

United Nations Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

19 December 2001

Statement of H.E. Dr. Han Seung-soo, President of the 56th Session of the General Assembly, at a Luncheon with the Vice-Presidents

Your Excellencies,

I am very pleased to welcome you to this luncheon. I am grateful that you took time out of your busy schedules to be with me today. Since the main part of the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly is about to recess, I thought that this would be a good occasion to give you a brief account of what we have achieved so far since September and to share my views with you on the session.

As you know, this has been a very unusual and a very busy session. So far we have had 88 plenary meetings and adopted 209 resolutions concerning the items before the General Assembly. By the time the recess begins, the Assembly will have considered most of the items on its agenda, adopted some 275 resolutions and held some 95 meetings. It seems that we would have almost the same number of meetings as were held during the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Organization. This indicates that this session was indeed a very busy session for all of us.

Since the opening of the session in mid-September, among other things, the Assembly held two days of high-level plenary meetings on development and held a debate on terrorism for one week. In early November, two days were devoted to "dialogue among civilizations". Thereafter, the Assembly, by extending the hours of its plenary meetings, managed to hold its general debate in seven days.

We still have three important items to consider in the plenary. Thursday morning, we will consider the item on "the Situation in Afghanistan and Assistance to Afghanistan" and Friday morning after the Second Committee reports we will take up the items on Multilingualism and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thursday afternoon we will hold the Tenth Emergency Special Session resumed pursuant to General Assembly resolution ES-10/7 of 20 October 2000.

So far, we have completed consideration of the reports of the First, Third, Fourth and Sixth Committees. As I said, we will take up the reports of the Second Committee on Friday. I have been informed that the Fifth Committee would conclude its work on Thursday and I am hoping to take up the reports of the Fifth Committee on either Friday or Saturday, as well as make my concluding statement and recess the session.

Some of the remaining plenary items will either be deferred to the next session, as was done in previous sessions, or will be considered during the remainder of the fifty-sixth session.

The remainder of the fifty-sixth session next year will also be quite busy. As you know, the Special session on Children will take place from 8 to 10

May. The dates for this two-day plenary meetings are still under consultations and not decided on yet. The Working Group on the Security Council will start its work in early March. There will be several other meetings and also we will have, among other things, three conferences that will keep all of us busy. The International Conference on Financing for Development will be held from 18 to 22 March in Mexico. The World Assembly on Aging will take place from 8 to 12 April in Spain. World Summit on Sustainable Development will take place in South Africa from 26 August to 4 September.

From what I have just said, it seems that next year will be a very busy year for all of us and I wish you success.

Before I conclude my brief statement, I wish to take this opportunity to thank all of you, who so ably presided over the plenary meetings when I had other important meetings to attend to, concerning General Assembly matters and during my absence. Once again, I thank you all for your cooperation and kindness that you have shown me in discharging my duties as President of the fifty-sixth session. Your assistance and contributions made my tasks less onerous.

I also wish to thank Mr. Chen, Under-Secretary General of the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference services and his staff and in particular to the staff of the General Assembly Servicing Branch for all their assistance during these past three months. With the kind cooperation and assistance from all of you, I am sure, this session will be crowned with success.

In conclusion, I wish to thank all of you and wish you a very happy holiday season and happy new year.

Thank you.