

10 October 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Briefing of the General Assembly on the Ebola Outbreak**

**Excellencies,
Mr. Deputy Secretary-General,
Dr. David Nabarro,
Mr. Anthony Banbury,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we gather this morning for a briefing on the Ebola outbreak and the global response to the epidemic, let me begin by thanking the Deputy Secretary-General, Jan Eliasson, for joining us today. Also, special thanks to Dr. David Nabarro, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Ebola and Mr. Anthony Banbury, Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) briefing the Assembly on the latest developments on this crisis.

As you recall, in the very first plenary meeting of this 69th Session exactly three weeks ago, we adopted Resolution A/RES/69/1, welcoming the Secretary-General's initiative to establish the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER). The resolution also called on Member States and relevant United Nations entities to provide their full support to the Mission. I am pleased to note that yesterday, the Assembly approved preliminary funding required for UNMEER.

Also yesterday, global development leaders met in Washington, D.C., to discuss the critical issues, needs and possible solutions for addressing the health and socioeconomic impacts of the crisis. In that meeting, leaders underscored potentially catastrophic economic consequences if the outbreak is not quickly contained.

Colleagues,

As you well know, the situation on the ground in the affected countries remains extremely precarious. On the frontlines of the epidemic, humanitarian staff, nurses, doctors, burial workers and ordinary civilians are doing extraordinary work at great personal risk. Yet, despite their heroic efforts, the epidemic continues to ravage communities, with the death toll rising with each passing day.

In light of the spread of the disease, the outbreak evolved from a regional to an international crisis. As we have already witnessed, in today's interconnected world, Ebola is a threat that can easily land at any nation's doorstep.

I am therefore pleased to see that the international community has wasted no time in responding to calls for action. Many Member States have come forward with generous pledges of support, both in terms of financial assistance and in-kind contributions. For these efforts, Member States deserve thanks and deep appreciation.

Furthermore, UNMEER teams have already been deployed to the Mission headquarters in Ghana and launched their response efforts in the most affected countries. In a situation where each day potentially means more lives lost, the rapid response of UNMEER supports the implementation of critical prevention and containment measures.

Yet, while the initial response from the international community is commendable, much more needs to be done to stem this public health crisis. In this context, I urge Member States to follow through on their commitments and pledges of support. As we have said all along, addressing the crisis requires bold, urgent and coordinated action on the part of the international community. Your pledges of support are a vital component of the global response.

Beyond commitments already made by Member States, I also encourage concrete proposals on how the global community can support those most affected in terms of financial, humanitarian and other requirements. Given the unprecedented nature of the epidemic, the international community must work together to come up with innovative, yet practical solutions to contain the further spread of Ebola. In this regard, I urge Member States to remain seized of the evolving situation and share specific proposals on how to improve, hasten or streamline response efforts. Even from those Member States who have already made contributions, more is needed.

Let us use the opportunity of this briefing to make more pledges.

I thank you for your attention.