

23 January 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,  
President of the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Reception of the Forum of Small States (FOSS) marking the  
Chinese New Year and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Establishment of  
FOSS**

Ambassador Albert Chua  
Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon  
Distinguished Colleagues  
Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a real pleasure for me and my wife, Mona, to join you at this lovely reception to mark the first day of the Chinese New Year. Our thanks to Ambassador Chua for the invitation to join you this evening.

At the outset, let us wish you a happy Chinese New year. We wish each of you good health, success and prosperity.

This is a time for celebration and also an occasion to prepare ourselves to benefit from the enthusiasm generated by the spirit of the New Year.

This is the Year of the Water Dragon.

The Dragon is a creature of myth and legend. The Oriental Dragon is regarded as a divine beast, a symbol of good fortune and a sign of intense power - the reverse of the malicious monster that Westerners depict it to be. The dragon is a beautiful creature and a bundle of energy, but at the same time known to be unpredictable. So, we might see something unexpected – good or bad - happening in 2012.

Let us all, therefore, work together and focus our energies, in this New Year of the Dragon, in order to produce something good for humanity.

Another reason for celebration is that this year, 2012, also marks the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Forum of Small States, (FOSS). I wish to congratulate all its members on reaching this important milestone.

I believe FOSS has always been an open, interactive forum for dialogue and frank exchange. And I have personally joined in the past. My being with you for the third time since taking over as the President speaks for my special recognition of this important forum.

As I had said in my address to you in November, FOSS members may be small in the sizes of their populations but they are never small in terms of ideas and initiatives. They are also never small in terms of the dynamism of their human resources. I also underscored that being small generates among its members a sense of solidarity, empathy and compassion which are essential for our world body to make progress in its global mission.

As President of the General Assembly, I continue to count on the collaboration, consensus and support of the FOSS membership.

Once again, I wish all of you a happy Chinese New Year and a happy 20th anniversary of FOSS!

Thank you very much.