

21 December 2007

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Srgjan Kerim,
President of the 62nd Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the Main Part of the 62nd Session of the General
Assembly**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is the final plenary meeting of the main part of the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. It has been an honor for me to preside over this busy, dynamic and constructive period of work.

The Assembly held three substantive high-level meetings on contemporary global challenges;

- to promote Interreligious and Intercultural Understanding and Cooperation for Peace;
- to assess the consensus on Financing for Development;
- to follow-up on commitments made at the 2002 Children's Summit;
- and a thematic debate to monitor the implementation of the UN's Counter Terrorism Strategy.

In addition, the Plenary met 79 times; the General Committee 3 times; we held 9 informal consultations; and, adopted over two hundred and fifty Resolutions. I would like to thank the Chairpersons of the Main Committees for their professionalism, which enabled us to conclude this busy schedule in a timely manner. May I also extend my sincere appreciation to all Vice-Presidents for their contribution, and to the Bureaus of the six Main Committees for supporting the work of the General Assembly. For these and other accomplishments I would also like to thank all Member States for working together in a spirit of collective responsibility and thereby enhancing the relevance and vitality of this House.

Excellencies,

May I also take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his support and cooperation, and also for his initiative to develop a close working relationship with me.

Our complementary relationship has deliver results, in particular on climate change, the MDGs and the Capital Master Plan. We will continue to work together closely in the best interests of this organization on other priority issues during this session, in particular on Management Reform and counter-terrorism.

I would also like to commend the dedication and commitment of all the staff in my Cabinet, as well as, Under Secretary-General Mr. Shaaban and all the officials from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management whose work behind the scenes ensures that the Assembly runs smoothly.

Excellencies,

It is time to take stock and to look ahead to the New Year. Please allow me to briefly highlight some encouraging developments that illustrate how we have been changing the way we do business.

The adoption of the resolution on social justice and Member States initiative on Mandate Review are examples of a more cooperative atmosphere.

I would like to commend the delegates of the 5th Committee for their efforts to adopt the biannual budget of the Organization. I wish more flexibility should have been demonstrated in the attempt to reach a consensus on this very important matter.

The manner in which Member States approached elections to the Security Council and the adoption of a resolution on agricultural technology and development demonstrates a more responsible attitude.

A more responsive approach to contemporary events was evident in the adoption of several resolutions on Palestine and on climate change, which demonstrate that we are attuned to changing contemporary events.

Together, we have strengthened and coordinated working relations with Secretariat and other principle organs to better accomplish the common goals of this organization, including, through your active engagement in briefings by the Secretary-General and senior UN officials on topical political issues, such as Myanmar.

I have also met periodically with the Presidents of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council to spread best practices and improve coherence.

We have also had a broader engagement with parliamentarians, civil society, academia and the private sector. Our outreach with these and other important constituencies, including the media, must continue to be developed.

I would also like to acknowledge the many productive meetings I have had with different regional and political groupings of Member States in various formats and settings to enhance cooperation and mutual understanding.

All these trends indicate that the General Assembly is performing: that it is more responsive, more action oriented, and more concerned with results.

We should therefore replace the agenda item “GA revitalization” with the notion of the Assembly’s role in ‘strengthening the United Nations system’.

How well this Assembly performs depends on Member States! And, when you are active and engaged it also allows any President of the General Assembly to show leadership.

We can only live up to our mandate if together we continually strive to address contemporary issues and emerging trends. This is the best way to bolster the authority and international standing of the Assembly.

Excellencies,

At the beginning of the session we defined five interdependent priorities for the 62nd session. I would like to briefly set out the way forward:

- on climate change the Assembly will hold a high-level Panel and debate on the 11th and 12th of February, focusing on our ‘partnerships’ with the private sector and civil society. It is also an opportunity to assess the work of the United Nations in light of the Bali agreement;
- on Financing for Development we have successfully agreed a comprehensive preparatory process, including several multi-stakeholder review sessions. To ensure an optimum outcome in Doha in December 2008, I would like to see all Member States and Monterrey stakeholders take a leading role in the organisation and substance of the sessions;
- on the Millennium Development Goals the Assembly will hold an interactive thematic debate on 1st and 2nd April to consider where priority action can be taken to accelerate progress on the Poverty, Health and Education Goals. I also invite Member States to use this opportunity to set out the strategic development priorities for the international community throughout 2008;
- in our efforts to renew the management, effectiveness and coherence of this organisation we will press ahead with the Mandate Review process to streamline our work; hold a plenary meeting on the 8th of April to consider proposals on the way forward on Management reform; and, begin consultations on System-wide Coherence to assess progress already achieved at the country level with a view to achieve greater effectiveness and coherence;
- and, on counter terrorism we will continue to take stock and identify gaps in implementation in preparation of the full Review in September 2008. We will remain closely engaged with the Task Force and work to reach agreement on the Comprehensive Convention;

Distinguished Colleagues,

On these and other issues we have together created the basis for action next year by setting in motion agreed processes, and defining the parameters for concrete next steps.

For example, Member States adopted a resolution to hold a Comprehensive Review of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS on the 10th and 11th of June 2008.

On Security Council reform you have agreed to move forward on the basis of a principled framework, and working with the Task Force have begun to identify elements that can form the basis of intergovernmental negotiations.

I would also like to inform you that following requests from Member States I shall convene interactive thematic debates on Human Security and Human Trafficking to further demonstrate our leadership on global issues.

I see in all the developments I have outlined encouraging signs of improved cooperation, understanding and trust.

The General Assembly's work is becoming more compelling and relevant to everyday lives of the global public we serve.

It is the combined will of all Member States that creates this vital driving force behind the Assembly.

I therefore encourage you to continue to take the initiative and to strive for results.

Distinguished colleagues,
Friends,

The holiday period is a time of rest and renewal, and also a time of hope and re-affirmation. When we return let us not forget that our joint venture continues. We have a busy schedule ahead and there are many important issues that require our close attention and consideration. Given the holiday period, I would like to invite all delegations to make a New Year's resolution. As you have exemplified during the main part of the session, I would like you all to reaffirm your commitment to work together cooperatively and responsibly with a view to achieve results when you return in the New Year.

May I sincerely thank you all your support and hard work, and wish you all a very happy holiday.