

19 December 2008

**Statement of Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann,  
President of the 63rd Session of the General Assembly,  
on the Secretary-General's Briefing to the General Assembly**

Excellencies,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Friends All,

I am pleased to join you this afternoon to introduce the Secretary-General, who wishes to brief the Assembly on recent developments and his views on the outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development, which concluded on 2 December in Doha. As always, we welcome the Secretary-General and receive his views with great interest.

Before I give the floor to Mr. Ban, allow me to thank you all, especially the Chairs of the Main Committees, for the hard and fruitful work you have done over the past three months. The sixty-third session has been meeting during an especially difficult time for the world community. I hope that it will be remembered for its timely and proactive response to the confluence of crises that are challenging all the nations of the world.

I have not spent as much time with you as I had wished in recent weeks as I have been immersed in our efforts to identify meaningful responses by the Assembly to the many challenges before us. I am therefore especially grateful for the support and the trust you have demonstrated in my efforts and for the extraordinary progress you have made in so many areas.

It is with heavy heart that I fully expect our difficulties to continue during 2009. But I feel that we are better informed and better prepared to face these challenges together and take action that will prevent the crises from tipping into a prolonged tragedy for our less fortunate Brothers and Sisters. We must take these periods of crisis and transform them into opportunities for change -- change inspired by a new sense of urgency and solidarity with the billions of people who have placed their trust in the United Nations.

I assure you that the Secretary-General and I are both committed to working hand-in-hand to strengthen the capacity of the entire United System to respond the growing demands and expectations being placed on us. Our work here in the Assembly must continue to inspire others to join hands in the spirit of cooperation and to meet our responsibilities.

Let me wish you the best during the coming holidays. You deserve a rest. We will return in January both refreshed and determined to continue the enormous tasks that lie ahead.

Mr. Secretary-General, you have the floor.