To record the past as an aid to understanding the factors which shape the present and may influence the future is one of the functions of history. Like its predecessors, this fifteenth edition of the Yearbook of the United Nations is intended to help provide such a record. It is a reference work describing endeavours and achievements in many fields in the development of international co-operation which is so essential a foundation on which to base world peace and the welfare of all mankind.

It gives, within the space of a single volume, a concise and authoritative account (together with documentary bibliographies) of the activities, proceedings and decisions of United Nations organs on a vast variety of subjects of concern to the international community. It surveys, too, the work of the other members of the United Nations family of inter-governmental bodies—the International Atomic Energy Agency and the specialized agencies. It covers the calendar year 1961 and also proceedings of the General Assembly in January and February 1962; activities of the Assembly in the earlier months of 1961 were dealt with in the previous volume.

The Yearbooks, it is hoped, will serve not only as valuable reference sources but also as means for promoting informed appreciation and further knowledge of the facts and problems involved in the progress of international co-operation through the United Nations system.

U THANT
Secretary-General