

10 December 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Vuk Jeremić,
President of the 67th Session of the General Assembly,
on Human Rights Day**

On 10 December 1948, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which boldly stated that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” and that they are “endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”.

This unique document solemnly linked respect for the inalienable rights of individuals with advancing the cause of peace and security.

On Human Rights Day, as President of the General Assembly, I call on all Member States to faithfully and unreservedly respect the Declaration.

Human rights are in the core of the United Nations, standing alongside development and peace and security, as the three pillars of this organization.

The transformational power of human rights is incontrovertible; we witnessed significant progress since the adoption of the Declaration: a number of human rights treaties were adopted, the rights of the child and persons with disabilities were recognised and full equality between men and women became a standard we are pursuing.

Notwithstanding these many achievements, more challenges remain. Too many of our fellow human beings continue to be subjected to violations of their fundamental rights.

The United Nations should therefore continue to play a leading role in promoting and protecting human rights across the world. The General Assembly, together with the Human Rights Council, ought to devote greater attention to realizing what the Universal Declaration called a “common standard of achievement.”

This goal can be advanced through a collaborative approach of Member States and other stakeholders including public policy institutes, think tanks, and other types of non-governmental organizations.

As President of the 67th Session of the General Assembly, I will work with the Member States to realize the lofty ideals codified in 1948. Together mankind can achieve the goal of human rights for all peoples.