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THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

4 June 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,  
President of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the AFICS/NY 45th Annual Assembly**

*Delivered on behalf of President Kutesa*

**Ms. Linda Saputelli, President of Association of Former International Civil Servants/NY,  
Mr. Yukio Takasu, Representative of the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General for  
Management,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am honoured to address this 45th Annual Assembly of the Association of Former International Civil Servants (AFICS) on behalf of His Excellency, Sam Kahamba Kutesa, President of the 69th session of the General Assembly.

The President is pleased to add his voice in support of the mission of AFICS, to advise and assist former international civil servants and those about to separate from service, and to represent the interests of its members within the system.

This is an important assignment within the United Nations, which was built on a vision of a world where the dignity and worth of the human person is respected and reaffirmed, where tolerance prevails and where peace is maintained for future generations.

The United Nations can only be as good as the community of nations and people that are committed to protecting and serving its values and principles. On the eve of the 70th anniversary of the Organization, you should take significant pride in the contributions you have made to the development of a standard of service and professionalism that makes the United Nations unique in its mission and purpose.

While the body of the international civil servants has continued serving its constituency throughout 2015, this year has not been without challenge.

I understand there have been recent questions raised about pension issues. I hope the Town Hall meeting held on 16 April with the Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, Ms. Susana Malcorra, provided further clarification on measures in place to safeguard the interests of current and former Staff members.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

As many of you know, there are currently, three critical processes: Firstly, negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda which is intended to embody a common vision of progress and responsibility toward a safe, just and sustainable world where no one is left behind; second, agreeing on a financing framework to support implementation of the Agenda with a renewed spirit of partnership and cooperation; and thirdly, a negotiation on legally binding and universal agreement on climate change that addresses the urgent need to reduce carbon emissions.

Designed as they are to build upon the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, provide another opportunity for the international community to look back and to focus on those areas where we did not get it quite right. One of the key lessons learned from implementation of the MDGs is that in order to ensure that the new agenda is sustainable, it must involve and reflect the needs of all. This includes persons of all ages and abilities. Current SDG goals take into consideration older persons with recommended targets related to their health and nutritional needs and the safety of the cities and settlements in which they live.

Let me briefly say something about an element of President Kutesa's own agenda for this session. On 1st June the Office of the President convened, jointly with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), a high-level event on the demographic dividend. The event looked at the development potential for countries with large and increasing youth populations.

While the event largely focused on issues affecting youth, it was also acknowledged that in almost every country, the age profile of the population is changing due in large part to increasing life expectancy.

According to a 2012 report from UNFPA and HelpAge International entitled, "Ageing in the Twenty-first Century: A Celebration and Challenge", by the year 2050, one in five people will be 60 years and older. The report highlights the potential contributions inherent in a socially and economically active, secure and healthy ageing population.

Indeed, we all can reap the benefits of the skills and years of experience of this demographic by taking advantage of what is referred to as a "longevity dividend".

The United Nations is no exception where this is concerned. There are many examples of AFICS members effectively returning to serve the Organization in various capacities, either as volunteers or for short-term assignments.

Further, through continued involvement with this Association, former civil servants strengthen the impact of the Organization's work through knowledge and institutional memory.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

I take this opportunity to thank you for your service and commitment to the ideals that we all cherish. You should feel heartened that through your contributions to the work of the United Nations, you have helped shape its mission and played a pivotal role in its successes.

I know that you will keep a watchful eye as we work closely with each succeeding generation of international civil servants, as they contribute to writing the next chapter in the story of the United Nations.

Thank you.