

11 September 2002

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Annual Interfaith Service to the Commitment to the Work of
the United Nations**

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Allow me to thank you for inviting me to the Annual Interfaith Service to the Commitment to the Work of the United Nations. It is a great pleasure for me to be here and share with you the moments of reminiscence and prayer for peace and justice for all the people of the planet. This gathering of the religious leaders of the New York area and the members of the United Nations and the NGO community has by now developed into a valuable tradition.

First, I would like to recall the memory of the people who became victim to the most appalling terrorist act carried out on this day a year ago.

Today's service assembles representatives of a wide range of religions and faiths. A multireligious gathering such as this embodies the ideals of understanding, interrelationship, mutual tolerance and acceptance. It was with these very ideals that the founders of the United Nations laid the groundwork of the organization which has grown into the most representative and indispensable of all the international organizations. It is precisely these values which are essential to achieving a peaceful and just co-existence in a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected.

The United Nations similarly is a forum that unites peoples of a multitude of faiths and backgrounds. At the same time, it is a place which offers room for finding common language and common solutions through dialogue and cooperation. It is only in this spirit that the Organization can fulfill its mission of bringing peace, advancement and dignity into the life of every human being.

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Much work lies before us during the upcoming session of the United Nations General Assembly. Let us be strengthened by today's gathering in carrying out our work.