

3 February 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,  
President of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Member States briefing on humanitarian situation in Malawi**

*Delivered by H.E Mr. Denis G. Antoine, Acting President of the General Assembly, on behalf of H.E. Sam Kutesa*

**Your Excellency Honorable Minister Bright Msaka, Minister of Lands and Housing of the Republic of Malawi,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to thank you all for attending this important briefing on the urgent humanitarian situation affecting Malawi and the surrounding region following the devastating flooding that has affected tens of thousands of people. The President of the General Assembly, H.E. Sam K. Kutesa, could not be with us today, but I will deliver remarks on his behalf.

I would like to thank the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) represented by Mr. John Ging for facilitating this timely event.

I welcome Honorable Minister Bright Msaka, Minister of Lands and Housing, who is participating via video link from Lilongwe and will provide an overview of the current situation.

We will also be hearing from the United Nations system led by Ms. Mia Seppo, United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Malawi. She will be accompanied by members of the UN country team who will provide details on the response by the United Nations and its humanitarian partners.

**Esteemed Colleagues,**

This meeting is being convened in response to a letter I received from the Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations His Excellency Ambassador Brian Bowler, highlighting the need for the international community to take an active role in responding to the humanitarian situation. This letter was circulated to all Member States.

Since the beginning of the rainy/cyclone season last October, more than 100,000 people in the southern Africa region have been displaced or affected by floods and storms.

The Governments in the affected countries are leading the respective humanitarian responses, drawing on investments in preparedness made by the United Nations and its partners, including the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

At a time of multiple competing crises, I welcome your participation in today's meeting and urge you to consider providing support to address the growing needs that have been identified by the Government of Malawi, in collaboration with the United Nations and other partners.

These floods are taking place at a time of increasing humanitarian crises around the world, making it especially challenging to bring attention to specific situations such as those unfolding in Malawi.

While we may not be able to prevent disasters from taking place, we can do much more to mitigate their impact on people and economies. In responding to these disasters, it is also imperative that we address their long-term impacts, particularly with regard to issues such as food security.

I would like to acknowledge the leadership of the Governments in the affected areas for their efforts to address this difficult situation. It is my hope that today's meeting will highlight the humanitarian needs in Malawi and surrounding region and will help the international community identify concrete steps to support a full recovery.

I will now give the floor to Mr. John Ging of OCHA. I wish you fruitful discussions.