

22 September 2000

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
on the occasion of The Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
(ASEAN) Foreign Ministers' Reception in honour of the President of  
the UN 55th General Assembly**

Let me begin by thanking you for having organized this reception in my honour. It is a great pleasure to be here tonight. I should also like to thank you for the kind words addressed to me and my country.

In South-East Asia the ASEAN countries have succeeded in their efforts to create a stronger regional player. ASEAN's commitment to multilateral action is visible today in virtually every sphere of human activity. The series of ministerial meetings hosted by ASEAN in Bangkok last July; that is the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, "ASEAN plus 3" and the ASEAN Regional Forum are a few examples of this activity.

The establishment of the "ASEAN Troika", a new conflict resolution mechanism, shows that ASEAN countries are willing to play a pro-active role in addressing regional issues. And this is one of the crucial elements in conflict prevention. The formalization of the "ASEAN plus 3" framework has given new impetus to regional development and stability.

ASEAN has also become an important dialogue partner with the United Nations and we should make this partnership even stronger. The convening of the informal ASEAN- United Nations Summit last February was a new step forward. The Secretary General who attended that meeting stressed the complementarity of our two organizations and the fact that enhanced cooperation would strengthen both. And I very much agree with him.

At the Millennium Summit we have just pledged to strengthen the United Nations as an indispensable common house of the entire human family. The challenges facing us, when we strive towards this goal, are huge, and to be successful the United Nations must deepen its relationship with other organizations. I look forward to working with the members of ASEAN in this respect.