



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

General Assembly, 10 October 2005

Excellencies,

I begin this morning by expressing our solidarity with the people of Pakistan and its neighbours India and Afghanistan who have been tragically affected by the devastating earthquake this weekend. We have all been shocked by the news reports we have seen, with whole villages disappearing and massive numbers of people, including many children, falling victim to this disaster.

On behalf of the Assembly, I offer our deepest sympathy to the governments and peoples of the three countries, and to the friends and families of those killed, injured or missing. We, all of us in the General Assembly, stand shoulder to shoulder with you now as rescue and relief work continues. The world must also ensure you get the support and co-operation you need for the longer-term recovery and reconstruction that will be needed.

This earthquake, and the flooding and mudslides in Guatemala and its neighbours El Salvador, Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica which have also resulted in the tragic loss of many lives, remind us both of the power of nature but also of the importance of a quick, co-ordinated international response at times such as this.

Jan Eliasson