

18 November 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly**

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

For more than two decades, this body has considered the agenda item “Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly” as an integral part of its efforts to strengthen the Organization as a whole.

Although the world has drastically changed from what it was almost seventy years ago, the role of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations has remained central. We are at a defining moment now as we deliberate this item. We are reaching the target date for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which will be succeeded by Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) currently being formulated as key components of the post-2015 Development Agenda. As we pursue this agenda, it is essential, that we continue giving urgent attention to enhancing the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly. That is one of the priorities I have laid out during this session

Excellencies,

Resolution 68/307 of 10 September 2014 established an Ad hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (AHWG). The resolution called for the Working Group to be open to all Member States to, and I

“identify further ways to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the Assembly inter alia, by building on the progress achieved in past sessions of the Assembly as well as on previous resolutions, including evaluating the status of their implementation.” [end quote]

I thank Ambassador Frantisek Ruzicka, Permanent Representative of Slovakia, and Ambassador Norachit Sinhaseni, Permanent Representative of Thailand, the Co-Chairs for the Ad Hoc working Group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly for their leadership and the work done in the past session.

Through the four clusters, the Working Group, has made efforts to explore how best to enhance the voice and impact of the Assembly, in line with its mandate and the realities of today’s world.

Let me recall some highlights of this work.

The first cluster relates to the role and authority of the General Assembly. It is essential that resolutions adopted by this body are implemented and that cooperation between the Assembly and the Principal Organs of the United Nations is continuously pursued. I intend to strengthen this cooperation, coordination and exchange of information with the other Principal Organs and also with the Secretariat of the United Nations, particularly the Secretary-General.

I welcome the progress made in improving the working methods of the Assembly and its Main Committees, which is the second cluster on our revitalization agenda. We have to maintain this steadfastness as the efficient and coherent work of the Committees has far-reaching impact, particularly on the Assembly's ability to make timely and meaningful decisions. Rationalizing our agenda and making it more focused will also enhance the quality and impact of the consideration of topics, reflecting Member States' priorities.

Excellencies

We should preserve the integrity and eminence of the general debate. An important lesson from the General Debate held this year is that, we need to rationalize the number of meetings and side events held in the margins of the General Debate, to enable greater focus on the matters being discussed here by world leaders.

During this session, I will convene high level meetings and thematic debates on current issues of critical importance to the international community. In my previous statements to the Assembly, I have outlined the specific meetings and events. I will continue to consult with the General Committee and Member States on the preliminary programme of these debates as well as on the possibilities for achieving, result oriented and productive outcomes of these debates.

I wish to note the important and tangible outcome in the scheduling of early elections for members of the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Beginning from the 70th session, elections to these organs will take place six months before the elected States assume their responsibilities.

I also note that work has been progressing with regard to the third cluster, on the selection and appointment of the Secretary-General and other Executive Heads. This is consistent with Resolution 68/307, which inter alia, re-emphasizes the need for the Secretary-General Selection process to be transparent and inclusive, in accordance with Article 97 of the Charter.

The fourth and final cluster, the strengthening the institutional memory of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, will also play an important role in reinvigorating this Assembly. I commend the President of the 68th session for facilitating transition and continuity in the Office of the PGA. I also recognize the vital support provided by the Secretariat, in particular the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. In the coming period, I look forward to briefing Member States on my Office's activities against the backdrop of an increasing workload. I thank Member States for their continued support to the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

Excellencies,

I will actively involve Member States in the work of the Assembly. During the last few weeks, I have appointed Chairs and Facilitators for the different items on our work agenda. In this regard, I thank Ambassador Vladimir Drobnyak, Permanent Representative of Croatia and Ambassador Wilfred Emvula, the Permanent Representative of Namibia for accepting to serve as new Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly. I call on you all to support their efforts to advance the agenda of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

Finally, I wish to reiterate that the revitalization of the work of the Assembly will remain a priority during this session and I look forward to your collective support and contribution.

I thank you for your kind attention.