

15 July 2015

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa,
President of the 69th Session of the General Assembly,
at the World Youth Skills Day 2015**

Delivered by H.E. Maria Cristina Perceval, Permanent Representative Argentina, on behalf of President Kutesa

**Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

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

Excellencies,

Today, we have gathered for the first time to mark World Youth Skills Day. This event is indeed timely, as this year we have been presented a critical opportunity to create a better future for people and the planet.

This September, we will gather in New York to adopt an ambitious and transformative post-2015 development agenda. This week leaders are also meeting in Addis Ababa to put in place adequate means of implementation for the future development framework. Furthermore, in December, we will gather in Paris to adopt a new, universally-binding climate change agreement.

As we pursue efforts to promote sustainable development while also seeking to protect the well-being of the planet, considerations for the needs and aspirations of the youth should be taken into account.

Excellencies,

The issues affecting youth are also taking centre stage in other fora this year including as we celebrate the 20th Anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY). In an event marking that milestone last May, many participants noted the important strides made in addressing youth development over the last two decades, although many challenges remain, including access to education and unemployment.

The High-level Event on the “Demographic Dividend and Youth Employment”, which I convened last month, provided another occasion to explore the many challenge and opportunities facing today’s youth. Throughout that event, special emphasis was put on human capital development, with specific calls to provide young people with quality education, training and skills development.

Beyond educational, entrepreneurial and vocational skills, there is also a need to enhance the core skills of the youth, including, interpersonal skills, innovation, creativity, values and attitudes all of which will help foster a generation of young people that contributes to the well-being of their homes, their communities, as well as their workplaces.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we mark this first World Youth Skills Day, we are afforded an opportunity to reflect on the important role of young people around the world and identify ways to maximize their potential.

Indeed, the youth are no longer just the leaders of tomorrow, but are valued partners today as we seek to put the world on a course toward a better, more sustainable future.

I thank you.