

3 December 2001

**Statement of H.E. Dr. Han Seung-soo,  
President of the 56th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Debate on “Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable  
peace and sustainable development in Africa”**

Before inviting representatives of the Member States to speak on this important agenda item, I wish to make several observations on the urgent need for the international community to support the African states in their efforts to achieve durable peace and sustainable development.

Chapter seven of the 2000 Millennium Declaration, while recognizing the special needs of Africa, pledged support for the consolidation of democracy in Africa and assistance for Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication, and sustainable development. This commitment was seen as central to the vital task of bringing Africa into the mainstream of global development.

Currently some 17 conflicts are ongoing in Africa. Almost half of African countries are directly or indirectly affected by conflict. While many African countries showed slow but steady economic growth during the 1990s, conflict-ridden states suffered negative growth. The tragedy of AIDS blights the lives of more than 23 million Africans today; 13 million Africans have already died and 10 million African children have been orphaned by AIDS.

We must stop this trend and reverse it. In a world of accelerating globalization, the common prosperity of all mankind should be our objective. In this regard, we highly welcome the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), an African-initiated and African-led framework for action to promote sustainable development, adopted by the African leaders last July. NEPAD draws its strength from the determination of Africans to overcome underdevelopment and marginalization.

In order to guarantee the successful implementation of NEPAD, the international community should do its part by providing, inter alia, increased private and public capital flows to Africa, market access expansion and debt reduction.

I urge the United Nations System to provide maximum support for African states and to help foster a productive and mutually beneficial partnership between Africa and the international community and civil society, including the private sector.

The General Assembly will continue to play a major role in assessing and monitoring progress in Africa and make necessary recommendations, mainly through the work of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa as well as the preparatory process for the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. I now invite the speakers on the list to take the floor.