

20 December 2013

**Message of H.E. John W. Ashe
President of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
on the International Human Solidarity Day**

As we shape the post-2015 development agenda, it is important to recall that International Human Solidarity Day was developed as a means to address poverty eradication. In the Millennium Declaration, heads of State and Government identified solidarity as a fundamental value to be cultivated alongside equity and social justice. We recognize that persistent poverty and inequality are two of the most pressing development challenges facing us today.

The theme for this year's International Human Solidarity Day, "Bridging the gaps to achieve international development goals by 2015 and beyond," is perfectly designed to support the processes in which we are engaged during this 68th session of the General Assembly and lie within the key priorities of my presidency. As I stated in my acceptance speech, the post-2015 development agenda will represent a significant global evolution in our thinking insofar as it envisions an interdependent, planetary community regardless of disparities in development.

I believe that our success at building solidarity, equity and social justice depend on the extent to which our differences are celebrated rather than treated as a justification for hatred and violence. We can no longer allow mothers and children to perish from preventable diseases. Conflict and environmental degradation must cease to threaten our existence as a human family. Our children and young people must receive the education and skills that will guide them toward a path of entrepreneurship and access to decent jobs. And finally, we must continue to strive to develop sustainable global partnerships.

These achievements will mark our victory in bridging the gaps between what we have accomplished and what we have yet to accomplish. We must seek to realize the goals set forth by world leaders at the Millennium Summit and then go beyond them building on the momentum of Rio+20. As an international community of nations, we must keep these commitments. We must own them and demand nothing less than their full realization.