



H.E. SAM KAHAMBA KUTESA

PRESIDENT OF THE 69TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PRESS CONFERENCE – INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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I would first like to send my warmest greetings to those who are monitoring this press briefing from a remote location. I thank you for your interest.

I am pleased to meet you all today to brief you on my priorities for the 69th session of the General Assembly.

I am honoured and privileged to steward the work of the United Nations General Assembly, following my election on 11 June 2014.

A host of important issues will be deliberated at the General Assembly. My effort will be to promote cooperation and forge consensus among the Member States and to reach decisions and recommendations which promote our common interests.

The statements made today at the opening of the 69th session are particularly encouraging. Member States expressed their strong expression of support for multilateralism and the United Nations and reiterated their determination to address our common objectives.

The theme I have selected for this session – Delivering on and implementing a transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda – reflects these goals.

During my tenure, I will focus on the following priorities:

- Formulating the Post-2015 development agenda: we have a historic opportunity ahead of us. I will actively support this process and will work closely with Member States on an ambitious and transformative Post-2015 agenda at the 2015 Summit;
- Advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women: during this session, we will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the groundbreaking Beijing Declaration, which laid a roadmap for promoting women's rights. While we have seen significant progress over the last two decades, a lot remains to be done.
- Climate change: There is urgent need to reach a fair and effective agreement in 2015 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that

incorporates the legitimate aspirations of all countries- rich and poor, North and South.

- Strengthening multilateralism and advancing the reform of United Nations, in particular the revitalization of the General Assembly and the reform of the Security Council.
- Strengthening the cooperation between the UN and regional and subregional organisations: experience has shown that this is an effective model to address common challenges.
- Peaceful settlement of disputes, peacekeeping, peace building and reconstruction.
- Africa –the continent where I hail from- still evokes, in the minds of many, a mix of disease, war and poverty. However Africa is rising and it will emerge from the crisis stronger than most people think.
- As reiterated by African leaders at the recent Summit of the African Union which I had the honour and privilege to attend, Africa recognizes that the responsibility for peace and security lies primarily with African countries and stresses the need for further meaningful support of the International Community and the United Nations by strengthening the African Union's capacity and its architecture for peace and security.
- The situation in Somalia, Darfur, Central African Republic, DRC and Mali need further sustained attention and commitment from the international community and the United Nations. I pay respect to the courage of those UN civilian and military peacekeepers for their commitment and sacrifice. I am appreciative of the important role several countries, including mine [Uganda] have played and continue to play in contributing to or the maintenance of peace in a number of conflicts.
- Enhancing the role of the Alliance of Civilizations: It is critical to counter the threat of extremist ideology that fuels violence, terrorism and conflicts. I will support and foster the Dialogue among civilizations to promote a culture of peace and tolerance.
- Human Rights is one of the three pillars of the United Nations, together with Development, and Peace and Security. Universality, objectivity and non-selectivity are important principles when considering human rights issues. We must address human rights violations wherever they occur and eliminate double standards.
- Throughout my tenure as President of the General Assembly, I will obviously fulfil my obligations, abide by and promote the Charter of the United Nations which stipulates that our Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.

Thank you. I will be happy to answer your questions.