

25 June 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Special Session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS
AIDS Memorial Quilt Unfolding Ceremony**

As we begin the Special Session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS this morning, we remember not only those who presently carry the virus, those who are dying from HIV/AIDS or those who might be infected by the virus in the future. We also remember those who have lost their lives to this terrifying disease.

The quilt, which we unfold this morning, commemorates the lives lost and reminds us of those people which are no longer with us.

These quilts have grown from a single voice of caring to acres of colourful, silent voices commemorating both life and death.

I am convinced that this symbolic gesture - the presence of memories of those who have lost their lives to HIV/AIDS - will strengthen our efforts and will to find a strong global commitment to fight against AIDS and to save lives.