At a time when the United Nations is approaching its goal of full universality of membership, and when its work affects virtually all human activities, the role of the Yearbook of the United Nations is more important than ever.

The Yearbook provides an authoritative and concise account of these activities. But it is not only valuable as a work of historical record; it provides us with the opportunity to evaluate the performance of the world organization and to give us guidance for the future.

The United Nations urgently needs an informed public if it is to succeed in its many tasks, and the Yearbook plays an important role in this process. It is used as the standard publication on the annual work of the United Nations, and it enables all who are interested in that work—and particularly diplomats, government officials, scholars, teachers and journalists—to have full and accurate information, easily obtained.

Those who study the Yearbook see quickly how the work of the United Nations has changed and expanded since its foundation in 1946. But despite the movement of the world organization into new fields of activity not anticipated by its founders, the essential objectives have not changed. These are the restoration and establishment of lasting peace; the elimination of injustice and oppression; and the eradication of human suffering and misery in all its forms.

These goals are eternal. The Yearbook of the United Nations describes how the world organization is endeavouring to achieve them, and to create a real international partnership between nations.

KURT WALDHEIM
Secretary-General