

27 January 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
on the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the
Victims of the Holocaust**

Under-Secretary-General Akasaka,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by thanking the organizers for today's event. In accordance with the General Assembly resolution 60/7 of 2005, I join you today to commemorate the Holocaust Remembrance Day.

We have among us survivors and their families. The presence of each of you here today tells us that every human being has a sacred duty to speak out in the face of injustice and intolerance, regardless of any color, religion or ethnicity.

This year, the focus of our commemoration is "Children and the Holocaust".

We acknowledge with respect and sadness those children who were lost.

Lost to their families.

Lost to their communities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us honour all those victims by taking preventive action so that hatred, injustice, discrimination, inhumanity, ethnic cleansing and mass killings have no chance to occur anywhere to anyone.

Through the General Assembly resolution in 2005, Member States condemned without question all manifestations of intolerance and incitement to hatred, wherever they occur. They condemned harassment or violence against persons or communities based on ethnic origin or religious belief.

In doing so, members of the international community demonstrated that the nations of the world make up one human family.

That we must stand shoulder to shoulder as we look back in shared grief.

And that we choose to journey together towards the culture of peace, tolerance and human dignity.

To this end, there is much that each of us can do.

We can – and should - commit the necessary measures and resources for the prevention of discrimination, racism and crimes against humanity, in accordance with international law.

We can do more to educate our communities about the horrors of injustice, racism and hatred.

We can continue our critical work to promote dialogue among different faiths and religions.

In this regard, the UN Alliance of Civilizations provides, since its very beginning, an important forum for promoting respect for diversity and pluralism.

In particular, youth can play an important role in efforts to advance cross-cultural understanding and dialogue. In partnership with the Alliance of Civilizations, I intend to organize on March 22 an interactive thematic debate of the General Assembly on this vital topic.

Also recognizing the critical need for fostering mutual understanding and inter-religious dialogue, the General Assembly, by its resolution 65/5, has declared the first week of February as the annual “World Interfaith Harmony Week”.

Many events will take place in celebration at the UN next month, including one that is organized by my office on 7 February.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let us continue to work together, in close cooperation, to create an environment in which tolerance, understanding and peace are enjoyed by all.

Thank you.