

26 May 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
on the Occasion of the International Day of Spanish**

Delivered by H.E. Denis G. Antoine, Permanent Representative of Grenada on behalf of President Kutesa

**Excellencies,
H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy-Secretary General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Thank you for the invitation to join this celebration of the International Day of Spanish. I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of His Excellency, Sam Kahamba Kutesa, President of the General Assembly.

Language and dialects have the ability to bring people around the world closer together through shared dialogue and meaning. Language is about far more than communication; playing a role in identity, culture, social integration and politics. Indeed, language is of strategic importance to people and societies the world over.

With about 400 million native Spanish-speaking people living and working around the world, the Spanish language has a key role to play in households, communities and political spheres. This includes here at the United Nations, where multilingualism is a true reflection of the diversity of the Organization.

Distinguished colleagues,

Today, beyond celebrating the Spanish language, we also honour the life and work of the famed Uruguayan writer and journalist, Eduardo Galeano.

The late Mr. Galeano left an indelible mark on literature, helping to bring to light the history and politics of Latin America. Mr. Galeano's writings struck a thoughtful balance between past and present, featuring modern-day observations alongside meaningful historical references.

Mr. Galeano leaves behind a plethora of works, including articles, essays, poems, and books. In his passing, Latin America not only lost a literary giant, but also an important voice on contemporary political issues facing the continent.

I thank the Group of Friends of Spanish in the United Nations for the opportunity to join this celebration and to honour Mr. Galeano.

Gracias y buenas noches.