

18 September 2009

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki,  
President of the 64<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the Student Observance of the International Day of Peace**

Mr. Secretary-General,  
Distinguished Messengers of Peace,  
Dear students from all over the world,

It is my pleasure and honor to participate at the twelfth year of the student observance of the International Day of Peace. I am particularly pleased that in the first days of my term as President of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, I have the opportunity to take part in an event that gathers representatives of our potential future global leaders.

The choice of “Disarm now for a better world” as the theme for this year’s observance day of peace attests to your awareness of the most pressing issues of our times.

Positive signals of willingness, particularly from the major powers, to advance multilateral negotiations on disarmament, have generated high hopes in the international community as a whole. However, real efforts towards complete disarmament remain to be seen. In spite of the current risks and dangers that weapons of mass destruction pose to mankind, it is important to acknowledge that the present favourable political environment can contribute to successful outcomes of forthcoming meetings, particularly the review conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, due to take place here at the United Nations next year.

It is important to bear in mind that disarmament also encompasses the challenges posed by conventional weapons which fuel inter-state conflicts, civil wars and urban violence. The efforts towards disarmament should not leave aside this perspective, which threatens peace and security and contributes to the violation of basic human rights in many parts of the world.

As we all know, peace is not the mere absence of war or conflict. To achieve real peace, it is imperative to address a number of other issues including climate change, eradication of poverty and hunger, and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. And each and every human being can make a significant contribution to those ends. In this regard, education is key, and therefore, the role of students and teachers in promoting a culture of peace can largely contribute to a better world for all. I encourage you to make use of all sources of information, and means of communication to promote the values of peace, disarmament and respect for human rights, which constitute the foundations of the United Nations.

I am confident that you will play a significant role in raising awareness and mobilizing action among the governments and the civil society regarding the issues that affect us all.

Thank you.