

# United Nations Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

24 October 2014

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

**Excellencies,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Good evening and welcome to this United Nations Day Concert, the first in this newly renovated General Assembly Hall.

Nearly seventy years ago, “we the people of the United Nations...” agreed to end war; reaffirmed human rights and the equality of men and women; and committed to promote socio-economic progress, in a just world.

We have made remarkable progress over the last 69 years: the United Nations family of States now stands at 193. Socio-economic development indices across countries continue to improve. Peace and security, rule of law and democracy are increasingly being entrenched. Gender equality and women’s empowerment has been mainstreamed.

Yet, we continue to grapple with serious challenges, new and old: persistent violent conflicts in many parts of the world; climate change, environmental degradation and increasing natural disasters; poverty, inequality and hunger, especially in the developing world; terrorism, money laundering, and drug and human trafficking; and youth unemployment.

The world looks to the United Nations with high expectations for a better tomorrow, and we have to stand up to the challenge. As we fast approach the target date for the Millennium Development Goals, our resolve for a better tomorrow will be demonstrated through formulating an ambitious and transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda.

On this note, I wish to especially welcome Mr. Lang Lang, the United Nations Messenger for Peace; as well as Mr. Manuel Lopez-Gomez and the youth orchestra, who will be performing for us this evening. For many years, music has been a universal language with the power to bring together people from all nationalities, ethnicities, races and creeds. Beyond our differences, music fosters unity, harmony and tolerance.

Tonight gives us a rare opportunity to enjoy each other’s presence outside the rigors of our daily work. I invite you to sit back, relax and reflect on the beauty of music, and allow the sounds and delights of this performance to captivate, entertain and inspire you, as we celebrate our United Nations.

I thank you for your attention.