 1992 in Brazil. 174 countries within the United Nations and sixty thousand delegates will attend this world conference. Those countries will put their signatures to specific rules and regulations which must be obeyed. In this conference global environmental problems will be on the agenda, such as emissions of gases – which in my view is very important – and also pollution of the seas, waters and the air.

Recently, Turkey has established a Ministry of Environment. Allow me to say that I am an infant in this area, a 5-month-old Minister in an 8-month-old Ministry. It does not matter. As long as we realize how important environmental issues are, we shall overcome many of the global problems that we are facing at the moment.

I fully intend to honor this and give a comprehensive education to my people, especially the students and children. People need schools. Our people, especially the women, are very interested and very sensitive about the environmental problems in our country. According to the Government's program, next year environmental courses are going to be initiated in the educational program.

Upon settling the legal problems, our efforts will be directed to opening some voluntary schools for illiterate children. We have some faults, as all nations do, and these must be alleviated so as to allow for the proper protection of the environment.

A lot of success has been achieved during the past 8 months. Last week we signed the Black Sea Convention, among the six countries having shores to the Black Sea. We have useful conventions like the Mediterranean and the Barcelona Convention, signed a long time ago. As you may already know, the Mediterranean and Barcelona Conventions have continued and the secretariats are located in Greece. The Black Sea Conference secretariat will be located in Istanbul. The scope of this convention along with the others, is to unite peoples, nations, countries and continents.

Finally, in order to overcome the environmental problems, the formula we suggest is protection before pollution is created, since the cost to prevent is far less than to cure. Therefore, environmental protection is a priority. In my country, the effort is to establish a policy line before waters, soil, seas are polluted. We will try to keep them clean and, in addition, try to rehabilitate the areas that have already been polluted.

I would like to thank the people from the universities of Turkey, as well as all the other participants, for setting up such important organizations to teach people about environmental protection. I came here not to talk but to listen. Therefore, I will finish my speech and listen to those academicians.

The Honorable **B. Dogancan Akyurek** is Minister of Environment of Turkey. Before becoming active in politics, he worked as Chief of the General Directorate, Trade Representative and Deputy Representative of the U.S. Representation of Sea Transportation Trade, as well as a free counsellor on sea transportation. Since 1983, he has been continuously elected as Istanbul Deputy to the Turkish Parliament. From 1987 to 1991 he served as Deputy General Manager of the Democrat Central Party. In 1991 he was elected with the True Path Party and has become Minister of the newly established Ministry of Environment of Turkey.