

3 May 2001

**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 Regional Groups for
the month of May**

The meeting was attended by the Chairpersons of the Regional Groups for the month of May: Namibia (African States), Philippines (Asian States), Belarus (Eastern European States), Ecuador (Latin American and Caribbean States) and Denmark (Western European and other States).

**1. PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The President noted that he has received a letter from H.E. Jørgen Bøjer, Permanent Representative of Denmark, in which the President was informed that his tour of duty in New York is coming to an end and that he will therefore resign as Co-chair of the Preparatory Committee. Ambassador Bøjer also intends to recommend to the PrepCom that it elect Ambassador Ruth Jacoby of Sweden as the new Co-chair and that the new Danish Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Ellen M. Løj, be elected to the Bureau.

The President also noted that he has been informed that the election of Ambassadors Jacoby and Løj would be supported by the Western European and Other States Group. Therefore he asked the Chairs of the other four groups to conduct, on an urgent basis, appropriate consultations to ascertain whether these groups can support the election of the two Ambassadors.

As the currently ongoing PrepCom is coming to an end on Tuesday, 8 May, the President asked the Chairs to inform his Office no later than Monday morning, 7 May, by 10 a.m., if they are not able to support the two candidatures endorsed by WEOG. It was noted that unless the President hears any objections by then, he will inform Ambassador Bøjer accordingly, and the Prepcom can then proceed to the election at the end of its session.

The President told that H.E. Asda Jayanama, Permanent Representative of Thailand, has informed him that he also intends to resign as Co-chair of the Preparatory Committee during the summer, as his tour of duty will be coming to an end. The President noted that he would therefore ask Member States, through the regional groups, to undertake informal consultations, so as to facilitate the election of a successor/successors to Ambassador Jayanama as member of the Bureau and Co-chair. The President told that he has been further informed that there may be a short intersessional meeting (half-day) of the PrepCom in the course of the summer to elect Ambassador Jayanama's successor.

The President used the opportunity to express, in his belief on behalf of the whole Membership, his sincerest gratitude to both Ambassador Bøjer, whose departure from New York is imminent, as well as to Ambassador Jayanama, who will be leaving later on in the summer. He noted that their work has been invaluable for this very important process.

2. SPECIAL SESSION ON HIV/AIDS

The President once again urged regional groups to come up with decisions with regard to the selection of Roundtable Chairs.

It was noted that the endorsement by the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC) of the candidature of Brazil to the Chairmanship of Roundtable No. 1 entitled "Prevention and Care" has been communicated to him. Also, the Group of Eastern European States has endorsed Poland to the Chairmanship of Roundtable No. 2 entitled "HIV/AIDS and Human Rights". The President asked the two remaining groups, Africa and Asia, to take note of these endorsements and to communicate, as soon as possible their respective candidatures.

3. IMPROVING THE WORKING METHODS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The President referred to his non-paper on the revitalization of the General Assembly, prepared with the superb assistance of Ambassador Valdes of Chile. It was noted that the paper has been sent to all Permanent Missions on 23 April.

In this connection, the President informed the Chairs that the Plenary informal/informals on this subject, originally slated for May 10 and May 11, will be postponed until the following week, due to scheduling problems. It was noted that an announcement to this effect will appear in the Journal.

The President concluded with saying that he looks forward to seeing Member States take an active part in the discussion in two weeks' time.