

22 September 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Africa Rising Forum**

**Your Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya,
Distinguished Panelists and Moderators,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Good evening!

The next year, 2015, promises to be one of immense opportunity, not only for the international community, but also for Africa. While the international community looks forward to the formulation of a transformative agenda, to inter alia eradicate poverty and hunger, Africa is on the verge of finalizing its vision 2063 – “the Africa we Want” – as a socio-economic transformation guide for the next fifty years.

I am therefore honored, and truly grateful, for this opportunity to address this high-level segment of the Africa Rising Forum. The Forum’s overarching aim, of sharing ideas and perspectives on how Africa’s transformation can be impactful, is one I fully identify with. It is both pertinent and timely. I am confident that the messages emerging from this evening’s discussion will benefit the forthcoming negotiations for the Post-2015 Agenda.

The discussions early this afternoon have covered the major issues we should be talking about: infrastructure and energy; industrialization; education and healthcare; agriculture and environment; natural resources management; peace and security; social cohesion and inclusion; and governance and rule of law. It is for us leaders to walk the talk.

Your Excellencies,

From the African perspective, we have for a while emphasized the importance of the African renaissance. Indeed, we reaffirmed this theme last year during our Golden jubilee celebrations. For Africa’s rising, therefore, we must embrace the African renaissance. We must formulate, embrace and implement the Post-2015 Development Agenda. And above all, we must finalize, embrace and implement Vision 2063, and mainstream it into our national development visions and plans.

Former President Thabo Mbeki outlined the fundamentals of the African Renaissance as social cohesion, democracy, economic growth and transformation, as well as the establishment of Africa as a significant player in the global geo-political affairs. To this I add, the need for strong and visionary

leadership; peace and security on the continent; an enterprising and skilled people; a robust private sector; a large but productive population; and industrialization.

The basics for propelling Africa's growth already exist. We just have to harness our full potential. Today:

- Africa has some of the fastest growing economies in the world, and its GDP has increased exponentially over the years;
- More and more investors are coming to Africa, as the continent now offers perhaps the highest return on investment in various sectors such as agriculture, energy, oil/gas, mining, ICT etc;
- Africa's young population is increasingly getting educated and skilled; and
- The private sector is more dynamic and fast becoming an engine of growth.

We must therefore take control of our own destiny, by doing a number of things differently. We must get the most out of our vast natural resources through value addition. We must address the root causes of conflicts among us, by addressing ideological, political and socio-economic differences. We must deepen our integration, starting with regional blocs. We must develop our productive capacity, through infrastructure and energy development. We must put in place socio-economic and political policies to stimulate our economies and support private sector investment and growth. But above all, we must gradually be ready to finance our own activities, linked-in with sound leadership.

Your Excellencies,

I am glad that thus far, Africa's aspirations for the next half century resonate quite well with the transformative agenda we are trying to craft. We have aspirations for a prosperous Africa, with inclusive growth and sustainable development. We aspire for an integrated, and politically united continent; a peaceful and secure Africa. We aspire for an Africa with a strong and influential voice as a global player and partner; as well as people-driven African development, involving women and youth.

As far as the Post-2015 Development Agenda goes, adopting appropriate means of implementation will be the critical ingredient. That is the reason I selected "Delivering on and implementing a transformative post-2015 development agenda" as the theme for the 69th session. We should strengthen partnerships among us, beyond aid. We should work for a fair international trading regime. We also need to enhance national and foreign direct investments, to contribute to productive employment creation and economic security.

This, I believe, is what will contribute to Africa's rising.

I thank you.