

# United Nations Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

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## **Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa, President of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly, at the observance of World Food Day**

*Delivered by H.E. Zwelethu Mnisi, Permanent Representative of Swaziland to the UN and Vice-President of the 69th session of the UN General Assembly*

**Ambassador Anatolio Ndong Mba, Permanent Representative of Equatorial Guinea to the United Nations,  
Ambassador Libran N. Cabactulan, Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations,  
Excellencies,  
Ms. Sharon Brennen-Haylock, Director, FAO Liaison Office,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a pleasure to join you today to deliver remarks on behalf of the President of the General Assembly, for the observance of World Food Day.

The theme of this year's commemoration "Family Farming – Feeding the World, Caring for the Earth" draws attention to the vast potential and importance of farming at household level to improve food security, while preserving the environment.

It also serves to remind us that despite significant progress over the last two decades, the global fight against hunger and malnutrition is far from over. Chronic hunger continues to affect over 800 million people worldwide. Too many children still go to bed hungry, see their development stunted and will never be able to achieve their full potential.

Recognizing the important contribution of family and smallholder farming in providing food security and eradicating poverty, the General Assembly proclaimed 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming. Indeed, family farmers feed 70% of the world population, and manage the majority of the world's agricultural land.

In many countries, family farming is an essential part of the social and cultural fabric of societies. As the custodians of traditional knowledge and practices, small farmers play an essential role in the sustainable management of natural resources and the preservation of biodiversity.

If we are to succeed in our efforts to eradicate hunger and poverty, we must actively support farmers at household level. We need to spur innovation to increase small holders' productivity and improve rural

livelihoods. We must improve their resilience in the face of new challenges such as climate change, natural resources depletion and land degradation.

We should also recognize the important role of women farmers. In the developing world, they make up over 40% of the rural labor force. As they farm the land, harvest crops, fetch water and wood, and cook meals, they are on the front lines of the war against hunger. When we empower them, we also support their children and families, strengthen their villages and communities.

### **Excellencies,**

The strides we made under the MDG framework to fight hunger should encourage us to raise our ambitions in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. We already have the work of Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals to build on, where eradication of hunger and the promotion of sustainable agriculture feature prominently.

Yet, if we are to make hunger history, the means of implementation for the post 2015-agenda will have to match the level of our ambitions.

To facilitate exchanges among Member States and relevant stakeholders, the President of the General Assembly will convene a High-level thematic debate in February 2015 on the means of implementation. The event will explore ways to mobilize the significant resources that will be needed to implement a truly transformative agenda.

### **Distinguished delegates,**

The next year will be pivotal. We have a historic opportunity ahead of us to set our world on a sustainable path. Let us seize this momentum to build a future where images of children dying of hunger no longer make news headlines.

I thank you for your attention.