

14 December 2000

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
before the General Assembly takes action on the draft resolution  
concerning the closure of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant**

The tragedy at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant almost 15 years ago affected almost the entire territory of Europe, most of all Ukraine and the neighboring areas of Belarus and the Russian Federation, and caused long-lasting complex problems. The human suffering caused by the accident cannot be measured and its environmental impact was partly irreversible. The Chernobyl accident was a major global technological catastrophe and an eye opener in many respects.

We will soon take action on a draft resolution on the "Closure of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant". We all welcome the decision by the Government of Ukraine to close the Chernobyl plant tomorrow, 15 December 2000. By doing so Ukraine pursues her commitments under the Memorandum of Understanding signed in Ottawa in 1995.

The draft resolution before us invites the international community to continue to provide support to the Government and people of Ukraine and other affected states. It is my sincere hope that the adoption of this draft resolution in connection with the closure of the plant will give new impetus to the concerted efforts by the United Nations system aimed at mitigating and minimizing the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster.