

23 June 2003

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,
on the outcome of the work of its Ad Hoc Working Group on the
Integrated and Coordinated Implementation of and Follow-up to the
outcomes of the major United Nations Conferences and Summits in
the Economic and Social Fields**

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me special pleasure and satisfaction to present to the General Assembly the outcome of the work of its Ad Hoc Working Group on the Integrated and Coordinated Implementation of and Follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations Conferences and Summits in the Economic and Social Fields.

As you know, the concept of the “integrated implementation of the major UN conferences” has been followed by the Czech Presidency as one of our four priorities from the very beginning of the 57th session. In January 2003, I made it an urgent priority of my presidency to see the successful and timely completion of the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group. The challenge before this working group was considerable. You had entrusted it to make concrete recommendations to ensure that the UN supports, in the most efficient way, the implementation of the ambitious and detailed set of development goals agreed upon at major UN conferences and summits.

When we started our work in January, many doubted whether the group would be able to tackle adequately this complex and comprehensive issue within the time limits.

We were well aware of our ultimate goal, but unsure of the path to follow. Yet the working group, guided by the Bureau, engaged in a firm and demanding programme of work. And as we engaged ourselves, what we could achieve became clearer. As did the fact that we agreed on many issues, and that our commitment to the goals agreed at conferences, from the Children Summit to the Millennium Summit, Monterrey and Johannesburg, was alive and strong, much stronger than our areas of divergences.

The resolution born from that intense, and at times difficult process, is before you today. I am convinced that it is a good outcome. It will help make the work of our organization more relevant, more visible and enhance its role and political importance, by focusing it on the actual implementation of conference outcomes.

I am particularly pleased that there is a general agreement to look at the work programme of the Second Committee. This will weave a certain logic and topicality in its work.

I also very much welcome the idea of holding a politically attractive major event in 2005, to review progress achieved in implementing commitments made during the conferences and summits. We should all work with our Governments and partners to ensure that commitments made are expeditiously implemented so that concrete advances are made when we meet in 2005.

Another important achievement is the agreement that the General Assembly should decide on the periodic review of the implementation of conference outcomes on a 'case-by-case' basis.

The draft resolution has also given new impetus to the coordination work of the ECOSOC. By planning better its work on common conference themes, the Council will be able to engage the functional commissions and the various parts of the UN system more intensely in its preparations. We have asked the functional commissions to review their working methods in light of the changes that have been made by the Commission for Sustainable Development. We have given clear guidance to organizations of the UN system to work closely together to help Governments implement conference targets. The Council's coordination segment in July will be able to build on these recommendations and launch measures for their implementation.

As I told the working group last Tuesday, I see this resolution as an important landmark that will contribute to strengthening of the General Assembly and ECOSOC, and to the implementation of the programme of reform launched by our Secretary-General.

Our achievements go beyond this. We have demonstrated that the spirit of cooperation and compromise, and the principles of multilateralism are very much present. We have shown once again that the UN can deliver agreements and concrete measures at a political level.

I would like to extend my profound thanks to the two Vice-Chairs of the Group - Ambassador Nana Effah-Apenteng of Ghana and Ambassador Jean de Ruyt of Belgium who presided over the informal consultations, provided guidance through the whole process and tirelessly participated in the work of the Bureau and related negotiations. I am also very grateful to our facilitator, Counsellor Henri Stephan Raubenheimer from the Permanent Mission of South Africa, whose substantive skills, tireless efforts, and suggestions greatly helped finalize the work of the working group.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation to all the delegations who participated in our deliberations, for their continuing engagement, their ideas, and for the collaborative spirit in which they worked throughout our many sessions. I would also like to acknowledge with appreciation the solid and substantive support provided to the Group and to the Bureau by the Secretariat, particularly by Mr. Sarbuland Khan and Mr. Nikhil Seth. My personal thanks go also to my team for its hard work and dedication to this important issue.

Thank you.