

*Remarks by Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University and Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, at the launch of the Science Barge, Friday May 4, 2007 at Pier 84 in Hudson River Park, New York City:*

Wow, I think we're going to be eating a lot of those in our delis around town.

The Science Barge is obviously important for us in three ways. First, it's a wonderful learning environment and it just takes a short stroll through this remarkable project to see how much we can learn, and how fast, and how many of the students in this city, and all of us, are going to be learning from this project. Second, this is a real time research project. We have to learn new ways of sustainability. I'll come back to that in a moment. And third, this is an activist project as well. This is not only an invitation to ideas and learning but to change. And I take Ted at his word when he talks about getting green roofs throughout this city, and new ways of urban sustainability around the planet. We need these projects. We're thrilled at Columbia University and the Earth Institute. My colleagues in the engineering school – and we have Professor Vijay Modi here, one of the great sustainability engineers anywhere, partnering with Ted and mobilizing students to work on this – we're very proud of what Ted has accomplished, and we're thrilled to look forward together to the future.

Ted talked about another million people coming to New York City in the next twenty-five years, as the mayor has noted. Let me also add that we're going to have two billion people coming to the world's cities in that period of time. And almost all of those two billion additional people – the planet rising from 6.6 billion to 8.6 billion people on the planet – are going to be in very poor places on the planet, extremely environmentally stressed. They're also going to be in tropical climates with a lot of sunshine, like the beautiful day that Ted brought us today, where we can use solar power and use the other technologies of renewable energy to make good on the vision that we have just in front of us, in front of all of you.

There's no question that even today with our 6.6 billion people on the planet we are not living in a sustainable manner now. That's objectively the fact, that's not fear mongering. That's just the evidence of the destruction of habits, climate change, pollution, other toxics, loss of biodiversity, and many other very dangerous trends. Now realize that we're adding another two billion people within the next twenty-five to thirty years. And by current U.N. medium forecasts, another two and a half billion by mid-century, and you see the scale of the challenge. And those people also want their place in the sun, not only outdoors, but also economically, so the pressures of increased economic activity will grow. Therefore, learning to manage our natural resources – and particularly our renewable resources – of sunlight, giving solar power, of water, the hydrologic cycle, for rainwater harvesting, for hydroponics, for growing food, for green roofs, for many other necessary changes in lifestyles and technologies – will be essential if we're going to get through this very, very difficult phase ahead.

But of course what's promising – it's the most promising fact, it's why we can be optimistic – throughout human development and economic development, science and

technology has played a critical role, and that we have in ample measure now. And even more than that, not only do we have the scientific potential, we have a flowering of leadership. And this is thrilling: we have Mayor Bloomberg's leadership on the environment, we have our governor's leadership on the environment, and we have wonderful individuals like Ted Caplow who are paving the way for all of us, and leading and showing us how this can be done. So let me thank you for the chance to be partnering with you in any ways that we can, and congratulate you on what you've accomplished today. We know that there is a great deal more leadership to come. And we're looking forward to watching you lead and helping you along the way. Thanks so much.