

1 June 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 Event on the Demographic Dividend
and Youth Employment**

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

As we close this High-level Event on the Demographic Dividend and Youth Employment, I thank all participants for their contributions to our discussions on this important topic.

Throughout the day, speakers underscored that the youth not only represent the hopes of the future, but they are also emerging as the leaders of today.

Many participants emphasized that young people are at the forefront of global change and innovation and will play an important role in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

They also called for the creation of formal and informal mechanisms that would empower the youth to play a greater role in solving the challenges facing them.

The use of new technologies to further engage young people and allowing them to share their challenges and contribute to solutions was noted by many participants.

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

Youth unemployment and under employment were highlighted as enormous challenges in many parts of the world; including developing countries, those in conflict and post-conflict situations, those facing humanitarian challenges as well as countries with large refugee populations.

The lack of gainful employment often leads to frustration and discontent, making youth populations vulnerable a number of risk factors.

Many emphasized that access to universal, high-quality education must be part of global efforts to address issues facing young people. The need for vocational training and practical job-related skills to prepare young people for the job market was also emphasized.

Participants called for increased investment in youth development, including by enabling young people to harness their full potential, which in turn will spur economic growth and development.

Many underlined the need for value addition to primary products through processing and manufacturing, which would aid the creation of jobs for young people, particularly in developing countries.

Speakers called for increased investment in girls whose access to health and education may be limited by family, societal and cultural hurdles.

They also noted that large populations in developing countries impinge on the realization of the demographic dividend. As such, measures to reduce population growth should be encouraged.

Others called for increased access to social security and ensuring that the youth are fully aware of their rights, including labour rights and sexual and reproductive rights.

Speakers stressed the urgency of addressing these challenges through increased cooperation at all levels as well as stronger engagement with civil society, the academic community and the private sector.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This event provided a useful platform to explore the many challenges facing the youth and to share strategies for maximizing the potential found in today's young people.

A detailed President's Summary of our discussions will be transmitted in due course to all stakeholders.

I thank you for your participation and kind attention.