

16 January 2007

**Statement of H.E. Ms. Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa,  
President of the 61st Session of the General Assembly,  
at the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Summit on Staff Security**

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to commend the tireless dedication and sacrifice of all those who have served to further the ideals of the United Nations family. I would also like to pay special tribute to all staff members who have lost their lives, been injured or are held captive, as well as to those missing whose fate remains unknown.

The United Nations ability to rise to the challenges of our time rests not only on the integrity and professionalism of its staff, but also on their security and safety. The safety and security of United Nations staff is paramount and, promoting and enhancing security consciousness, training and risk assessment is essential.

The General Assembly takes this issue very seriously. Last year, through Resolution 60/123, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the sixty-first session a comprehensive report on the safety and security and protection of all United Nations personnel.

During the reporting period, from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006, 15 United Nations civilian staff members lost their lives as a result of malicious acts; there were 215 violent incidents; 120 incidents of threatening verbal abuse and 93 armed robberies of significant United Nations assets; five incidents of rape; and, nine cases of sexual assault occurred.

There are other initiatives designed to strengthen the safety and security of UN staff. The United Nations Chief Executives Board in consultation with the Department of Safety and Security, also submitted a report to the sixty-first session of the General Assembly, making recommendations and reporting on progress to strengthen and unify the security management system for the United Nations.

As a result the Department of Safety and Security has intensified contacts with Member States, both through permanent missions to and through direct contact with host country authorities in order to increase cooperation, improve lines of communication and guarantee the necessary support.

The reduction in statistics on the number of security incidents involving staff over recent years is likely attributable to many factors; however there is no doubt that the enhancements to the United Nations security management system undertaken by the Assembly since 2001 have played a major role.

In conflict situations, we should also remember that UN partners in the field face the same dangers. In this regard, there are efforts under way to improve safety and security coordination mechanisms for NGOs in the field.

Although, the United Nations has taken significant steps to enhance the safety and security of staff, host Governments continue to bear the primary responsibility to protect all UN personnel under their jurisdiction.

I call on Member States to work with the Department of Safety and Security to fulfil their obligations, under the Charter of the United Nations, to ensure the safety of all United Nations personnel. The General Assembly remains seized by this critical issue and continues its robust support of the United Nations security management system.

Ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to those United Nations personnel currently working in insecure and sometimes violent and hostile environments. They follow the call of duty, which makes this organization so invaluable to people in need. Without their courage the UN could not fulfill its main goals of peace and security, human rights and development. We should do everything within our power to guarantee their safety and security and, uphold the principles and rules of international humanitarian law.

Thank you.