

19 November 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Annual Parliamentary Hearing**

**Excellencies,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Honourable Saber Chowdhury, President of IPU,
Rt. Honourable Speakers,
Distinguished Members of Parliament,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to join you here today and to welcome our distinguished Members of parliament. I would like to congratulate the Honourable Saber Chowdhury on his recent election and able leadership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

I am particularly heartened to see the wide range of participants who are here today; including parliamentarians, representatives of Member States, academics, members of civil society and the private sector. The diversity of participants lends itself nicely to the theme of today's hearing, "Ensuring a people-centred approach to the new SDGs: A shared responsibility".

Over the next two days we will collectively examine how to best ensure that the needs of people around the world are reflected in the post-2015 development agenda. We will also identify opportunities for direct involvement from actors spanning a broad array of stakeholders.

For the past two years, several processes have been underway towards the formulation of the new development agenda, of which Sustainable Development Goals are a key component. The comprehensive and inclusive nature of these discussions has been unprecedented.

As a result of these efforts, a great deal of groundwork has already been laid for the forthcoming negotiations. The proposed 17 Sustainable Development Goals are ambitious. They build on the foundation laid by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and integrate the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The Report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing has provided options for mobilization of resources and their effective use.

Recommendations on a technology facilitation mechanism, as well as the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report, expected next month, will also provide valuable inputs.

We have to ensure that voices from all segments of society, including civil society, the private sector, academia, and others continue to be heard and their contributions taken into account.

Distinguished Participants,

As we formulate the post-2015 development agenda, the needs of all people, especially the most vulnerable, must be at the forefront. It is essential to ensure that the SDGs focus global and national efforts towards eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality and women empowerment, improving maternal and child health, creating jobs, developing infrastructure and preserving the planet, among other key priorities.

As a pillar of democracy and good governance, parliaments can play an instrumental role in shaping a people-centred approach to the new agenda. In this regard, the participation and contribution of parliamentarians leading up to the Summit for the adoption of the new agenda is of utmost importance.

Members of parliament have a unique perspective on the needs of citizens, the specific circumstances of their respective countries, as well as the capabilities of governments to meet development aspirations.

Beyond the formulation of the post-2015 development framework, parliamentarians must also be involved in its implementation. Parliaments, through their legislative and oversight functions, will play a key role in fostering transparency, accountability and ensuring that global commitments are effectively implemented.

Members of parliament can also help by instituting effective and integrated systems of monitoring and accountability, including checks and balances at the local level, with regard to the mobilization and effective use of resources.

The goals envisioned for the future development agenda are ambitious and must be matched with scaled-up mobilization of resources from all sources public and private, domestic and external for their implementation. We need a renewed global partnership for development.

To advance discussions on this important issue, I intend to convene a high-level thematic debate in February 2015 on the means of implementation for the post-2015 development agenda. I strongly welcome the active participation of members of parliament and local government leaders at that debate, which will also focus on their role in the implementation of the agenda.

Distinguished Members of Parliament,

Over the course of the next two days, your deliberations will focus on a number of important topics. You will discuss strategies on how to implement a rights-based approach to development. Recognizing the intrinsic linkages between development and human rights, the challenge ahead will be to ensure that they are mutually reinforcing in the context of the new SDG's.

In the subsequent sessions you will consider how to make markets work for people, explore how to develop regulatory frameworks, focus on inequality and discrimination, examine the need for monitoring and accountability with regard to the SDGs and how people can be empowered in these processes.

The issues you will be addressing are of paramount importance. I look forward to your active participation and wish you all productive deliberations.

I thank you for your attention.