

2 June 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,  
President of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Ebola Briefing**

**Excellencies,**

**Mr. Ban-Ki-moon, Secretary-General,**

**Mr. Peter Jan Graaff, the Secretary-General's Acting Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response,**

**Dr. David Nabarro, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola,**

**Distinguished delegates,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to join you at this briefing and thank Mr. Peter Jan Graaff, the Acting Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) and Dr. David Nabarro, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola, for joining us today.

I also wish to extend my appreciation to Mr. Ismail Ould Cheikh Ahmed, the outgoing Special Representative and head of UNMEER, for his leadership and commitment to the Ebola response.

Today, we gather for our fifth briefing on Ebola since the start of this 69th Session of the General Assembly. I am heartened to note that as we do so, the Secretary-General's most recent report indicates important progress has been made in our response to the Ebola epidemic.

The reported cases in Guinea and Sierra Leone have decreased significantly in recent months, with the geographical area of transmission more than halved since February. I am also pleased to note that Liberia was formally declared "Ebola free" on 9 May 2015.

In this context, I commend the people and governments in the affected countries for their steadfast efforts and thank the international community for the spirit of solidarity shown throughout the crisis.

I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to the response partners, including the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, medical experts and ordinary citizens, for their courage and commitment.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

Although major progress has been made, challenges remain; including the need for continued awareness-raising and community engagement.

The outbreak has shown the importance of building strong and resilient institutions, especially health infrastructure in post-conflict countries. It has also demonstrated how quickly development achievements can be dramatically reversed by unforeseen crises.

Our collective efforts must be sustained and even scaled up in the final push to fully eliminate this devastating disease and ensure zero cases.

As we look toward the long-term stability of the most affected countries, now is the time to commit to and garner international support for their full socioeconomic recovery.

Further, as we look to the future, it will be important to create safeguards to prevent re-introduction of the disease and strengthen monitoring, early detection and preparedness response capabilities.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

You will recall that as we gathered for our first briefing on Ebola on 10 October 2014, the situation was indeed dire. At that time, dozens were losing their lives daily, healthcare facilities were overwhelmed and fear was widespread across communities.

I wish to commend His Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations for his personal commitment and dedication since the very beginning of the Ebola outbreak.

We should all be heartened by the progress that has been made over these months in response to this unprecedented health care emergency. I commend you all for the support shown to the affected countries and urge you to remain engaged as we make our final push toward zero cases.

Thank you for your kind attention.