

22 September 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the HLM to Commemorate the Tenth Anniversary of
the Adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

Heads of State and Government, Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we draw to a close this high-level meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for coming together to reaffirm your collective commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances.

I would also like to once more express my heartfelt gratitude to the co-facilitators, Her Excellency Mrs. Isabelle Picco, Permanent Representative of Monaco to the United Nations, and His Excellency Mr. Tommo Monthe, Permanent Representative of Cameroon to the United Nations, for their exceptional leadership throughout the preparations for this high-level meeting. Let me also take this opportunity to sincerely thank our Co-Chairs and all of the participants in today's meeting. And I commend the peace-loving Member States who supported this process and worked together to address this serious global challenge.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Today we have heard about the important work being done worldwide to implement the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. We have also heard about efforts to make progress towards realizing the fundamental principles of equality and non-discrimination, in accordance with international human rights law and its relevant instruments.

Unfortunately, we have also heard that, despite concerted efforts, racist attitudes and racial discrimination continue to perpetrate deeply embedded social and economic disparities.

This rising inequality and discrimination makes the DDPA and the commitments in the Outcome Document you adopted this morning even more urgent. It is vital that we go further to implement measures to counter intolerance and eradicate advocacy of hatred, incitement and discrimination. It is vital that we do our utmost to promote and strengthen effective dialogue, which in turn increases understanding within and among communities and promotes social cohesion. And it is vital that we unite efforts and collaborate more intensively in order to effectively combat racism and other forms of discrimination.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I firmly believe that the principles of equality and non-discrimination are essential for social harmony, for the promotion of good governance and the rule of law, for sustainable development and for the fair allocation of resources. It is therefore crucial for the dignity and development of the world's population that we continue to fight the scourge of racism.

I urge you to continue to speak with one voice, to unite your efforts and to collaborate more intensively, in order to combat racism and to make the world a safer, more harmonious place for all.

Thank you.