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Received Sylff Fellowship in 1991

My name is Dejan Šoškić, I am a Full Professor on Faculty of Economics, University of Belgrade. I have received a SYLFF scholarship back in 1994, so that “Y” in SYLFF does not necessarily apply to me anymore. Those were the years of war in my country (Yugoslavia) and at that time it was very hard to get a scholarship to study abroad. SYLFF has helped me in the way that I will never forget, since it helped me go to the US to prepare my PhD, and at the time it was almost impossible for me to do so otherwise. That has immensely influenced my later career and academic development. Back in 1993 I was invited to Sasakawa conference in Beijing as one of the receivers of the SYLFF scholarship for that year by the University of Belgrade. I was amazed by the vastness of the organization and the number of people coming from all over the world to Beijing. But also it was a tremendous experience for me to meet a lot of these people from various Universities, countries and professional and academic backgrounds. At that time, I also had a privilege of meeting Mr. Yohei Sasakawa and I am very pleased to see him again today after quarter of the century, still dedicated to same ideals of humanity and international cooperation. Reading about the Foundation and Mr. Ryoichi Sasakawa, I always felt the need also to know more about the country and the people of Japan, capable of supporting such an international project in the interest of humanity. Despite my fare share of interesting engagements in my academic, private sector and public service parts of my career, and quite a bit of traveling on my side, I have never been to Japan. So, I have applied for this workshop also wanting to learn more about Japan and its culture. At first, I was not sure that my expertise (in economics and finance) will be relevant for the topic of Food production in 2030, but soon I have realized that this topic is a multidisciplinary one, engaging the need for expertise in natural sciences, but also in economics, and humanities, including the knowledge in the domain of institutional development. Working in smaller interdisciplinary groups has been a revelation for me. Despite the difference in our expertises, sense of “working for the common good” has prevailed soon, enabling us to have a constructive dialog with concrete

results. It was impressive how soon we have developed mutual respect and understanding, and genuine friendship not just in smaller groups, but among all the participants in the workshop. My sincere and strong impression of this workshop is one of hope. Hope, that benevolent, educated people from various backgrounds, cultures and corners of the world can in fact easily find common ground and language in exploring solution for the global problems. In the world of today, with all of its divisions, and tensions, it is a blessing to realize that such things are possible, and only if there is a will, there will be a way. SYLFF has once again, quarter of the century later, made a significant impact in my life, and on my understanding of the world. Thank you very much.