

21 October 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
to the Third Committee**

Mr. Chair,  
Distinguished delegates,

I am very pleased to address the Third Committee today.

His Excellency Mr. Hussein Haniff, Chairman of the Third Committee, I have great confidence in your leadership, and in the assistance of your distinguished colleagues from the Third Committee Bureau in supporting the work of this Committee.

While it is not a common tradition for the President of the General Assembly to address the Main Committees, I am very pleased to have the opportunity to address all six Committees this year, to deliver a personal message of appreciation and encouragement.

From my time in New York over the past 13 years, I am deeply aware that the Third Committee plays a critical role in promoting one of the three pillars of our organization: human rights.

This session, the issues before this Committee are particularly pertinent, given this remarkable moment in history. We are witnessing emerging democracies calling for liberty, dignity, and social justice. In your work, your consideration of topics ranging from social development to the advancement of women to the promotion and protection of children's rights, are fundamental starting points for realizing the potential of democratic nations. These are also essential elements of peaceful and secure livelihoods for all.

In this respect, the Human Rights Council, as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, plays a crucial role in the worldwide protection and mainstreaming of human rights. Last year, the General Assembly carried out negotiations on the review of the Council, as mandated by the Assembly, so as to strengthen the Council's functions and methods of work. I welcome the consensual approach and outcome that resulted from these negotiations, as well as the coordinated approach between Geneva and New York during the review process. This practice should be strengthened.

In this regard, the General Assembly's support to the work of the Human Rights Council, led under the able stewardship of its President, Her Excellency Ms. Laura Dupuy Lasserre, is of great importance. I am sure we will all benefit from the new practice of holding an interactive dialogue between the Third Committee and the President of the Human Rights Council. I myself look forward to addressing the March session of the Council next year.

I would also acknowledge the leadership of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay, in supporting the UN's human rights efforts.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Chair of the Third Committee, His Excellency Mr. Hussein Haniff, for his constructive efforts to address the issue of the speaking order of major groups. I am pleased that the work of the Committee has been able to continue, with all groups showing flexibility.

Overall, I understand that your discussions during the past two weeks have been substantive, and I am pleased to note that you are progressing in your work.

I am also pleased that discussions are taking place in a constructive atmosphere. I would urge you all to strive for consensus in your deliberations. By doing so, you will ensure lasting, legitimate resolutions to the very complex issues before you. Successful, outcomes based on consensus will also alleviate the Plenary's workload.

Distinguished delegates, I will count on all of you to maintain a constructive and forward-looking atmosphere this session, keeping our ultimate goal at the fore: to protect and promote the fundamental human rights, dignity and worth of the citizens of the world.

I wish you all great success in your important work.

Thank you very much for your attention.