

11 November 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,  
President of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Joint Debate on Cooperation between the UN and regional and  
other organisations**

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Regional and sub-regional organizations have been important actors in their respective regions for many years. As clearly recognized and articulated in Chapter VIII of the Charter, as well as several General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, regional cooperation is an important aspect of the work of the United Nations,

The report of the Secretary-General illustrates how cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organisations now plays a critical role in virtually every area of the Organisation's mandate.

In particular, the report highlights the depth of cooperation achieved between the United Nations and its regional partners across the full range of mandate areas, from the maintenance of international peace and security and humanitarian assistance to development and the protection of human rights.

The challenges facing the United Nations in today's world are indeed complex and multidimensional; most of which, the Organization cannot successfully deal with alone. Furthermore, there is increasing involvement of non-state actors in international affairs.

In these changing times, the unique role regional and sub-regional organizations have to play in addressing some of the world's most persistent problems is as important as ever. These organisations are diverse, with distinct approaches, structures and priorities.

The international community at large stands to benefit a great deal from increased interaction and coordination between such organizations and the United Nations in the implementation of their respective mandates. Strengthening these partnerships is strategic for promoting the principle of comparative advantages, complementarity and burden-sharing.

**Esteemed Colleagues,**

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations already has a proven track record of producing tangible results. In this context, the General Assembly has taken proactive steps to enhance such partnerships through a number of initiatives. To-date, some 25 different

regional and sub-regional organizations have established formal cooperative relationships with the United Nations.

I am convinced that strengthening the strategic partnership with these organizations is of critical importance, which is why it is one of my key priorities for this General Assembly session. Indeed, I am heartened to note that support for such cooperation has gained momentum and relevance in recent times.

As we formulate a post-2015 development agenda, regional and sub-regional organisations are uniquely placed to contribute to and support the work of the United Nations in this process.

In the area of peace and security, regional and sub-regional organizations are distinctly positioned to understand the root causes and dynamics of issues in their regions, while often possessing a greater depth of knowledge of the parties involved.

This expertise is critical for conflict prevention, mediation, peaceful settlement of disputes and peacebuilding efforts. The specialized knowledge regional and sub-regional organizations can bring to the forefront also has an instrumental role to play in the provision of humanitarian assistance, the promotion of development and the advancement of critical infrastructure.

There are many examples of successful cooperation with regional and sub-regional organizations we can draw upon, including several from my home continent of Africa.

For Africa, the partnership with the United Nations in the area of peace and security is one of the most visible. Collaborative efforts in promoting peace and security in Sudan, Somalia, Mali and the Central African Republic have already yielded positive results. In recent days the UN, AU and ECOWAS have also undertaken a joint mission with respect to the situation in Burkina Faso.

The benefits of this cooperation are further illustrated by the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. The same is true in the formulation of the African Union Agenda 2063, which is expected to chart Africa's 50-year strategic vision and action plan for socio-economic transformation.

Beyond Africa, the Association of the South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has forged a strong partnership with the United Nations, thanks to the active commitment of both partners, especially in the context of the Comprehensive Partnership.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and United Nations are also working on a strategy for future coordination efforts, while taking up a number of shared thematic priorities, including climate change and transnational organised crime.

The United Nations and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) have also adopted a matrix on joint activities that will serve as a guide for effective cooperation over the next biennium.

These experiences, along with many other examples, can provide useful lessons on how more predictable and mutually reinforcing partnerships can be established going forward. These include;

1. Respect for regional ownership and priority setting;
2. Flexible and innovative application of the principle of subsidiarity;
3. Mutual respect and adherence to the principle of comparative advantage; and
4. Division of labour underpinned by complementarity.

It is essential that the United Nations continues to strengthen its partnerships with regional and sub-regional actors to foster implementation of the Organization's mandates and the overall objectives enshrined in the Charter.

These efforts should take into account the specificities of each region, the mandate and objectives of the organisations involved and the interests of Member States.

The following are important steps to be taken;

1. Closer cooperation between the UN Secretariat and regional organisations to explore ways of establishing more responsive partnerships;
2. Enhanced consultations between the organs of the United Nations and regional organisations; and
3. Effectively and systematically addressing the issue of predictable, sustainable and flexible funding, through the use of UN assessed contributions for peace support operations undertaken by regional organisations such the African Union, with the authorisation of the Security Council.

Beyond cooperation with the United Nations, regional and sub-regional actors could also greatly benefit from enhanced partnership and sharing of experiences amongst themselves.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

With so many success stories to draw upon, this is an opportune time to explore ways to further harness the benefits of strengthening the United Nations' partnership with regional and sub-regional organisations.

In this context, I am pleased to inform you that in May 2015 I will convene a high-level thematic debate on strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations.

I urge you all to participate in this event, which will be an opportunity to examine how to build upon past successes, while laying the foundation for fruitful cooperative efforts in the future.

I thank you for your kind attention.