



**10.01.2016 - Today marks 70 years since the United Nations' first General Assembly meeting. On January 10th, 1946, the 51 founding member states gathered in pursuit of a more peaceful world in the immediate aftermath of World War II.**

In this first meeting, Colombian diplomat Zuleta Angel articulated the basic principles that the UN should follow in its activities – those of free will, defiance of scheming and trickery, and spirit of cooperation.

The General Assembly plays a vital role in ensuring Member States follow the UN Charter's principles, which at times has meant suspending delinquent Members in moments of crises. In commemoration of the event we reflect on some memorable moments in the forum's history:

- In the 1960s the General Assembly suspended South Africa for practicing apartheid. The country was re-admitted in 1994 following its democratic transition.

- In the late 1960s Israel was blocked from sitting in the 'Asia' regional group by Arab states. In 2000 it was permitted to become a temporary member of the 'Western European and Others' regional group.
- In 1992, following the dissolution of Yugoslavia, the Assembly denied Serbia and Montenegro the automatic inheritance to the Yugoslavia seat.

### **John F. Kennedy**



"[The United Nations] will either grow to meet the challenges of our age, or it will be gone with the wind, without influence, without force, and without respect (...) A nuclear disaster, spread by wind and water and fear, could well engulf the great and the small, the rich and the poor, the committed and the uncommitted alike. Mankind must put an end to war--or war will put an end to mankind." September 25th 1961

**Yasser Arafat**



“Today I have come bearing an olive branch and a freedom fighter’s gun. Do not let this olive branch fall from my hand.” October 13th, 1974

**Emma Watson**



[http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2015/Jan/20150110.un70thga.html](#)