



STATEMENT BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON**

AT THE

**OPENING OF THE PLENARY DEBATE ON
HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK
31 OCTOBER 2005**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On 24 January 2005, the General Assembly held its first ever special session to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps.

In that session, the General Assembly unanimously condemned the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps. We paid solemn tribute to the millions of innocent victims of this unspeakable atrocity. Genocide was committed against the Jews of Europe during the Holocaust. Hundreds of thousands of people of other ethnic origins, religious and political backgrounds fell victim to this crime against humanity.

This year, we are celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations, erected from the ashes of the Second World War. The United Nations was set up to protect mankind from the scourge of war and serve as an effective international institution for the promotion of human rights, the rule of law and social and economic development for all. In this context, I welcome the inscription of this new agenda item entitled “Holocaust remembrance”.

The Holocaust also reminds us of the crimes of genocide committed since World War II. It must, therefore, be a unifying historic warning around which we must rally; not only to recall the grievous crimes committed in human history but also to reaffirm our unfaltering resolve to prevent the recurrence of such crimes. We cannot continue to repeat saying “Never again”.

Last September, at the 2005 World Summit, our leaders did not fail to live up that test when they unanimously accepted the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. This is a major step toward preventing genocide in the future.

It is in this spirit – both of remembering the crimes of the past and preventing their recurrence in the future – that we must consider the draft resolution on “Holocaust remembrance”.