

24 October 2002

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,
on World Development Information Day**

The United Nations General Assembly instituted World Development Information Day at its twenty-seventh session in December 1972 with the object of drawing the attention of world public opinion each year to development problems and the necessity of strengthening international co-operation to solve them. The General Assembly also decided that World Development Information Day should coincide, in principle, with United Nations Day to stress the central role of development in the work of the United Nations.

The world thirty years ago, when World Development Information Day was established, significantly differs from our world today. It was the middle of the Cold War and these events seriously hampered international cooperation. The flow of information was also much more restricted than it is today in the era of the Internet and other modern and sophisticated means of communication. However, despite the relentless work of the United Nations and other international organisations active in the field of information and development, the need for development information remains extremely important and urgent.

The United Nations Millennium Summit brought new impetus to the development agenda. Two years ago, world leaders adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration with clearly stated Millennium Development Goals that should be achieved within specific time frames. This year, the United Nations General Assembly has considered the achievements and gaps in the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and generally agreed with the conclusion made by the United Nations Secretary General in his report, that the world is falling short in meeting these goals and that the results achieved so far are "at best mixed".

Let me express my full support to the initiative of the United Nations Secretary-General to launch the United Nations Millennium Campaign. I would like to urge all United Nations member countries to do their part in bringing the Millennium Development Goals to the top of their agenda everywhere.

I would like therefore, on the occasion of World Development Information Day 2002, to emphasize that reviewing the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals could provide an excellent opportunity for considering development information at a high political level.