

17 November 2014

**Remarks of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
for the Presentation of the Report of the Human Rights Council**

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

I welcome H.E. Mr. Baudelaire Ndong Ella, President of the Human Rights Council, and commend him for his leadership of the Human Rights Council.

Since its establishment in 2006, the Council has continued to gain prominence as the main UN organ dedicated to the promotion and protection of human rights, one of the three pillars of the United Nations.

By responding to human rights violations, the Council is instrumental in encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for everybody, everywhere. In this regard, the Council's active and sustained response to human rights situations around the globe is commendable.

With creative working methods and a variety of tools, such as commissions of inquiry, special procedures and panel discussions, the Council has assisted Member States in fulfilling their human rights obligations. The Council has also shed the spotlight on widespread and systemic human rights violations, ensuring that complex human rights situations remain high on the UN agenda.

I would like to underscore the importance of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), which is now well into its second cycle. This mechanism, by providing universal coverage and guaranteeing the equal treatment of all States, has become a cornerstone of the UN human rights system. It is essential to preserve the UPR's founding principles, and I encourage Member States to continue cooperating with this important mechanism as well as ensuring follow-up of recommendations accepted during their review.

Excellencies,

The Council has not only been prompt in addressing country-specific issues, it has also been active in promoting the entire spectrum of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development.

Through its various mandates and mechanisms, the Council has given a voice to the most vulnerable, those most likely to suffer discrimination and denial of their basic rights. From the rights of women and

children to persons with disabilities, from internally displaced persons to victims of sexual violence, the Council has worked towards strengthening the fundamental rights of all people.

The work of the Human Rights Council reaffirms the fundamental principle that every human being is entitled to a life of dignity and the full enjoyment of human rights. The support of this Assembly is therefore essential to ensure that the Council fulfils its important mandate.

I thank you for your attention.