

10 December 2009

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki,
President of the 64th Session of the General Assembly,
on the occasion of Human Rights Day**

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, let us wholeheartedly reaffirm that promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, is one of the fundamental purposes of the United Nations. Human rights stand, alongside development and peace and security, as a pillar of the organization. We approach this pillar with humility, mindful of the fact that all Member States have human rights challenges. And we embrace it with purpose, knowing that those challenges must be met, both for the cause of human rights itself, and for the benefit of peace and development. I will continue to work with Member States to reaffirm our collective commitment to universality, non-selectivity, and the indivisible, interdependent and interrelated nature of all human rights: civil and political, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development.

The Human Rights Council was established to promote universal respect for the protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. As we move closer to the mandated five-year review, we will build on the positive experiences gained by the Council to support the further development of this important organ. I urge Member States to engage in an open, inclusive and transparent process to fulfill the promise of the Council and to further strengthen human rights.

On this day in particular, I am eager to add my voice to all those who fight against discrimination in all its forms. Discrimination on the basis of race, gender, language, or religion denies the dignity and worth of the human being. Yet millions of human beings continue to fight a daily battle against discrimination to gain access to education, health services and decent work.

During this session, we will be called upon to follow up on the outcome of the Durban Review Conference, at a moment when the scourge of racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance challenge societies across the globe. Today I urge the UN family, governments, civil society, national human rights institutions, the media, educators, and individuals to join hands to embrace diversity and end discrimination.