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Good morning everyone,

My task in the next seven minutes is to summarize the B track, which was B-1 Infectious Diseases, B-2 New Developments in the Genome Era, and B-3 GMOs and Innovation in Food, Fibers and Fuel. And I might share with you the instructions we received for our comments this morning, which was: this is not to be a scientific report, it is not to be a journalistic report from the sessions, but it is to be our own very personal biased views about what we feel were the important points made during the discussions and how we react to them.

Now, my reaction to what we have heard in these three sessions, focused on science and technology and global health and agriculture, was actually summarized very nicely by Mahatma Gandhi, on a visit to London, shortly after the independence of India. The world of course was very interested in this man who changed the course of history with his leadership of a non-violent revolution. And during his visit he was asked what he thought of western civilization. And Gandhi's answer, I think it is very relevant here, he said: "I think it would be a good idea."

So what did we hear in these three sessions? First is we do have enormous problems; from the costs and lives, the quality of life; from the chronic diseases, cancer and heart diseases and others; to the emergence of infectious diseases around the world, due to population growth, urbanization, globalization, and yet to come global warming. Oh, and by the way, we will be unable to feed the 9 billion people who will be on this planet in 2050.

Now it is certainly true that science and technology is allowing us to make progress against these problems, but as Elias Zerhouni said yesterday, we are not yet at sufficient scale. Now that progress has been quite dramatic; from better surveillance systems in infectious diseases, to new medicines and vaccines that already exist, and of course some of the 19th century public health actions. And the future holds great promise, both in GMO, foods and agriculture and the genome. And in our session on the genome, a very important question was asked, which was who is going to pay for all this, and quite frankly nobody had a good answer. So that's really what I would like to explore here this morning.

So if I told you for example the US economy spends 16.8 percent of GDP on information technology, education, entertainment, we would all be fine with that. But 16.8 percent on health care, or if the topic is GMO foods, we are all very unhappy. Though it really shouldn't surprise anybody I suppose that as the population gets older and wealthier, we spend more. But why this anger, why this frustration with science and technology in these two important areas. It is really two-fold, it is cost, well I would say three, cost – it costs too much, access – those who need it can't get access to it, and quite frankly the science is not very well understood.

Now every system I know around the world is focused on cost: reducing it, or shifting to someone else. And the problem for all of us in this room is that cost of the system is our income. So pretty clearly, the light of science and technology and health and agriculture, is being overwhelmed by the darkness of cost, access and understanding of the science. So what to do about this?

I'll have five quick suggestions. One is those of us working in these fields need to celebrate our successes more. People are dying, because of lack of access to food, to care, to treatment. However, millions more, tens of millions more are benefitting from the work of the President's emergency plan for AIDS relief, the global fund, the involvement of pharmaceutical companies, in the less developed area of the world, the work of the NGOs. Let's give them some credit: they may do more.

Secondly, world war, war with the virus, with the bacteria, with food shortages. Let us not be at war with each other. Let us remember we are fighting a virus, we are fighting food shortages, we are not fighting each other.

Third is: do what you can with what you have. It is certainly true: people are dying of neglected diseases, so called neglected diseases. However for many of these, tuberculosis, pneumonia, blinding trachoma, river blindness, and treatments are available for pennies a day. And for the last two, treatment is available free. So do what you can, others may join in. We need that leadership, we need that community involvement. Demonstrate to people that science and technology is the solution, not the problem.

Fourth and this may be the biggest thing that came out of this meeting, is the need for scientists to take personal responsibility in educating others about what they do: the public, healthcare professionals, politicians, and media. And recognize that this need room for education also reflects a need for greater trust and local capacity building.

Finally, in order to continue doing what we do, we need to make the case for further investment in science and technology, in health care and food supply. We need to talk about health, not sickness. We need to talk about agricultural productivity, not GMO food. We need to talk about prevention, not treatment. The future is really very exciting. We heard the possibilities of GMO and agriculture, what they can do for productivity. We heard about the OMICS, and others, and how that may impact high informational clinical trials, we heard about the IPS technology, which offers the prospects of organ repair; and the one that was announced Sunday, which wasn't discussed at this meeting, that scientists at the University College London, have been able, in rats so far, to mimic the beneficial impact of starvation, which is a prolongation of life and a healthier life. They found that by blocking the action of S6K1 protein, rats will live 20% longer, and avoided age related diseases. That is the future I would like to be part of.

Thank you.