

5 May 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Tree Planting Ceremony to Commemorate the Seventieth
Anniversary of the End of the Second World War**

**Excellencies,
Mr Secretary General,
Ms Penny Abeywardena, Commissioner of the City of New York, Mayor's Office for
International Affairs
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to be here with you today and thank the distinguished representatives of the 45 Member States for their contributions to this very special initiative.

The planting of this Tree of Peace and Unity here at the United Nations Headquarters today is in commemoration of the end of the Second World War.

The end of the War will forever be inextricably linked to the creation of the United Nations, which was founded, in part, to prevent such catastrophes from happening ever again.

Seventy years after the conference was convened in San Francisco to draft the United Nations Charter to – quote – save succeeding generations from the scourge of war – end quote -, we gather today to reinforce the commitment of this Organization to the noble objectives and ideals that served as the inspiration for its foundation.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

In many cultures around the world, the planting of a tree signifies universal peace and hope.

This particular tree, the weeping cherry, is a symbol of mourning for the fallen. The white flowers of the weeping cherry are also meaningful; pointing to purity and rebirth.

For generations to come, this delicate and graceful tree will serve as an enduring symbol of peace and unity here at the United Nations Headquarters. As is the case with peace, this tree will require careful and steadfast nourishment. And only with unwavering care and attention, will this tree, much like peace, grow strong, robust and resilient.

I thank you for your attention.