

H.E. MR. JAN ELIASSON

PRESIDENT OF THE SIXTIETH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson was elected President of the sixtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly on 13 June 2005. At the time, he was Sweden's Ambassador to the United States, a post he held from September 2000 until July 2005.

A veteran in the fields of diplomacy and foreign relations, from 1994 to 2000 Mr. Eliasson served as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, a key position in formulating and implementing Swedish foreign policy. Earlier, from 1988 to 1992, he was Sweden's Ambassador to the United Nations in New York. During this period, he also served as the Secretary-General's Personal Representative on Iran/Iraq and was Chairman of the UN General Assembly's working group on emergency relief (1991), Vice President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) (1991 to 1992) and Chairman of the UN Trust Fund for South Africa (1988 to 1992).

In 1992, Mr. Eliasson was appointed as the first United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs. During his tenure, he was involved in operations in Somalia, Sudan, Mozambique and the Balkans and also undertook initiatives concerning landmines, conflict prevention and humanitarian action.

From 1980 to 1986, Mr. Eliasson was part of the UN mediation missions in the war between Iran and Iraq, headed by former Prime Minister Olof Palme. More recently, Mr. Eliasson served as a mediator in the Nagorny Karabakh conflict for the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and was a visiting professor at Uppsala University in Sweden, lecturing on mediation, conflict resolution and UN reform.

Over the course of his diplomatic career, Mr. Eliasson has been posted to New York (twice) Paris, Bonn, Washington (twice) and Harare, where he opened the first Swedish Embassy in 1980. He served as Diplomatic Adviser to the Swedish Prime Minister from 1982 to 1983, and as Director General for Political Affairs in the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs from 1983 to 1987.

Mr. Eliasson has authored and co-authored numerous books and articles and is a frequent lecturer on foreign policy and diplomacy. A recipient of honorary doctorate degrees from the American University, Washington, D.C., Göteborg University, Sweden, and Bethany College, Kansas, he also has been decorated by a number of Governments.

Born in Göteborg, Sweden, in 1940, Mr. Eliasson was an exchange student in the United States from 1957 to 1958 and graduated from the Swedish Naval Academy in 1962. He earned a Master's degree in Economics in 1965.

Mr. Eliasson is married to Kerstin Eliasson, who is Sweden's State Secretary for Education and Science. They have three grown children, Anna, Emilie and Johan.