

16 September 2002

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,  
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on New  
Partnership for Africa's Development**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a remarkable opportunity for me to speak today at this high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

This year we will be conducting the final review and appraisal of the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF). This programme was initiated in 1990 and approved by the General Assembly in 1991. UN-NADAF was the culmination of a process of detailed discussions and reviews of the complex issues Africa faced at that time.

UN-NADAF has played a very positive role in focusing the attention of the international community on various aspects of development in Africa. During the past decade much has been accomplished and many difficult issues have been addressed, including the issues of poverty eradication, sustainable development, and fighting the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Many lessons were learned from 10 years of UN-NADAF implementation. First, it was reconfirmed that conflict and development are mortal enemies. Second, accelerated development co-operation with Africa requires a new orientation, especially in conducting multilateral and bilateral programmes. Third, commitments made by the parties involved need to be honoured. Fourth, there is a need for sustained advocacy for African development. Last and perhaps most important, the results of the interim evaluations during the implementation of UN-NADAF highlighted the need for coordination and collaboration among the United Nations agencies in their developmental activities in Africa.

Although a number of corrective measures and steps were undertaken during the UN-NADAF implementation, all the points of its agenda were not resolved. Africa remains a continent suffering widespread problems such as extensive poverty, HIV/AIDS and inadequate access to water, education and sanitation. In addition to these pre-existing problems, new challenges posed by globalization continue to arise.

With the NEPAD initiative, a new approach was set in motion. For the first time, development needs and objectives were identified and defined by African countries themselves. The NEPAD initiative, incorporating a complex matrix of key social, economic and political priorities, is a collective pledge by the leaders of Africa. It is based on a common vision and a firm and shared

belief that they have a duty to address the development challenges facing their individual countries and the continent as a whole.

The NEPAD initiative has another advantage in that it is not trying to compete with existing initiatives and development plans. Rather it strives to consolidate these ongoing activities by establishing links between them while introducing new elements. African countries are themselves undertaking particular responsibilities and obligations in their own interest. This process has also introduced the concept of new partnerships with quantifiable commitments, contributions and benefits.

The concurrent discussion on UN-NADAF and NEPAD during the 57th Session of the General Assembly gives us a unique opportunity to learn from the lessons of UN-NADAF and outline the conditions required for success of the new initiative.

Today, during the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the New Partnership for Africa's Development, we will hear from distinguished representatives of Member States, who will express their views on how the international community, including the United Nations, can participate in the New Partnership for Africa's Development. During the informal panel discussions in the afternoon, distinguished panelists from the countries that initiated NEPAD will relate their first-hand experiences and their views on the potential for co-operation between the African countries and the United Nations.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I wish you fruitful discussion and success in your deliberations.