



STATEMENT BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON

AT

**THE G77 & CHINA CHAIRMANSHIP HANDOVER
CEREMONY**

UNITED NATIONS

NEW YORK

12 JANUARY 2006

Ministers, Secretary-General, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

As President of a General Assembly comprising 191 members, it is a great honour for me to be able to address today the largest grouping of Member States on the occasion of the handover of your Chairmanship. Your stature brings both power and responsibility, and the way in which the Group of 77 and China conducts itself is a vivid demonstration of the impact of collective international efforts.

I would first like to pay tribute to the way in which the Government of Jamaica, represented in New York by Ambassador Stafford O. Neil, has carried out its Chairmanship over the past year. 2005 will be remembered as a year in which important commitments to the development agenda were made, including commitments to substantially increase the flow of resources to developing countries.

While 2005 will go down as a year which saw an appalling series of natural disasters, it will also be recalled as a year when the United Nations took a big step toward improving its response to such

disasters by launching the new Central Emergency Response Fund –already at over \$200 million.

When we recall Minister Knight’s words on this occasion – the handover ceremony – last year, we see that the development agenda, resource flows and disaster management were three of Jamaica’s stated priorities. I believe that the whole of the General Assembly will look back on Jamaica’s Chairmanship of the G77 and China as one in which important and very real progress was made.

If 2005 was about commitments, 2006 must be about implementation. Much remains to be done. I very much look forward to working with South Africa and its Government, represented here today by Foreign Minister Zuma – and of course our friend and colleague Ambassador Dumisani Kumalo – as we strive to meet the challenge of turning the outcome of the World Summit and our other goals and objectives into action and reality.

A key feature of our work this year will be the need to build bridges. So many of the issues facing us – on development and poverty reduction, communicable diseases, peacebuilding, human rights, the environment, organised crime, terrorism – are areas in

which the whole world has a common interest. All Member States, be they North or South, large, medium or small, need effective international co-operation and good multilateralism. We have to prove that ‘together’ is better and more effective than ‘alone’.

The need for Secretariat and Management, ECOSOC and Security Council reforms, and for revitalization of the General Assembly, is something on which the Member States also agree. On all these issues, we as Member States must work together constructively and creatively to find solutions and common approaches.

I commend the efforts the G77 and China are making to develop understanding and co-operation with other groupings here in New York. Such efforts can help to ensure that in the course of our inter-governmental negotiations, we deliver the results our leaders and the world outside expect of us.

The importance of delivering results in today’s world cannot be overstated. In a world of much uncertainty and mistrust, we need now more than ever a strong United Nations and an effective General Assembly. As our leaders reaffirmed at the World Summit, the General Assembly has the central role as ‘the chief

deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations’.

Through delivering the outcomes to which our leaders committed us at the World Summit, we will show the world that a revitalized General Assembly can respond decisively to the major challenges of the twenty-first century. You, the Group of 77 and China, have an indispensable role to play in this endeavour. I look forward to working with you, and wish you – and us all – strength, courage and inspiration for the important year ahead.