

22 September 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the 29th Special Session of the GA on Follow-Up to
the Programme of Action of the International Conference on
Population and Development Beyond 2014**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we come to the end of this Special Session, I wish to congratulate all participants on the quality of debate and sharing of national experiences over the course of this afternoon and evening. Your commitment to ensuring the well-being of every human being and to achieving sustainable development is inspiring. This session has benefitted from the invaluable contributions of Member States, many of whom were represented by Heads of State or Government. Civil society organizations, particularly those representing the hopes and aspirations of young people were also instrumental in our proceedings. The energy, enthusiasm and commitment shown by these organizations has been a driving force for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). We recall that the 47th Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), taking into account the findings of the ICPD Beyond 2014 Operational Review, and the regional review outcomes, adopted a resolution reaffirming commitment to further implementation of the ICPD agenda, which is clearly reflected in the Secretary-General's Report before us. During our deliberations throughout this session, we heard leaders affirm support for the Programme of Action, while also reiterating many of the recommendations found in the Framework of Actions. This has been a remarkable opportunity to commit, in one voice, our collective intent to address the challenges to population and development in the 21st Century. It is evident from what we have heard that the world has reached a turning point. Global progress is increasingly uneven and characterized by the exploitation of the Earth's resources, coupled with increased human consumption. This paradigm threatens inclusive development, the environment and our common future.

Excellencies,

The Session participants highlighted a vast range of formidable challenges facing our world, including unfulfilled gender equality and women's empowerment ; the need for lifelong learning opportunities; inequalities in universal access to sexual and reproductive health services, just to mention a few. We have to ensure that these issues, in view of their significant implications for development policy, are effectively addressed. Similarly, we heard that increasing urbanization requires us to plan and build sustainable cities and strengthen urban-rural linkages. The impact of population dynamics at the micro and macro levels also requires the integration of these elements into development planning at the national, regional and international level. The respect for and promotion of human rights was emphasized by speakers as being critical to building individual capability and resilience, both of which are essential for sustainable development. Many speakers stressed that further implementation of the

ICPD Programme of Action, taking into account the respective regional reviews and the findings and recommendations of the ICPD Beyond 2014 review will be a critical first step. Many also called for the findings and recommendations of the Secretary-General's Report and the regional review outcomes to be included in the post-2015 development agenda. It is clear from our discussions that the development challenges we face require cooperation from all stakeholders, with a strong emphasis on partnerships and global leadership from the United Nations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We must act quickly and decisively to put our plans into action on all the key development challenges at all levels in our countries. We have all worked hard to this point, but, in fact, the real work starts now. We must proceed in this endeavour with a new determination, commitment and vision. We have now come to the end of the twenty-ninth special session of the General Assembly. May I invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.