

10 December 2007

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Srgjan Kerim,  
President of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly,  
on Human Rights Day**

Today is Human Rights Day. On 10 December 1948 the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights – a historic milestone in the evolution of our common understanding, and affirmation, of values we deem inviolable: that all human beings are born free and with equal and inalienable rights and fundamental freedoms!

The Declaration, inspired by the extraordinary vision and determination of its drafters, is a testament to what we can achieve together as an international community. Its universality is a sign of the shared human values that bind us together, no matter where we were born, or where we live. The rights and values contained in this Declaration stand as a truly binding force in today's globalized world.

It is, however, also important to remember that even on this day human beings continue to be subjected to violations of their fundamental rights in all parts of the world. This must not and will not deter us.

In calling for a new culture of international relations, based on full respect of human rights, human security, the responsibility to protect and sustainable development, I wish to emphasize that we must not and cannot forget those who are denied these rights. It is incumbent upon us to champion their cause.

Human Rights Day 2007, with the theme “dignity and justice for all of us”, provides a unique opportunity to reflect on the achievements we have made collectively since 1948, the obstacles we are facing together today and the challenges we aim to overcome tomorrow.

Let us therefore seize the moment and work together to uphold the Declaration through our work in the General Assembly. Let us also strive - as we embark on a year-long commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - to live up to the spirit embodied by those who had the courage and conviction to leave us with this great legacy.