

19 November 2002

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Jan Kavan,  
President of the 57th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the UN-IPU Meeting of Parliamentarians**

Mr. President of the Inter-parliamentary Council, Mr. Secretary General of the Inter-parliamentarian Union, Distinguished Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor and privilege to welcome you here in New York at the traditional UN-IPU Meeting of parliamentarians attending the session of the UN General Assembly. I am especially pleased to welcome many of you as my colleagues, being myself not only the President of the 57th United Nations General Assembly, but also a member of the Parliament in my own country, the Czech Republic.

The formal cooperation between the United Nations and the Inter-parliamentarian Union has a relatively short history. It was only in 1996 when the Inter-parliamentarian Union and the United Nations signed a cooperation agreement. However, the informal cooperation of our two organisations has certainly much deeper roots. Both, the IPU and the predecessor to the United Nations, the League of Nations, were, from their inception, based on the same principles stemming out of the pacifist movement at the end of the 19th century. Peaceful settlement of international disputes was their primary objective. The same principles have guided the work of both our organisations though the range of other issues and objectives has substantially increased.

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Session of the General Assembly on Children, the World Food Summit+5 in Rome, the UN Conference on the Financing for Development in Monterrey and the World Summit on