

26 September 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the meeting of Foreign Ministers of the Association of South East
Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

**Honourable Ministers,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,**

I am pleased to join you for this important meeting of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). I commend your Excellency U Wunna Maung Lwin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, on your able leadership of ASEAN this year. Your choice of the 2014 theme ““Moving Forward in Unity to a Peaceful and Prosperous Community”” echoes the goals and values enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

ASEAN continues to play a central role in promoting friendly relations, peace and stability as well as economic growth among its Members. ASEAN epitomizes the importance of sub-regional cooperation. It has collectively addressed the complex challenges confronting some of your members in a spirit of solidarity, open dialogue and cooperation.

Your forward-looking goal of establishing, in the near future, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) for enhanced regional economic integration with a single market and production base, and a highly competitive economic region with equitable economic development that is fully integrated into the global economy, is commendable.

We need to further strengthen regional cooperation and integration in all regions and sub-regions to benefit from economies of scale, bigger markets, and more attractive investment destinations, free movement of goods and services.

ASEAN has also forged a strong partnership with the United Nations, thanks to the active commitment of both partners, especially in the context of the Comprehensive Partnership.

As I stated last week in my opening address to the General Assembly, over the years we have seen numerous examples of successful partnership and cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organisations. Owing to their geographic proximity and keen understanding of local geopolitical dynamics, sub-regional and regional organizations are well positioned to play an active role in the prevention or resolution of disputes.

This concept is clearly articulated in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter and grounded in the principles of complementarity and burden-sharing. Strengthening this type of cooperation is one of my priorities for

this 69th session. In this regard, I will convene a High-level Thematic Debate in April or May, focusing on the Peaceful Settlement of Disputes and Strengthening Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional Organizations. I trust that our Assembly will greatly benefit from the experience and contributions of ASEAN and I encourage your active participation.

Excellencies,

The coming year will mark a critical stage in our collective quest to build a peaceful and prosperous world. We have to ensure that we formulate and adopt a transformative post-2015 development agenda that is ambitious and inclusive, to bring about the future we want. It is for this reason I chose the overarching theme: “Delivering on and implementing a Transformative post-2015 Development Agenda” for this session.

I am committed to working closely with all the members of ASEAN and look forward to your active engagement and contributions throughout the session.

I thank you for your attention.