THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

REMARKS UPON THE ELECTION
OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SAM KAHAMBA KUTESA
AS PRESIDENT OF THE 69TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
New York, 11 June 2014

Your Excellency Mr. John Ashe, President of the 68th session of the General Assembly,
Your Excellency Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa, President-elect of the 69th session of the General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I congratulate His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa on his election as President of the 69th session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Kutesa brings wide-ranging experience to the job – lawyer, parliamentarian, finance minister and foreign minister. I wish him every success as he takes up his important responsibilities.

The position of President of the General Assembly demands a variety of skills. I saw this for myself when I served as Chef de Cabinet to the President of the Assembly’s 56th session.

One must be able to build bridges among all Member States, not just the most powerful.

One needs patience, since negotiations and consultations can take time.

At times, one serves as a quiet guide, a messenger, a seeker of consensus.

At all times, a General Assembly President is guided above all by the values, principles and obligations of the United Nations Charter – a Charter which will celebrate its 70th anniversary during your term.

These many roles will be especially important during the upcoming session of the Assembly, when many critical streams of work will converge and reach moments of truth.

Our efforts to accelerate our work for the Millennium Development Goals will enter the home stretch.
Discussions by Member States on the period beyond 2015 will move towards what we hope will be an inspiring yet practical vision and a concise set of goals that will reflect the many voices we have heard and lay out the path for a new and transformative sustainable development agenda.

And on the grave overarching challenge of climate change, the Climate Summit on September 23rd and conference of parties in Lima in December will be key moments to mobilize solutions on the ground and ambition for a new global agreement next year.

The Assembly will also be called on to address other key concerns, including disarmament, humanitarian assistance, the special needs of Africa and the participation of the world’s young people. You will focus on strengthening the United Nations itself. And we must continue our efforts to end all forms of discrimination and ensure that each and every member of the human family can enjoy their fundamental human rights.

The 69th session will be a period of great consequence for the well-being and shared fate of people and the planet. I look forward to working with the new President of the Assembly and with all Member States to do our part to end extreme poverty and set the world on a peaceful, just and sustainable path.

Let us work together to keep ambition high and meet the expectations of the billions across the globe who look to this Assembly, this house of all nations, for dialogue, decisions and action to bring about the world we want and a life of dignity for all.

Thank you.