

25 February 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the High-level Thematic Debate on “Integrating
Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Post-2015 Development
Agenda”**

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Esteemed panelists,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Thank you for participating in today’s debate on “Integrating Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in the Post-2015 Development Agenda”.

The insights and contributions shared today have been informed, incisive and driven by genuine concerns to prevent crime and strengthen criminal justice systems to assist people and communities.

As highlighted by many, this debate is both timely and pertinent. It comes ahead of a number of landmark events; most notably the 13th Crime Congress that will take place in Doha, Qatar in April. It also coincides with our on-going work to formulate a transformative development agenda that seeks to improve the lives of people around the world.

Today’s debate, therefore, has come at an opportune moment as the international community focuses greater attention to the resounding need to support those affected by poverty, crime, terrorism, persecution, joblessness, disease and deprivation, among other challenges.

As many speakers pointed out today, the negative impacts of crime are most acutely felt by vulnerable segments of our populations, including the poor, women, and children.

In order to deliver on our promises of sustainable development, we must ensure that our societies are secure and peaceful. As was repeatedly stated during today’s deliberations, we must fight crime to foster development.

Our aspirations can only be realized if we promote the rule of law and strengthen the criminal justice systems that uphold the fundamental principles of justice, fairness and equality.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

Illicit trafficking in firearms, cybercrime, human trafficking, wildlife crime and many other illicit activities are on the increase. These crimes represent serious obstacles to the achievement of sustainable development and the well-being of people worldwide. As emphasized during today's debate, crime is a universal scourge. It transcends country and regional borders and must be collectively confronted by all to deny criminals the access and space needed to commit crimes.

We must tighten the links between the international conventions on drugs, crime and corruption, and the international treaties on terrorism and domestic laws.

Our strategies against transnational organized crime must also be firmly rooted in cooperation, coordination and improved communication amongst nations and law enforcement agencies. The role of regional and sub-regional organisations is also crucial in these efforts. It is also of utmost importance that civil society and other stakeholders contribute to these endeavours.

Improving data collection and timely sharing of information is another area that deserves our attention. Countries should strive to improve their data collection processes to foster the creation of effective and efficient crime prevention policies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we have had a very fruitful and productive debate that has provided valuable contributions to our work. I would like to thank the delegations of Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Qatar and Thailand for initiating this meeting.

A summary of the key messages and proposals from our discussions will be prepared and circulated to Member States and other stakeholders, as well as transmitted to the UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice for consideration.

I thank you for your participation.