

5 February 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the World Summit
for Social Development**

**Excellencies,
Honourable Members of the Bureau,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my pleasure to join you today for this important and timely commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development.

This year, we are engaged in a historic task of formulating an ambitious, transformative and inclusive post-2015 development agenda. We are striving to develop a forward-looking, progressive agenda that places people and the planet at the centre of global development efforts.

In this context, the outcome document of the World Summit on Social Development, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, holds particular relevance.

The three main focal points of the Copenhagen Declaration; poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social integration should still remain key priorities in the new development framework. Indeed, these priorities have been recognized as such in the outcome of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals.

Ensuring that development efforts build just societies that focus on the individual and collective well-being of all people is as relevant today as it was 20 years ago.

Excellencies,

Since the meeting in Copenhagen 20 years ago, the ideals of the World Summit for Social Development have continued to drive actions at the national and international levels, including with regard to the Millennium Development Goals.

While significant progress has been made in reducing poverty, we still have nearly 1.2 billion people globally living in extreme poverty, and inequality is rising in many countries.

Assessing the progress and gaps in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the impact it has had on the lives of people in vulnerable situations, such as women, youth, older persons,

indigenous peoples, migrants and others will help contribute to a new development agenda that leaves no one behind.

In that regard, this session of the Commission for Social Development, which will focus on the theme; “Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world”, can provide valuable inputs and insight.

Distinguished participants,

Today’s commemoration should not only serve as a celebration of the progress made so far, but also as a reaffirmation and reminder of the need to strengthen the role of social development for sustainability.

When meeting at the World Summit in 1995, Member States were already clear that sustainability should be an integral part of development efforts. The interdependent and mutually reinforcing nature of social and economic development and environmental protection was also clearly laid out. Given this realization, the Copenhagen Declaration called for re-orientation of values, objectives and priorities towards the well-being of all.

As such, the new development agenda should deepen our collective commitment to social development, while recognizing that to secure social progress we must also give due attention to economic development and environmental protection.

In Copenhagen, world leaders acknowledged the urgent need to address profound societal problems, particularly poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. It was recognized that the most effective policies would be those that empower people, and that for social and economic development to be secured in a sustainable way, full participation of women as well as equality and equity between women and men is essential.

Now, as we formulate an ambitious universal development framework, the principles and commitments of the World Summit are as relevant as ever and should be built upon

I thank you for your kind attention.