

19 September 2000

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,
on the occasion of the Millennium Peace Day Event at United Nations
Headquartes in New York**

I am delighted to welcome you all to the Millennium Peace Day celebration. I firmly believe that peace is imbedded within human nature and behavior, and not inimical to it.

Today, I have received 50 million signatures, collected throughout the world in support of UNESCO's campaign, on behalf of the culture of peace. All those who have signed the manifesto have made a personal commitment to translate peace, tolerance and sharing into their daily lives.

I thank members of the Peace Poem project who have collected thousands of lines of peace poetry from over 80 UN Member States. I would also like to extend special thanks to the members of The Cloth of Many Colors. The mile-long banner they have created with quilts collected from all parts of the world is like a beautiful mosaic, embodying our own collective humanity.

All these performances, including the music presentations prove to us that we have a common goal, and that peace does have a chance. I am deeply moved by the beauty and magnitude of your efforts. I warmly thank each and everyone of you.