

10 September 2002

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,
on the Admission of the Swiss Confederation as a New Member of the
UN**

It is a great pleasure for me on this historic occasion to welcome on behalf of the General Assembly, the Swiss Confederation as a new member of the United Nations.

The admission of the Swiss Confederation into the family of nations is of great significance, as it strengthens the universality of the United Nations and thus enhances its legitimacy and effectiveness.

There has been close relation and good cooperation between the Swiss Confederation and the United Nations. The Swiss Confederation, as a country with a long and deep-rooted tradition of democracy makes a great contribution to the development of international cooperation in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations.

Let me remind you, at this historic moment that it was the Swiss Confederation, which was the host country of the League of Nations after the first world war. Moreover, it is the Swiss Confederation, which is the host country of the human rights section of the United Nations, especially the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees. In our minds, Geneva is connected also with the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent as the body that targets the improvement of conditions of people in difficulty during armed conflicts as well as during natural or social disasters. Geneva is also well known as the birthplace of many international humanitarian conventions.

However, I firmly believe that the decision of the Swiss Confederation to become a member of the United Nations reflects the will and aspirations of the Government and people of Swiss Confederation to further enhance the cooperation with other Member States within the intergovernmental processes of the United Nations.

I congratulate the Swiss Confederation and the United Nations on the admission of its 190th Member State and I am confident that this newly admitted Member State will contribute to the General Assembly and to the United Nations efforts in addressing the issues in international relations that lie ahead.