



STATEMENT BY

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON**

**FIRST SESSION OF THE
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

**UNITED NATIONS – GENEVA
19 JUNE 2006**

Mr. Secretary-General, Mr. Director-General, Madam High Commissioner,
Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Friends,

Today we are all part of an historic occasion, the opening of the first session of the Human Rights Council. We are entering a new chapter in the United Nations' work on human rights.

In the days and weeks to come the world will closely follow and scrutinize this Council's work and its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration and the founding resolution, General Assembly resolution 60/251 of 15 March 2006. Today, the world is behind you, supporting you, urging you to live up to this commitment.

Let us briefly recall the steps we have taken together and the achievements that led us to today's event.

First of all, let us pay a special tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In his report "In Larger Freedom" Kofi Annan reinforced the vision of a United Nations founded on three pillars: development, peace and security, and respect for human rights, all mutually reinforcing. Without an effective human rights machinery, the United Nations as a whole would diminish in credibility. To place human rights on the same level as peace and security and development and to stress the interdependence of all three pillars was an historical contribution to achieve security in a broader sense, a life in dignity to all.