30 June 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Opening of the "The Rhythms of One World 2012" Concert in
Celebration of the Anniversary of the Signing of the UN Charter**

Your Excellency Mrs. Simona Mirela Miculescu, Permanent Representative of Romania to the UN,
Mr. Patrick Sciaratta, Executive Director of the Friendship Ambassadors Foundation
Excellencies,
Eminent guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

I am honoured to join you today to celebrate a decisive moment in the history of international diplomacy and development: the signing of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Charter was signed in the wake of a truly devastating war that claimed the lives of millions of people. It was intended to be a living document.

And events such as this bring the Charter to life. So, I wish to thank Ambassador Miculescu, the Permanent Mission of Romania and the Friendship Ambassadors Foundation, for treating us to this afternoon's performance by a gathering of choirs composed of gifted youth from every corner of the globe.

I applaud both the Republic of Romania and the Friendship Ambassadors Foundation for their unwavering commitment to promoting youth leadership.

I am particularly delighted to see that the talent of young people is the centerpiece of our celebration here today.

As all of us can observe this difficult world economy, the challenges facing our youth have been overlooked.

Young people are the most important economic asset of any country. Yet, in many national policies, the needs of the youth are often missing among the priorities of governments.

Our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals will remain elusive if countries and governments fail to elevate youth empowerment to the top of their development agendas.

Young men and women are the future of humanity.

Our youth carry the mantle for upholding the ideals of peace and human progress that are enshrined in the United Nations Charter – the charter that we are gathered here today to commemorate.

In 1995, the General Assembly unanimously adopted an international strategy, known as the World Programme of Action for Youth, to address more effectively the problems of young people. It also aimed to increase opportunities for youth participation in society.

With this celebration, I would like to call upon Member States to reaffirm their commitment to the fifteen youth priorities that are identified in this Programme of Action.

In this hall today, through the gift of music, the young artists gathered before us will showcase how our youth are capable of leading the way to a future of mutual understanding and cultural harmony.

In this spirit, I urge all Member States to embrace a new paradigm of youth-led development to boost the chances of success for achieving the MDGs.

His Excellency Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, in his remarks to the General Assembly on the occasion of the opening of his second mandate, announced his decision to appoint a Special Representative for Youth.

I am glad and encouraged by this decision, because it reflects the Secretary-General's commitment to deepening the youth focus of the United Nations.

I echo his appeal for greater attention to be paid to the critical areas of employment, entrepreneurship, political participation, human rights, education and reproductive health for youth.

Today, youth around the world are calling for a greater voice in the economic and political lives of their nations.

I urge Member States to work more urgently and with a greater sense of purpose to answer their calls and create opportunities.

Empowering youth is a matter of inter-generational justice. This is one of the key missions reflected in the UN Charter.

Let us stay true to the ideals of the Charter and offer our youth the opportunity of a brighter future.

And as we celebrate the Charter here today with this concert, let us rise together and work harder to make it real and true once more, especially for the youth of the world.

Please, enjoy.