

22 November 2000

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,
at the monthly meeting between the Office of the President of the
General Assembly and the Chairpersons of the Main Committees**

I would like to begin by thanking you all for attending this luncheon. It is our last lunch in this framework and I for my part would like to express my appreciation and thanks for the tireless work you all have done during this session.

I would also like to thank you for the co-operation that you have extended to my office and me so far. It has been crucial for us in order to be able to follow the work of the committees.

As I have said before, I have sensed a kind of team spirit throughout the session and I am very grateful for that.

Let me now run briefly through some of the current issues on my working programme:

1. MILLENNIUM SUMMIT

As you are aware the follow-up process is on its way. Yesterday we had another good round of discussions based on my elements paper.

I am now preparing a draft resolution to be circulated to the membership in the near future.

I should also like to thank you and through you the Committees for acting upon my request reflect the Millennium Declaration in the work of the Committees.

2. BRAHIMI REPORT

As I have mentioned many times, the Summit called for expeditious consideration of the report's recommendations.

The consideration has been complex and difficult. But it is my understanding that the political will and momentum is there and that progress to reach concrete results has been made.

- I would appreciate if the Vice-Chairperson of the 4th Committee would brief us on this issue.
- I would also like to invite the Chairs of the 5th Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to brief us on the consideration of the Brahimi report and the implementation report on their side, including the timetable.

3. REFORM OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Last time we briefly discussed the reform of the GA. I would like to inform that I have consulted Member States and there is an eagerness to take further steps.

- I have urged member states to discuss this issue and come up with ideas and suggestions.
- I should also like to note that a statement I made at the Forum of Small States (Nov. 15) on this issue is available on my web site.

4. OUTREACH

As part of my outreach efforts I participated in the General Assembly of CONGO (the coalition of non-governemntal organizations in liaison with the United Nations). The Assembly was held in Vienna, where I also met with the Director General of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and representatives of the host government, Austria.

I also visited Washington, D.C. for meetings at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). I have understood that I was the first GA President ever to visit these institutions in their headquarters. Both visits were positive. In IMF I could, in particular, advance the cause of the Financing for Development process, and hopefully improve the prospects of IMF's full participation in it. I also had the opportunity of introducing the Millennium Summit follow-up process to the management of both institutions. I may inform you that I will participate in the opening of the Fourth Session of the Convention to Combat Desertification and Drought, which will be held in Bonn, starting the 11th of December.

5. RIO+10

Of issues which have taken place here in New York, may I mention that we still have the Rio + 10 host issue unsolved. I have therefore made a mediating proposal to Indonesia and South Africa and also liaised with the regional groups of Africa and Asia, as it is these groups, which ultimately must also consider my proposal. I am optimistic and hope to solve this issue before the end of the month.

6. HIV/AIDS SPECIAL SESSION

Preparations of a non-paper on organizational matters and on the form of non-governemntal organization (NGO) participation are going on. The first informal consultations of the plenary are foreseen for 15 December 2000 so as to allow delegations the Christmas break to study the proposals. I intend to announce the two co-facilitators no later than the first week of December. We will also distribute the non-paper on organizational matters and on NGO participation at that time.

7. UNITED NATIONS INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON THE OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA (UNICPOLOS)

On the Oceans and the Law of the Sea Informal Process, my office has conducted consultations on the selection of the two co-chairs. I expect to be able to announce the results of these consultations soon.

Now, I'd like to run through the Main Committees one by one. May I once again thank all Chairs for their good work.

1st COMMITTEE

1st Committee has successfully finished its work and we have taken action on the reports of the Committee in the Plenary last Monday.

If there are some points you might want to raise or information you might want to share or lessons learnt at this stage, I invite you to do so.

2nd COMMITTEE

I understand there are delays, which might prevent the Committee from completing its work by December 1st.

I am raising this issue, because there are Member States that have asked me to intervene to expedite matters.

I would invite the Chair of the Committee to brief us on the situation, and give an estimate on the completion of the Committee's work.

This being said, I do understand that there are many difficult issues on the table, not alone Rio+10, but also Financing for Development.

On the latter issue, I have understood that the dates of the final event are being changed to the first quarter of 2002. Still, yesterday the discussions on the resolution were going on.

3rd COMMITTEE

In my count, there were a total of 67 resolutions, 14 of them without a vote. This is a slight decrease as compared with last year.

I would like to welcome an analysis on this session of the Committee from the chair.

4th COMMITTEE

The Committee has practically taken finished its work, except for the consideration of the report it is expecting from the Special Committee on Peacekeeping. I have already invited the Vice Chairperson to brief us on this.

5th COMMITTEE

I have just received a letter from the Committee requesting an extension of its work until 20 December. While I am fully aware of the complexities of the Fifth Committee's work, it might be better to try to finish somewhat earlier, for example by 15 December. This would still allow for some "wiggle room" should things become deadlocked.

I am also somewhat concerned about the lack of results so far in the Committee's work, be it on small or on big issues. I understand the Committee has met for long hours in an informal setting on issues such as procurement reform and pattern of conferences, and that the debate has repeated itself.

I would appreciate the Chairman's appraisal as to when Resolutions on pending issues are expected.

6TH COMMITTEE

I understand that the 6th Committee will be probably finishing its work today, but I would like to invite the chair to brief us on this.