

3 June 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at a Meeting at the European Parliament**

**Honourable Elmar Brok Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee,
Honourable Linda McAvan, Chairperson of the Development Committee,
Honourable Members of the Foreign Affairs and Development Committees
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am pleased to begin my visit to Brussels with a meeting with you, the elected representatives of the citizens of the European Union. I would like, at the outset, to commend the EU for its steadfast commitment and support to the work of the United Nations in the areas of peace and security, development and human rights.

As you know, we are in the midst of a momentous year. The intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda are ongoing, with the new agenda set to be adopted at this September's Summit in New York. In July, we will gather in Addis Ababa for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. And in December, we will meet in Paris for the United Nations Climate Change Conference to conclude a new, universal climate change agreement.

We have a historic responsibility to ensure successful outcomes from each of these important undertakings. This continues to be my key priority during the 69th Session of the General Assembly, and my clarion call to you as members of this august body. People from all walks of life around the world look forward, with great expectations, to a better future of peace, prosperity and improved livelihoods.

The new universal, ambitious and transformative post-2015 development agenda currently being formulated provides a historic opportunity to change our world, and preserve our planet.

The eradication of poverty and achievement of sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions will be at the core of the new development agenda. We have to build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, through which over one billion people were lifted from extreme poverty.

Such ambitious endeavours will require engagement and commitment at all levels; from political leadership to regional and multilateral organizations; from civil society to the private sector.

Indeed, the active involvement of all stakeholders in the design and implementation of the future development agenda will be vital for its success. In this context, national and regional parliaments, as pillars of democratic governance, will have important roles to play.

In New York last February, I organized a high-level thematic debate, during which we focused on the role of parliaments, cities and local governments in the implementation of the post-2015 agenda at national and regional levels.

You and your fellow parliamentarians can help in ensuring that the voices of the people are heard and included in this important global process. In doing so, we will enhance ownership and buy-in, which will be crucial for the success of the development agenda. Furthermore, parliamentarians can use their oversight function to ensure that commitments are met.

Honourable Members of Parliament,

In view of the breadth and scope of the new development agenda, as reflected in the proposed 17 sustainable development goals, the resources that will be needed for its implementation are substantial.

The figures speak for themselves: estimates of additional financing needed to eradicate extreme poverty are in the range of 66 billion USD per year. Investments required in critical infrastructure including, transport, energy, water and sanitation are estimated to be between 5 to 7 trillion US dollars annually. In Africa, for example, the financing gap for infrastructure is nearly 95 billion US dollars per year.

To meet those financing requirements, we need a holistic approach to ensure mobilisation of resources from all sources; public and private, domestic and international. We must also focus on the efficient and effective use of resources as well as the promotion of domestic policy environments that attract more investment and private sector engagement.

In this regard, we need to ensure that the upcoming Financing for Development Conference in Addis Ababa is successful, given its importance in supporting the implementation of the new development agenda. We need a renewed global partnership and a variety of innovative measures to increase revenue collection and improve budget efficiency, while also combating corruption, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows.

I commend the EU for continuing to be a vital partner for many countries around the world. Your continued engagement will be instrumental for ensuring the success of the post-2015 development agenda. The EU's support to the efforts of many developing countries around the world, including through Official Development Assistance (ODA), is crucial especially for countries in special situations such as Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

I welcome the recent reaffirmation by EU Member States of their commitment to achieve the target of 0.7% GNI, and the undertaking to meet the target of 0.15 – 0.20% of GNI to Least Developed Countries in the short term, and to reach 0.20% within the time frame of the post-2015 agenda.

As I have stressed before, fulfilling ODA commitments is important. At the same time, we know that the scale of resources required for implementation of the new agenda will go well beyond what can be provided through ODA.

The EU's work in the area of blended financing is an example of innovative financing mechanisms that can leverage additional resources and increase the impact of aid.

As we look ahead, the Conference on Financing for Development represents the pivotal juncture when we need to agree on the necessary deliverables to support the implementation of the future development agenda. Ambition and participation at the highest possible levels will be critical for ensuring our success in Addis Ababa.

Honourable Members of Parliament,

Climate change is one of the most serious global challenges currently facing humanity. Together, we must urgently move ahead and work towards a universally binding agreement that can be finalized in Paris during COP21 in a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

I welcome the EU's resolve to combat climate change, as shown in the climate targets issued in March this year. To keep momentum moving forward, I will convene a high-level event in New York on 29 June 2015 to take stock of the progress at the mid-point between the Lima and Paris conferences. The event will also provide Member States and stakeholders a platform to exchange views and solutions for addressing climate change issues.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Beyond those issues I already highlighted, the world is facing a number of other emerging challenges that require our collective efforts and action, including the rising threat of terrorism and violent extremism.

We are also witnessing an alarming number of deaths of desperate migrants and refugees; some of whom are trying to escape conflicts, while others are victims of human trafficking, or trying to seek better livelihoods. There is an urgent need to address the plight of these people and also tackle the root causes, including conflicts and lack of economic opportunities.

I look forward to our exchange of ideas on these and other important issues.

I thank you for your attention.