

22 January 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the General Assembly meeting on the rise of anti-Semitism**

**Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Mr. Bernard Henri-Levy,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to join you today to deliver this statement on behalf of H.E. Sam Kutesa, President of the General Assembly, who was unable to join us today.

Esteemed Guests,

The prohibition of religious and racial discrimination is enshrined within many of the international community's most important foundational documents. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, proclaims that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind; such as race, religion or other status.

A number of other core international human rights instruments further elaborate on our shared commitment to upholding the basic principles of equality and non-discrimination.

Yet, despite these commitments, we are currently witnessing a disquieting rise of anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance and prejudice. Such forms of discrimination have perpetuated a wide range of negative outcomes; including, stereotyping, stigmatization, exclusion, threats and violence.

Next week, the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the victims of the Holocaust will be an important occasion to remember the horrors of the Second World War.

It is not only our solemn duty to remember the tragedies that took place, but it is our responsibility to learn from the unspeakable atrocities of the Holocaust. Furthermore, it is our obligation to prevent such acts of intolerance and hate from ever happening again.

Recent troubling events around the world have put into sharp focus the deep divisions within our communities. We must condemn, without reservation, all manifestations of intolerance; including, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism and all other forms of prejudice, incitement, harassment or violence against persons or communities based on race, ethnic origin or religious belief.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

As we witness the shadow of intolerance permeating so many segments of public and private life, it is of utmost importance that all stakeholders be actively involved in our efforts to fight against prejudice, while also promoting and strengthening tolerance, mutual understanding, dialogue and respect.

We have many tools at our disposal in these endeavours, including education, which can be a powerful weapon against prejudice and discrimination. The path for a more humane and tolerant world must come via the classroom, where education needs to be rooted in the principles of dignity and respect.

For my part, I am convening a high-level thematic debate on 6 April, titled “Promoting Tolerance and Reconciliation”. This event will provide an opportunity for participants to discuss practical strategies to enhance dialogue and understanding. It will also allow participants to explore measures to counter extremism and radicalization.

I look forward to having a diverse range of stakeholders at this high-level debate for an open exchange of ideas and solutions. All Member States are strongly urged to attend at the highest possible level.

I thank you for your attention.