

23 September 2014

**Remarks of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Opening of the UN Climate Summit**

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I thank the Secretary-General, H.E Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for convening this historic Summit.

I welcome Member States' commitment and responding positively, at the highest level, to the call of the Secretary-General. This attests to the urgency you attach to taking bold actions and measures to mitigate climate change and adapt to its adverse impacts.

Climate change is an urgent challenge and a potentially irreversible threat that affects livelihoods, limits development options and efforts towards eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development.

We gather here today with two objectives: to mobilise political will towards finalizing a meaningful, universal climate change agreement in Paris in December 2015, and to generate ambitious action on the ground that will increase resilience, cut greenhouse gas emissions and propel the world towards a cleaner, greener economy.

We are encouraged by the level of ambition being shown by Member States, the private sector and civil society. Many diverse partnerships have been formed in the run-up to this Summit. Now is the time to lead. We need transformational changes to limit global temperature rise to less than two degrees Celsius.

We stand to benefit greatly from climate action – both on adaptation and on mitigation. We also stand to reap the benefits and opportunities that acting on climate change can deliver and preserving hard-won development gains. It will provide many avenues for investment, job creation and economic growth.

Excellencies,

The recently released Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirms that there is no longer scientific argument about the fact that the planet is heating up. Climate change is adversely impacting food security, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification.

The coming months will be decisive for the negotiations on climate change under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. It is essential to address the critical issue of means of implementation in terms of finances, technology transfer and capacity building. In this context, increasing the flow of climate finance through the mobilization of public and private finances and capitalization of the Green Climate Fund, is crucial.

This Summit will inject the much needed political momentum to galvanize and catalyze climate change action. I will keep this political momentum during the 69th Session by convening a High-Level Event on Climate Change in June 2015 which will be a mid-point between the 20th Conference of the Parties (COP20) in Lima, Peru and COP21 in Paris, France.

Excellencies,

As you each take to the podium, I urge you to demonstrate leadership by announcing what your country will do to usher in a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.

I thank you for your attention.