

2 July 2015

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

**Excellencies,
Mr Lenni Montiel, Assistant Secretary-General for Economic Development
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of His Excellency, Sam Kahamba Kutesa, President of the 69th session of the General Assembly.

I welcome representatives of all relevant stakeholders of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) to this consultation, which is part of the preparatory process for the High-level General Assembly review on the implementation of the WSIS outcomes.

The WSIS was an important milestone in the global effort to harness the potentials of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to foster development. The international community not only set out the broad vision of building a “people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society”, but also outlined areas for concrete actions.

Since then, substantial progress has been made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes. The increased access to ICTs and ICT-based services has offered greater opportunities for economic and social development in many parts of the world. Nevertheless, challenges still remain including bridging digital divide and the use of ICTs to catalyze broad-based growth.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This WSIS review takes place at an opportune time as the international community works to formulate an ambitious and transformative post-2015 development agenda. It is vital that through this review, we not only take stock of the progress that has been achieved in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, but also gather momentum to further unleash the potentials of ICTs to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

A vast array of partners have important roles to play in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes at the national, regional and international levels. The purpose of today’s consultation is to collect inputs from all relevant stakeholders early on in the review process, to allow their contributions to feed into the intergovernmental negotiations.

Today's hearings will feature panel discussions focusing on three main objectives of the review process: taking stock of progress made in the implementation of the WSIS outcomes, identifying gaps and areas for continued focus and examining how to best harness ICT for development in the future.

To enable broad participation in these hearings, we have set-up a live chat via Twitter using the hashtag "Ask WSIS 10" to allow those who could not attend in person to make comments and ask questions.

Furthermore, we have also launched a web page on the General Assembly WSIS+10 review website and encourage all relevant stakeholders to submit written submissions by 31 July 2015 for consideration in the review preparatory process.

I look forward to an open exchange of views and thank you for your participation.