

2 July 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)
Informal Interactive Consultations**

*Statement by H.E. Mr. Einar Gunnarsson, Permanent Representative of Iceland to the United Nations
on behalf of President Kutesa*

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

I thank all our participants for their contributions throughout the day, which will serve as valuable inputs for the review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) outcomes.

Today we heard about progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of WSIS. We also heard of the notable achievements that demonstrate the dynamism of the information society and the valuable role of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in promoting sustainable development.

Throughout the day, we heard repeated calls from various stakeholders for the full realization of a vision of a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society.

Participants emphasized the need for innovative approaches to addressing the new technological landscape while narrowing the digital divide and ensuring the full empowerment and engagement of women, youth, persons with disabilities and other local and diverse groups.

Many speakers stressed the importance of strengthening the engagement of multi-stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels in building the information society, which has been one of the most important achievements of WSIS.

We heard from many speakers that the Internet Governance Forum is a valuable platform for dialogue among stakeholders and continuation of its mandate is broadly supported.

Participants highlighted the societal transformations that ICTs had enabled as tools for economic growth and for promoting dialogue among people and nations. It was also noted that ICTs have made possible, enormous advances in health, environment, education, human rights and disaster response.

It was further noted that stable, open, secure and an increasing multilingual Internet has also been essential in advancing innovation and growth across all sectors and borders. The importance of investment in new technology, such as broadband and mobile networks, was also underscored.

Many participants noted that despite the many achievements made, many gaps remain. It was also reaffirmed that where the Internet is available, the digital divide persists and is changing, from one based on access alone to one based on the quality of access and information, as well as the capabilities that are needed to fully benefit from them. In this regard, many participants called for concrete actions to ensure affordable, universal, open access, enhanced capacities and promotion of technology transfer and cooperation.

Participants underlined the importance of Internet stability and security, and the protection of privacy and freedom of expression. Speakers highlighted the need for strengthened international cooperation to assist developing countries in addressing technology and infrastructure gaps.

There were calls for a clear linkage of ICTs and WSIS+10 commitments to the post-2015 development agenda.

Some participants also proposed consideration of the timing of future WSIS stakeholder consultations, vis-a-vis intergovernmental preparatory meetings.

A President's summary of key messages will be prepared and circulated in due course.

Once again, I thank you all for your valuable contributions and active participation.