



**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the General Debate**

Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before closing this year's General Debate, I would like to make a few concluding remarks.

At the outset, allow me to express my sincere appreciation for the kind words of support and assurances of co-operation that you extended to me and the Vice-Presidents of the General



by side in peace and security. The recognition of security, political, economic, humanitarian, and institutional dimensions is an integral part of the plan. There is no need to stress that support for the endeavours of the diplomatic Quartet and compliance by both parties are essential for further progress and that much more detailed work still has to be done.

At the time of last year's General Debate, Afghanistan was a war-torn country with leadership that oppressed its own citizens and harbored the most despicable terrorist organization in the world. The changes that Afghanistan has experienced since then are unprecedented. On the first day of our debate, a democratically elected president of a completely different country addressed this Assembly. Despite all the progress achieved to date Afghanistan faces major security challenges and is in dire need of continued humanitarian and developmental assistance. The international community and major donors have played - and must continue to play - a decisive role in the positive changes in Afghanistan.

I have listened very carefully to the statements of the distinguished representatives concerning the economic development and prosperity of their countries and regions. The message was apparent and clear - there is no development and prosperity without peace and stability. We have to dedicate our time during the 57th Session of the General Assembly to further addressing and confronting the issues of poverty eradication, HIV/AIDS, equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization and preservation of the environment.

To address these issues, many of you stressed the need to concentrate our efforts on meeting the targets and timeframes laid out in the Millennium Development Goals. The time has come to translate the outcomes of Monterrey and Johannesburg into achievable policies and concrete actions.

A very special attention during this year's General Debate was given to the issues of Africa's development and its future, including UN support to the emerging New Partnership for Africa's Development initiative. I appreciate the conclusions of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on NEPAD and I believe that question of Africa and its development will remain high on our agenda.

Throughout the debate, supportive references have been made to the continuous process of reforming the United Nations. Many of you expect that the role and function of the General Assembly will be revitalized and rationalized, and that discussions on ensuring more equitable representation in the Security Council will continue.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to thank you all for your active participation that made our debate fruitful and successful. I appreciate that many speakers, though not all, have kept - more or less - to the agreed time limit of 15 minutes. I am convinced that shorter and comprehensive statements have greater and more unequivocal impact than long surveys of numerous issues, national and international, and they make our work more efficient. I also greatly appreciate the support and

