





Special attention throughout the session was paid to the most urgent issues of developing countries, particularly those in Africa. Successful outcome of the high-level meeting on New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in September, and deliberation on many issues related to the African continent, such as the causes of conflict and promotion of peace and sustainable development, the fight against malaria, and so on, contributed to greater awareness of Member States and the international community on these issues.

We have also devoted significant amount of time to the alarming spread of HIV/AIDS pandemic. The resolution just adopted calls for a high-level plenary meeting during the 58th Session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted at the 26th Special Session. In this respect, I would like to emphasize the importance of the participation of civil society, including those representing and working for people with HIV/AIDS and the private sector, in this process.

In the coming months, I also promise to build on the endeavours of my predecessors in their efforts to make the work of the General Assembly more efficient and the meetings more interesting. I hope that a step in this direction was the organization of the open-ended panel



instrumental in the drafting of the resolution. I intend to launch the drafting process under my chairmanship in mid-January with a view to finish the negotiations in April, at the latest, and then to adopt a consensus resolution.

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Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to use this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to all of the delegates and acknowledgement of their valuable and important participation in the meetings of the Plenary and the Main Committees. I want to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and Deputy Secretary-General, Madam Louise Fréchette, for their dedication and contribution to the successful work of the Organization. I would like to warmly thank the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly for assisting me in presiding over the meetings, and in guiding the work of the Plenary. I also had excellent working relations with the Chairpersons of the Main Committees whose input to our common achievements has been essential.

I would like to extend special thanks to the representatives of the Secretariat, especially the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, under the able leadership of Under-Secretary-General Mr. Chen Jian, who have been always helpful and supportive in the fulfilment of my duties. Invaluable support and guidance was provided to my Office and myself by the General Assembly and ECOSOC Affairs Division, in particular Ms. Catherine Boivin. Last but not least, I would like to pay t