

20 September 2002

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,  
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Peace Bell Ceremony**

Mr. Secretary-General, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you this year, as we gather here to ring the peace bell and to celebrate the International Day of Peace and Global Ceasefire.

This special occasion allows us to remind ourselves of the primary mission of our organization - maintenance of world-wide peace and security. The people of the many nations who collected the coins to construct this bell show us that life in peace is a desire shared by people around the globe. Many of these people look to the United Nations for support in the peaceful settlement of disputes, in conflict resolution, post-conflict reconstruction and economic and social development. And indeed, throughout the years of its existence, the United Nations has helped to better the lives of many of these people.

I therefore wholeheartedly welcome the designation of 21 September as the international day of peace, nonviolence, and global cease-fire. The celebrations give us an opportunity to reflect on past accomplishments and draw inspiration for the work ahead as the United Nations General Assembly launches its deliberations. I also sincerely hope that this symbolic act can be accompanied by a commitment to a cease-fire by as many warring parties as possible.

In this way let the peace bell's ring resonate throughout the world by spreading tolerance, dignity, justice, understanding, solidarity, prosperity - in one word, by spreading peace.