

30 June 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the High-Level Event on Climate Change**

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I thank our Keynote speakers, panellists and all of you for your valuable contributions throughout this High-level Event on Climate Change. I am particularly grateful for the insights and key messages by His Excellency, Mr. Anote Tong, President of the Republic of Kiribati and the many Honourable Ministers who participated in the event.

We heard resounding calls for bold, courageous action on climate change – one of the most formidable challenges of our time.

Throughout the event, speakers noted that climate change affects all countries and peoples, although its impacts were much more acutely felt by the most vulnerable, including children, women and the elderly.

Our discussions over these last two days benefitted from a wide range of perspectives from different regions and stakeholders.

The Small Island Developing States (SIDs) highlighted their particular vulnerabilities, especially the risk of rising sea levels, which threatens the very existence of several countries. The SIDs also called for urgent action to prevent coastal erosion, the destruction of marine eco-systems and the protection of fresh water sources.

African countries' representatives pointed out that although they are not major contributors to global emissions, the continent suffers the most from the devastating impacts of climate change. They called for urgent measures to support their adaptation efforts.

Our youth representative made an impassioned statement on the important role the youth should play in our efforts. We also heard about the unique contribution religious leaders of all faiths can play in our collective endeavours.

Participants also called for an ambitious outcome from the upcoming Third International Conference on Financing for Development to be held next month in Addis Ababa.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

We took stock of the progress of the on-going negotiation process under the UNFCCC process. Many speakers welcomed the announcement of commitments and targets by the major contributors to global emission to reduce their emissions.

Participants stressed that ambitious intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) are required to meet the target of keeping the global temperature rise below 2 degrees Celsius and urged all States that have not already done so to submit theirs. It was further stressed that the new climate change agreement should address both mitigation and adaptation goals in a balanced manner and in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, including equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.

Participants underscored the important linkages between the conclusion of new, universally-binding climate change agreement and the achievement of our aspirations for a transformative post-2015 development agenda. Speakers underscored the need to mobilize adequate means of implementation, including through the Green Climate Fund, to support mitigation and adaptation actions.

In that regard, it was emphasized that climate financing mechanisms should be adequately funded with a view to assist developing countries. The Lima-Paris Action Agenda was also identified as being essential to our efforts.

Many underscored the need for a robust partnership to address the challenges posed by climate change, including the active engagement of the private sector, the scientific community and civil society.

Speakers noted the G7's announcement to "fully decarbonize" the world's energy systems by the end of the century. Others pointed out the potential benefits of sustainable land management and restoration of degraded land can ensure food security, increase resilience of the vulnerable people and eco-systems and contribute to sequestration of carbon dioxide.

Many speakers cited the recent advancements in the renewable energy sector, are another cause for optimism in many parts of the world, while many highlighted encouraging new research that points to the potential for economic growth and poverty eradication as mutually-reinforcing endeavours.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Time and again throughout this event, we heard that while Paris will be a critical milestone, our collective journey to preserve the Planet is only just beginning.

Going forward, I urge you all to maintain the momentum and foster a constructive spirit as we work toward a new, ambitious and universally binding agreement that will preserve our planet for ourselves and the future generations.

A President's Summary of today's deliberations will be prepared and submitted to all stakeholders in due course.

I thank you for your participation and kind attention.