

24 November 2014

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
on the Question of Palestine**

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

This morning I attended the Observance of the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, organised by the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People. I thank the Committee once again for its work, including raising awareness on the unresolved question of Palestine.

The International Year, proclaimed by the General Assembly in Resolution 68/12, reflected the desire of the international community to see the conclusion of the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations with a final peace agreement. This year did not bring the progress we were hoping for, as the direct peace talks were suspended.

The violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem which erupted almost immediately after the failure of the last round of negotiations, led to the death and injury of scores of civilians and the destruction on property. We must condemn all acts of violence against civilians. I call on all parties to observe calm and restraint, and to refrain from provocative actions and incitement.

Excellencies,

I remain concerned by the current impasse in the peace process. This situation is untenable and it only prolongs the uncertainty, instability and insecurity that is so detrimental to both Palestinians and Israelis. It is important that the parties resume talks and make their best efforts to create an environment conducive to the resumption of direct negotiations.

The international community should continue to support the parties to overcome their differences and return to direct talks within a clear framework, based on internationally recognized parameters.

The United Nations should play a more decisive role in supporting the parties in their efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive negotiated settlement in the Middle East, based on a two-State solution with the State of Israel and the State of Palestine living side by side in peace and security within internationally recognized borders.

Finally, I wish to commend the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) for the vital role it has continued to play in providing basic services to alleviate the suffering of the growing Palestinian refugee population.

The recurring cycle of violence and the scarcity of funds have impacted the Agency's ability to provide basic humanitarian services. Taking into account that the largest percentage of the Agency's funding comes from voluntary contributions, I reiterate my strong appeal to Member States and other international partners to make additional efforts to fully fund the Agency's core budget. I also urge new donors to make financial commitments to the Agency's work.

I thank you for your attention.