

19 June 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,  
President of the 69<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Presentation of the draft Resolution on “International Day for  
the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict”**

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

I welcome today’s adoption of the resolution on the “International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict”. It demonstrates the continuing resolve and commitment of Member States to eliminate sexual violence in conflict.

By calling for an International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict, the General Assembly is positioning itself to address concerns that require the deliberative, multilateral authority of the Assembly for effective implementation and follow-through.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict constitute grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Yet these depraved acts still occur and are used to terrorize and control civilian populations in conflict zones.

Together, we must prioritise prevention and response efforts, empower victims, provide comprehensive assistance and shift the stigma of shame from the victims of these crimes to those who commit and condone them.

Sexual violence is not a new phenomenon. In my country, Uganda, there was an era where horrendous atrocities were committed, these included abduction of children, killing of men and rape of women. These atrocities fuelled outrage among our people. We did not just speak out against them, the people rose against the government that perpetuated these atrocities.

Rape as a weapon of war must be stopped. We should ensure that the perpetrators of these crimes and their superiors who condone their actions are held accountable, and that victims get justice.

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,**

Ensuring the full and equal participation of women is critical for the creation of an enduring peace. Women must be included in efforts to resolve conflicts and in the post-conflict transition,

reconstruction and peacebuilding processes as well as initiatives targeting the elimination of sexual violence in conflict.

I commend the delegation of Argentina and the co-sponsors for this initiative. I also thank the numerous other countries and civil society groups, particularly women's organizations, which have championed past initiatives on women and peace and security as well as children in armed conflict.

I note with appreciation the important work underway within the United Nations system, including the initiatives of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children in Armed Conflict. I also thank the members of the High-level Advisory Group for their preparatory efforts on the forthcoming Global Study on Women, Peace and Security.

Today, we are reaffirming our collective resolve to work together to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence.

Thank you for your attention.