

Member for Flinders

Liz Penfold MP

Parliamentary Travel Report

**III WORLD CONGRESS OF RURAL
WOMEN**

2-4 OCTOBER 2002

MADRID SPAIN

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Objectives of Travel

- 1. To be a representative South Australian woman attending the prestigious congress.**

The South Australian government recognised the current and potential role of rural women and in particular women involve in primary industries by offering bursaries to South Australian women.

As the Member for Flinders representing a huge rural electorate I believe it was an invaluable opportunity to tap into the valuable resource of fellow rural women.

- 2. To network with other rural women on a world wide stage.**

- 3. To research / observe the possibility of markets, the effects of farm subsidies, the use food quality as a trade barrier and the implication of these trends for Eyre Peninsula and South Australia.**

Background

- 160 Australian Women attended the congress joining with 1500 women from 78 countries.
- Senator Hon Judith Troeth, Parliamentary Secretary for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry lead the Australian delegation

Diary:

Private travel

Wednesday 25th September – Tuesday 1st October 2002

Departed Australia, travelled to Paris, ex Port Lincoln, Adelaide, Melbourne, Singapore (almost 23 hours travelling time)

Personal travel throughout France noting culture, attitude/acceptance of GMO's in the marketplace, market opportunities for Eyre Peninsula products and tourism
Visited the Somme Battlefields and paid respects to Australians who paid the highest price.

Saturday 5th October – Wednesday 9th October 2002-12-02

Rail travel throughout Spain again looking at markets and opportunities, windfarms, olive groves, Science Culture Centre – noting use of antibiotics in GMO work.

Diary Report on Congress:

Tuesday 1st October

Travel to Madrid, booked into hotel NH Embajada Santa Engracia

Wednesday 2nd October

Early morning left hotel utilising excellent underground train system.

Arrived at congress venue and met with Marie Lally from Lock on Eyre Peninsula currently National president of the Country Women's Association and and Lib Mc Clure, Manager Rural Affairs Primary Industries & Resources SA.

Registered for Congress.

Opening Lecture: 11.30-12.00

Rural Women in the Global Village.

Working Session 12.00-14.00 hrs:

Gender, sustainable development and food security.

Mrs Guo Ruixiang: now working for AusAid. Land ownership, access to credit, education, migration of males to the cities. Chinese women's issues.

Mrs Maria Cuvi: South American women's issues

Mrs Linda Swarcina: USA Food safety and inspection systems.

Mrs Isabel Peutz: European Commission. Spoke at length about going away from mass production to quality, the formation of a quality policy and the increase of membership of the UN. Mrs Peutz also spoke about disease, foot and mouth, mad cow and the problem of dioxins and hormones and the need for sustainable agriculture. My concern after listening to Mrs. Peutz was that there will be a major issue with quality being used as a trade barrier in the future.

Mrs Hajiya Aisha M S Ismail: Very impressive speaker (refer to Overview page.20). Nigeria has only had democracy for three years. HIV is at 60% of the population. Most aid programs have not worked but still paying the debt for them. Women make up 50% of farmers but are also the carers and food preparers.

Working Session 16.00-18.00 hrs:

Social and Territorial Equity

Rebecca Gryspan: Mexico

Latin America – Unemployment at 10%

7 million invisible working women in rural areas

Less than 10% of land to women (12% - 38% after law reform)

Loan no greater access 2% of loans

5% get training to do with farming.

Access to water - 43% only have access and 5% safe water.

Mexico up to 40%

Aim 100% of people must have access to power and water. Most people have no social security protection.

Mrs Sheena Boughen: Australia

Social Scientist, was in Green Peace, now works with Corporate bodies.

14 years in rural area – Dairy farm

Fear of challenging the status quo

Water – not separate from people social and environmental issue

Impact of economic issues and managing natural resources

Through lense of Economic Rationalism

Need to do things differently

Globalization

Vibrant Communities/Economies more important!!

Social and Economic Issues

Another way to change

Use the market force in Corporate Sector – new idea to help

Corporates make money

- A different perspective from women
 - give the resources to do things differently.
- Social impacts of Dairy Industry Change Study
 - Shifted Power because it provided new knowledge. Social Impact Study
- Needed just as much as economic impact studies

Mrs Blanca Fernandez Montenegro- Peru

An action plan with new policies and follow up procedures.

Gathered information on owning land.

Access to Education and Technology.

Needed to help exert pressure for change.

Men control the provision of water – farm / animals / household activities.

Loans – guarantees needed cost of financing the loans.

Mrs Mellouli – Tunisia – (no interpreter)

Thursday 3rd October

Working Session 10.00

The Role of Rural Women in Agricultural & Sustainable Rural Development

Hon. Mrs Rehmah Kassim: Malaysia.

90% of population have water and power

Poverty down from 50% - 8%

Critical Success factors

- Political Stability
- Policies that are well understood and translated
- Budget Support

With mechanisation, women's work on farm have dropped - diversifying into other mainstream income earning activities eg tourism (home stays, cottage industries, handicrafts), Value adding products and Government employment, paid social roles.

Mrs D Adela Backiel: USA

Summit – World Summit on Sustainable development. 40,000 delegates -3 Key outcomes

The Johanansberg Declaration

- Declaration
- Plan
- Public and private partnership to get actions on the ground.

Improve women's access to all resources, IT, land succession, water, credit, education, health

Adapting – technologies to address women's needs, farming, IT.-low cost technology for cooking and water.

Building Education and Capacity Building – access and opportunity to complete primary education and remove gender discrimination.

Making Women's needs visible -Data disaggregation by sex – women often not counted.

Gender aspects of work - perspective of women. (women undertaking the work but men own the land)

PPP - a way to move forward. 200 Partnerships now on Summit websites.

PPP's used to bring about:

- Actions

- Capitalise – all sections of society must be involved in decisions eg. 20 areas Congo basin, Launching Partnerships, Cutting hunger – Water supply, Natural Resource Management, Network of National Parks and Corridor

Economic Environment and Social aspects were all addressed.
Focus on turning words into actions.

Mrs Fran Freeman: Australia

ABARE - Australian Bureau for Agriculture & Resource Economics

Forces for change – Women in Agriculture

Twice as many women as men have better education. Women earn off farm income from professions. (50% in Health and Education)

Continuing Education = More Profitable Farms - even better if both men and women work off farm to some degree

Women – Financial Management of Farms

Small capacity building investments

Globalisation – Adjustment to pressures for change.

Subsidies – America, Japan, EU - greatest problem.

Mrs Angelina Heerens: European Commission

Director General for Agriculture

25% population of Europe live in rural areas, 50% women - 1 out of 5 farms have women in charge –

Participation in

Rural Tourism

Direct Sales

Development & Employment Policies

Cultural & Education

Mrs Jose Fernandez Aguerri: Spain

Issues: Weather – Access Roads, lack of access to health and education, loss of young people in rural areas (deserted villages), aged farmers

Quality products into Europe

Cooperatives have developed for marketing – buying

Mrs Marina Moya Moreno: Spain

ADESIMAN, rural development – non profit organisation

- Facilitate Development
- Direct benefit to members
- National Access
- Help with claims and matters
- Use and harness local resources

Working Session 12.00-14.00

Leadership & Involvement of Rural Women

Mrs Jan Fitzgerald: Australia

President Aust. Assoc. Women in Agriculture

“The Role of Rural Women in Agriculture and Sustainable Rural Development.”

Advice delivered with passion – Stand out from the flock, Persistence, Participation – *Consensus not confrontation* across all spectrums and the need to change perception.

Mrs Terry Gilbert: USA

American Women’s Bureau Ag Farming Office, very influential

Fewer urban people have an understanding of rural life

Farms down 6 million to 2 million farms

Promoting rural education in classroom (use farm examples for Maths, English etc) adopt a classroom city/country, include farms visits -Teachers exposed to agriculture

10% of disposable income spent on food

Special days – Build Understanding

Focus Media attention

National Agriculture Week / Farm – City Week

Mrs Sara Longwe: Kenya

A framework for Leadership and Mobilisation

Opposition – lots of window dressing, books, reports, etc but what is needed is commitment to gender equality and action to do something about it.

Dimensions -

1. Technical – Lack of Literacy skills must be tackled
2. Social – Freedom of movement - may be better to teach at church not school as women are there but are not in schools.

3. Gender specific needs - giving birth
Division of labour – household, farming, caring, cooking, water collection
Look at things from bottom up – lack of consultation – need to talk to women – e.g. put borehole in place with out consultation therefore not used.
Need Empowerment/Consultation of women.

Mrs Matilde Casa: COPA European Union

Subsidies are a question of survival of women farmers, few people work off farm- so they must have subsidies. Justifying subsidies.

Agro tourism – Innovation schemes of women

6 billion people on Planet, 3 billion of them rural therefore 1.5 billion rural women rural which is 25% of humanity

General lack of understanding of rural life and its importance, and the importance of women. Problem urban male bureaucrats
Mutual help and initiatives by women for women is needed.

General Discussions following session:

Question to Australia - What budget was given to rural women's program? Answer - Federal and state support leadership program from Farmbis also Director's courses available to women.

Discussion - Food security – Not to do with farming, or cleanliness rather diseases like mad cow etc. (Aseptic.) Globalisation – Wealth/Trade - Not production.
Subsidy reduction will not help small farmers, only big multi-nationals (opinion only)

Discussion – Globalisation

Can't afford very rich and very poor countries. How can this be changed?

Discussion – Andalusian – SPAIN

The written word puts down women - use Feminine gender in words

Discussion – Mrs Fitzgerald

At Globalisation Work shops global games are played. Markets and consumers but not farmers, are mentioned. Not taking into account money coming back to farmers.

Discussion – Participants want a voice – To help create real change in communities when they come home.

Discussion – Australian subsidies – Debate needed

Mrs Pilar Canto – Summary

1. Leadership Vs Organisations
2. Info to Non farming population / Women's leadership needed
3. Denounce current situations – development plans are blind to gender – needs to be taken into account by setting goals and strategies.
4. Objectives of Copa / Role of European Farmers / Skill of farm women / Need for participation/organisation.
5. Lack of space for debate
6. Globalisation
7. Subsidies

Working Session 16.00-18.00

Multi functionality in Agriculture and new opportunities for employment in the rural sector.

Chair – Mr Francisco Laberti: Spain

Spain's situation
Multi functionality
Production of food
Environment – Care / Preservation
Leisure for city people
Service – Rural areas
Safety and quality of food
Women – Need higher education – Management and family skills

Mr Albert Massot Marti:

European Parliament, Teacher at Uni and speaker on Agriculture Policy
Multi Functionality – Definition
Policy currently *non* functionality and women's worth not acknowledged in statistics and tax regimes. In Europe – women work in services etc.
New opportunities: Tourism – Service sector jobs close to cities. Access era (IT) is now, self employment, child care, home care, housing, Tourism (Revitalisation of culture history), Environmental services

Role of public authorities

Decentralisation, control by existing bureaucrats has to be broken, change administration and laws , good programs needed.

Training for new tasks must not strangle new opportunities.

Golf tourism – involves, tending golf courses, gardening, environment

Tourism – service eg catering

Need people to diagnose local problems and also teach new skills (eg TAFE)

Remove obstacles to potential projects , co ordination of these projects to allow establishment of new sources of employment

Business spirit needs nurturing. Trade union issues v's volunteers

2. Mrs Veronica Navarra: Italy

Owns dairy – Produces Parmesan Cheese

National Observatory – Represents Women's organisation. Encourage training, sharing of experience and modernisation of agriculture. Protection of consumers and promote competitiveness. Small to medium businesses are managed by women. 51% of children did not know where sugar, cotton etc came from similarly for bread.

Communication has its own role – need teaching farms for encouraging country values – understand origin of their foods and production processes. Status of farmers – Improve school farms also *touristic!*

Miss Fatma el Arbi: Tunisia

Government have improved infrastructure- power and roads.

Political willingness and support for farming. In 1990 civic and political rights improved. In 1987 President Benalea made a Ministry of Women and Family Affairs with subsidies for rural women and strategies for them to work out own needs.

6 aspects to the strategy -

- Participation of women
- Regional plans for each region
- Infrastructure needs identified
- Programs developed
- Co ordination of implementation
- Fight against illiteracy/poverty

Mrs Mazal Renford: Israel

Adult Education – Training for women to set up business's in rural areas.

Management – Money and resources to help create employment.

MICRO companies are important particularly for women in rural communities.

Millions of immigrants received.

Mr Jean Francois Hullot: European Commission

Rural Development Programs for Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, Finland.

How to maintain agriculture jobs.

World Trade Organisation – not set up for multi-functionality. It is international and based on trade. Developing countries not a priority – they need access to markets and the promotion of exchanges.

Johannesburg concept was clear of multi-functionality if word not heard.

European Commission - defends European Model

Aid to farmers not put in green box – its going to blue box. Therefore a change is needed to agriculture aid.

Mr Javier Calatrova Requena: Spain

Unprecedented changes in gender system because of new types of work. - are these always positive – yes generally because they create employment and income and promote well being – preserve environment but want gender symmetry (lack of recognition for women). There are practical aspects of gender (not a helpful submission from my point of view.)

General Discussions following session:

Discussion – Participant Bolivia

Basic needs – Land not even in the lands of men let alone women.

Life Expectancy under 56 years and not improving for women.

Wants proposals to take to her government when she leaves the congress.

Education is the basis for development.

Discussion – Participant – Uruguay

Golda Meier Association.

Micro Companies very important.

Discussion – Participant – Rosa Catalonia Spain

Question What is the formula for improving women's lot?

Answer – No 1 Speaker - there is no magic formula.

No social security to keep employment in the fields.

Change other sectors – tourism, service – industry

Participate responded – Working in the fields is in the past. Need help for elderly and child care so they have time to use imagination and business skills.

Need assistance with funding

Discussion Participant – Venezuela

Multi-functionality - New way to distribute income is needed because not even 5% get 60% of the subsidies. Protectionism of agriculture sector by other countries is detrimental - subsidies have to change.

\$170 billion to farmers by EU and Bolivia can't compete on the market.

Debriefing for Australian Women – Senator Troeth

Concerns raised by Australian Congress Attendees:

- Focus needed to be back on people. Globalisation the focus is on economics
- Need for more participation
- Frustration expressed by many at the congress because nothing tangible to take back home
- No discussion on GMO or food safety
- Continuity between congress's
- Diane Gibbs – NSW commented on discrepancy between developing world and developed world and the need for us to play a leadership role and pass on our knowledge (Caines Group)
- Drought
- International Women's Group – Link (Marie Lally)
- Social and Environmental Impacts
- Australian's seen as a leadership force (not being shown)
- Tangible expression of solidarity needed.
- Declaration from first conference build on this reaffirm this affirmation

- Senator Troeth replied this should come from the body of women from Australia not Government. There are wider issues
Suggested run a limited internet portal to accept comments - "Rural Women in Spain"

- Marie Lally – affiliate with Associated Country Women of the World. Entering and supporting

- Senator Troeth
Rural Women's advisory group
- AWIA – Could be the contact mini conference in each State to take information back home. Would be good for comment to come from the Spanish people

Friday 4th October

Working Session 9.00

Public Policies in Support of Rural Women

Senator Judith Troeth Liberal Member Victoria

Parliamentary secretary Minister for Agriculture.

1500 women from 80 countries. 1790 Elizabeth McCather imported sheep from Spain.

Women are invisible farmers. CWA and other industry organisation are available in Australia to network and learn.

FEDERAL – Industry Partnership

A) Infrastructure Building

- 81% of off farm income from women
- Women twice as likely to be better education
- Different skills, different priorities.

B) Resource Building

- Office of Status of Women

C) Mainstream

- Skills to get ordinary women to join industry organisations and boards.
Training leadership skills and mentoring so they can do business better
- Importance of partnership and collaboration
- Diversity of skills of women.

Mrs Virginia Matabale: Mozambique

Education of Children

Strengthening young Democracy 1975

17 million people 2/3rds living in poverty

53% of population is women but participation in society (public life) is low – less education because of culture and social issues.

HIV high

Majority of farms headed by women who also prepare food, fetch water but lack access to ownership of land or credit.

Mrs Lisette Garcia Bustamante: Chile

Gender Equity – Policy and role of government.

Rural Women's contribution is invisible. In 1995 plan for opportunities for Women strategy.

Mrs Wendy Quintero Gallardo: Mexico

Reform – Feminisation of farming in Mexico because migration of men to USA to earn money.

Life expectancy 69 years for rural women and 73 years for urban women

Delivery /Pregnancy deaths twice as high in rural areas.

House wives at a very early age (marry young)

Reinforce a conviction - we must make the world of rural women better to live in.

Mrs Concepcion Dancausa Trerino Spain No interpretation

General Discussions following session:

Participant Malaysia

Women's advisory group – how/why etc. Senator Toeth answered – Advisory Group for each Industry (12 industries) – Company Directors Course.

Discussion Participant Costa Rica

Need world wide networks

Discussion Participant Columbia

Discussion Participants Mexico

More budgets.

Reminders - 15th October 2002 World Day of Rural Women

Master Lecture 10.45

Rural Women: For the World Peace and Development of People

Mrs Graca Machel: Monzambique (See Overview page 19)

- Peace building
- Resolving conflict
- Reconciliation
- Reconstruction
- Women's rights in context of Rural women.
- Women's rights and women's movement.

- Peace absence of war – No sounds of gun fire Uneasy peace after – still fear Sustainable peace – absence of fear
- War – All suffer – Polluted water, land mines, lack of food, men gone.
- Rape – perpetrators not brought to justice. Women – stopped children from being recruited as soldiers.

- Two worlds that move in parallel – developed and developing worlds. Lack of bridges and priorities between the two. Priorities different in time and scale- simple survival / overproduction of food versus starvation. Need for third world people to live in peace, in dignity with adequate food.
- * Subsidies to farmers must be addressed.

Aftermath of war – very hard on women. Subsidies - “Mean literally to take the bread out of the mouths of our children”. Markets are not open to all.

Bridges between the two worlds built by women – giving a human dimension.

There is also differences between Urban and rural worlds

Rural women have no face

Pace of change is slow – Poverty

Increasing – Illiteracy and Disease. HIV – Major impacts

Army of carers for the sick and orphans

Women’s rights – Emphasis away from women’s roles to their rights. More focus on rights needed.

Right of women not to be discriminated against. Conclusion – Equal

Opportunity

The human face - *Markets Are people.*

Solidarity – Development but human dignity/equality

Not just profit but human values.

Mr Federico Mayor: Spain

Void in decision making, women are absent.

95% of decisions are made by men – only 5% by women. Should be 50/50

- Why do UNESCO NGO’s come to give us advice instead of coming to ask for our advice?
- Women from India – Educator – His method was to ask questions. How can we help you?
- Bangladesh women – Invented Pop rice but illiterate.
- Letter Mahatma Ghandi – first draft for declaration for human rights. Impressed by illiterate women – his mother.

International Co-operation has gone down alarmingly. Nordic countries have only kept up their % commitment.

Freedom and equality for all human beings

Can’t modify the past but can modify the future.

Conclusions 12.30

Mrs Conception Dancausa: Spain

Globalisation (critical analysis) needed for equality
How we are going to act within globalisation?

Access and control of production means and decision making also access to land water and credit.

Difference – Access to global markets (between developed and undeveloped)
Recognition of Women's work. Separate social security payments to women needed. (women do the work and men get the payment)
Need training to get back into labour market or start business.

Encourage capacity building

Mrs Conception Dancausa Trevino (another European Union Speaker) SPAIN

Need to make a case for women to have training and access to land credit etc

Mr. Miguel Arias Canete Minister for Agriculture Spain

Need for rural business women

Mr. Eduardo Zaplana Hernandez-Soro Spain Minister for Labour & Social Affairs

Spanish society in favour of defence of women's rights.
Equality – to encourage women into labour market.

Mrs Carmen de Miguel Garcia accepted the “CEREMONIAL BOWL” on behalf of Africa and the next women's Conference

Symbolic – *“women to eat equally from the bowl with men and children.”*

“Report on 4 things you have done to meet in reality what we have discussed today. So we don't talk on same thing on same level but on progress.
She stressed, one thing for each year and be “SPECIFIC!!”

CLOSING CEREMONY

Mr Franz Fischler EUROPEAN UNION

Lack of Infrastructure
Rural out - migration
Poverty, employment shortages
¼ population in Europe live in Rural areas
Unemployment of women – Lack of access to markets and new technology

Overview

The Rural Women's Conference held in Madrid on October 2nd, 3rd and 4th was a mixture of passion, frustration, anger and hope for the future. Two speakers in particular were outstanding.

Mrs Graca Machel the chairperson of the Foundation for Community Development painted a vivid picture of the current situation for rural women around the world when she spoke of two worlds that move in parallel, the developed and the developing worlds with priorities very different in both time and scale. She spoke of the very great need for more bridges between the two and the risk of not enabling all people of the world to live with dignity in peace and equality with the basic necessities of food, housing and clothing. Her description of peace being in 3 stages, brought home to me the reality of so many lives in war torn countries.

Firstly, Peace as the 'absence of war' that is just waking up in the morning without the sound of gun fire.

Secondly, the "uneasy peace' when fear is still present.

Finally, 'sustainable peace' when fear is absent. How lucky we are currently in Australia but while much of the world is not as fortunate, we should not feel complacent. I think this has recently been brought home to us with the events in Bali

Her vivid description of the effects of war, the absence of men, lack of food, polluted water, the ever present danger of land mines and the risk of rape, when simple survival is difficult – illustrated well by comparison what we have to lose and the need for all of us to work toward peace building, resolving conflict followed by reconciliation and reconstruction among all people.

Mrs Machel strongly criticised subsidies to farmers and urged that they be addressed as they, to quote her, mean "literally to take the bread out of the mouths of our children". She also pointed out that "markets are not open to all" a very relevant statement after the strong representation of the European Union and the change being proposed in their policy to help reduce over production caused by their massive subsidies to some farmers. Although it was interesting to note that about 90% of subsidies go to 5% of producers and they are proposing to cut out only those subsidies over E300,000 or \$A541,451.

Mrs.Machel also pointed out the added difficulty caused by the HIV pandemic with women particularly in rural areas not only having the responsibility of water collection, production and food preparation, but also responsibilities as carers of aged, infirm and of the HIV sufferers and the many orphans left behind. It is not surprising that the life expectancy is in the mid to low 40 years particularly with high infant mortality and death in childbirth.

The contrast with a E.U. Minister's comments during the conclusion of the conference when he proudly proclaimed that they had been able to keep a regional hospital open by providing specialised treatment by video conferencing could not have been greater. As one speaker put it, the developed world are choosing the sex of their babies, the underdeveloped are lucky to survive childbirth. The Honourable Mrs Hajiya Aisha Ismail, Minister for Women's Affairs from Nigeria said HIV was high across Africa and most aid programs have not worked but the country still has to pay the debt. Mrs Ismail believes there is a need to help farmers to grow their own produce and be able to sell it on the open market and value add it where possible. Then they can afford to provide their own services, provision of education and water etc.

Mrs Machel accepted the "Ceremonial Bowl" on behalf of Africa where the next Rural Women's Congress will be held in 2006. As she did so, she challenged those of us present to come back and "report on 4 things you have done to meet in reality what we have discussed today – so we don't talk on the same things on the same level but on progress".

Progress on a world scale firstly with sustained peace is needed if real progress is to be made. Then access to markets at the same time as ownership of land and access to credit or small loans at reasonable costs to enable seed to be purchased and planted and small businesses to be started. Education and assistance on the prevention of diseases particularly AIDS and training in small business management and farming techniques are also needed.

Australia is already pushing for the removal of trade barriers except where it might breach quarantine for disease that we do not have. Where possible pressure to open up Trade will help everyone except the highly subsidised farmers. EU statements on quality control indicates this could be used by them as a substitute barrier. It is particularly difficult for third world countries accepting GMO grains as aid from USA that are then used for seed as the products would not be accepted back into EU markets.

On assistance and education for the prevention of diseases, together with training in farming and business, I believe a system should be developed to encourage our businesses and government services to allow sabbaticals for employees willing to go and work (unpaid and at their own expense) in third world countries. They need to be guaranteed job security on return with no loss of superannuation. Such a scheme would help both the understanding of Australians about globalised world issues that we are going to be increasingly involved with while providing the expertise needed by developing countries. People who have finished their education and have a few years experience (particularly those without the responsibility of children) and/or

those whose children have grown up and gone could be targeted. The benefit for the participants, the companies and the countries could be considerable.

Using existing aid agencies as the conduits to identify the particular needs and target the applicants to these areas would be one way to go about introducing such a scheme. For some countries it would be better to bring their young people to Australia for education and training. This also has the advantage of building up a greater loyalty factor to our people and products in the future when the third world countries have found their feet.

One abiding problem will be the control of organised crime and corruption and of course religious fanatics. A strong, well funded police force, particularly to control white collar crime involving, IT, drugs etc is needed in all countries. Crime in “suits” is harder to control than crime that is more obvious as found on the streets. However image in controlling graffiti and litter is also important even in Australia if we are to continue to be seen as a first world country.

In Australia we must continue to improve our productivity and develop our country with world class infrastructure if we are to compete in the global economy. Clean, green environment, kangaroos, koalas and sharks are all important images of Australia held overseas, but not enough to keep us in the first world into the future.

As a large country with a small population and as a major exporter, Australia has no option but to become aware of, and be involved in, world issues that are effecting us all.

After the conference in Madrid I took a few days to travel by train across Spain, to get a feel for the country particularly the rural areas. Three things stood out, windfarms, olives and the GMO debate.

I saw two large wind farms with hundreds of turbines turning in the wind along the hill tops and there is another large windfarm being developed in the south of Spain by EHN. This company already has 1,000 MW of power and this will be about 1,700 MW by the end of this year. They estimate that they will have created about 8,000 jobs in Spain by the end of 2002. The potential of having the 1,000 MW of windpower developed on Eyre Peninsula and what it could do for the region and our State was well illustrated.

Across most of southern Spain there were small farms, ruins, old stone fences , aqueducts , small groves of oranges, olives, grapes, (mostly without trellises,) cotton, what appeared to be native vegetation and very few sheep and cattle. Near Valencia on the south coast of Spain I was amazed at the total destruction of whatever was there previously to plant olive groves as far as the eye could see in all directions, even

right over the top of small hills. I can only assume that this is being done by big operators, attracted by European Union subsidies.

The other surprise was a GMO display in Valencia's new Culture and Science Centre. This was an interactive display that did not take sides but attempted to make people think about all the issues involved and how GMO's worked. I thought I was aware of most of the issues but was stunned when it was stated that antibiotic resistant genes were used as marker genes to identify where a gene had successfully been transferred. When I followed this up with a scientist when I arrived back, she said yes it was the case, however many companies had found it to be a controversial marker and had changed to using a herbicide resistant gene as their marker instead. With the resistance to antibiotics becoming a major problem in disease control across the world, I was not surprised at the change but very disturbed that the change was made to herbicide resistance as the implications for Australian farms could be devastating.

The information and perspective that I gained from visiting Spain were challenging and confronting.