

20 October 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the GA Debate of the Secretary-General's Report on Sport for
Peace and Development**

Delivered by H.E. Ms. Greta Gunnarsdottir, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the UN and Vice-President of the 69th session of the General Assembly

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Today, the General Assembly will consider the Report of the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace.

Earlier this year, the international community commemorated the inaugural International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, proclaimed by the General Assembly at its 67th session. This first commemoration was an opportunity to celebrate the many contributions of sport to peace and development.

Indeed, this Assembly has long recognised the virtues of sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace. From 1993, with its resolution calling for the first time on the observance of the Olympic Truce, to the 1994 proclamation of first International Year of Sport and Physical Education, the United Nations has continued to elevate the status of this important subject.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document further underlined the potential of sport to foster peace and development and to contribute to an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding. This message was further reaffirmed in 2010, in the Outcome documents of the High-level Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), recognising that:

“sport, as a tool for education, development and peace, can promote cooperation, solidarity, tolerance, understanding, social inclusion and health at the local, national and international levels.”

Excellencies,

From the first Olympic Games in Greece to the large sporting events drawing an international and diverse audience today, sport has always captivated the human mind. With its universal language, sport brings people together across cultural and political boundaries and around shared values of effort,

solidarity and respect for others. Sport not only promotes healthy lifestyles, it also fosters perseverance, team spirit, and inclusiveness.

Since the Olympic Truce was first established in the IXth Century in Greece, we have seen many examples illustrating the role of sport in creating bridges between divided communities, supporting reconciliation and fostering peace.

Over the last two decades, the United Nations and partners worldwide have been committed to mainstreaming sport into social policies. From the UNDP matches against poverty to initiatives promoting gender equality in sport; from athletes speaking out against discrimination to the inclusion of people with disabilities, sport has proven to be a powerful channel to promote development, poverty eradication and social inclusion.

The Report of the Secretary-General in front of us today describes many of these initiatives undertaken by Member States and the UN System. I am looking forward to hearing your views on how we can further explore the contributions of sport to advance our efforts towards a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Thank you.