



**STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON**

**AT**

**THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DRAFT  
RESOLUTION ON PREPARATIONS FOR AND  
ORGANIZATION OF THE 2006 FOLLOW-UP  
MEETING ON THE OUTCOME OF THE TWENTY-  
SIXTH SPECIAL SESSION: IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE DECLARATION OF COMMITMENT ON  
HIV/AIDS (A/60/L.43) TO THE GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY PLENARY**

**UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS**

**NEW YORK**

**23 DECEMBER 2005**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Next year, 2006, marks five years since the landmark Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS made at the Twenty-Sixth General Assembly Special Session. The world has made progress in the fight against HIV and AIDS in the last five years – there is now more money in the system than there was before, though still not enough. And co-ordination of international efforts is improving, not least as a result of the work of the Global Task Team on AIDS Coordination. The benefits are beginning to show: last year, between 250,000 and 350,000 peoples' lives were saved because of expanded access to treatment.

But despite this progress, there is much still to do. In fact, despite twenty five years' experience of tackling this pandemic, over three hundred people will die in the next hour alone as a result of AIDS. And at the same time, over five hundred men, women and children will be newly infected. Over half of them will be under the age of 24.

This great human tragedy could, at least in part, have been avoided. Our initial response to HIV and AIDS was too slow. This we cannot change. But we can do our best to ensure that, when historians look at the way the world responded to HIV and AIDS, they see that 2006 was the year when the international community finally stepped up to the plate – the year when, to use the words of the World AIDS campaign, we recommitted ourselves to 'keep the promise'.

Dealing with HIV and AIDS requires action across many fronts. We need to focus on education and gender, to name just two areas, as well as health. And even in health, we need to make sure we are tackling vital issues of health systems capacity at the same time as we address issues specific to HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment and care. This is why I was delighted when, earlier in this Session, this Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution on enhancing capacity-building in global public health urging the international community to increase investment in health services in developing countries.

The draft resolution I am introducing today, resolution A/60/L.43 entitled 'preparations for and organization of the 2006 follow-up meeting on the outcome of the Twenty-Sixth Special Session: Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS' paves the way for a comprehensive review of progress of the 2001 Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and a high-level meeting in May/June 2006. This important meeting is intended to keep international attention focused on all aspects of the fight against HIV/AIDS. It follows our leaders' commitment at the 2005 World Summit to fully implement all the commitments established by the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, some of which fall due at the end of this year.

The draft resolution also requests that UNAIDS assists in facilitating country-driven processes for scaling up HIV prevention, treatment, care and support with the aim of coming as close as possible to the goal of universal access to treatment by 2010 for all those who need it. It asks UNAIDS to submit an assessment of these processes based on inputs received from

Member States, including recommendations for addressing obstacles and for accelerated and expanded action. This work will be vital in taking forward a key Outcome Document commitment.

Importantly, the draft resolution also recognizes the essential role played by civil society including inter alia national and international NGOs and organizations and networks representing people living with HIV/AIDS, orphans, community and faith-based organizations, families and the private sector. It is important that such stakeholders are involved in the comprehensive review, and I am glad that the draft resolution sets out arrangements to this end.

In introducing the draft resolution I should extend my sincere thanks to Ambassador Christopher Hackett of Barbados and Ambassador Laxanachantorn Laohaphan of Thailand for their skilled and pro-active co-chairing of the informal consultations which produced this draft. I should also pay tribute to Member States for reaching agreement in the consultations, particularly in light of the need to find common ground on some sensitive issues. This spirit of compromise in the pursuance of an important shared objective bodes well for the preparatory work for the Meeting which should get underway in the New Year.

In closing, I should note that high-level attendance will be critical to the success of the proposed Meeting next year. If we adopt this draft resolution today, I would strongly encourage high-level representation at the Meeting from as many Member States as possible.