Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin by extending my sincere congratulations to His Excellency, Mr. Sam Kahamba Kutesa of Uganda, on his election as President of this Honourable Assembly. I wish your Excellency a successful tour of duty.

This is the third time that I appear before the United Nations General Assembly in my capacity as President of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda ("ICTR" or "Tribunal"); it remains an immense honour for me to address the distinguished members of this Assembly and it is my pleasure to present to you the Nineteenth Annual Report of the ICTR. This report details the progress made in the last year towards the completion of the Tribunal’s mandate and the transition to the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals ("Mechanism").

Excellencies, I will begin by providing you with a brief overview of the work undertaken throughout the reporting period from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014, during which the Tribunal continued its efforts to complete the remaining appeals expeditiously while respecting the rights of the accused, transferred a second accused in its custody to Rwanda for trial and made significant progress in the ongoing transition of functions to the Mechanism. I will also update you on the progress since the close of the reporting period, which included the delivery of three additional appeal judgements.
As Your Excellencies are aware, the work before the ICTR Trial Chambers has been complete since December 2012 and the Tribunal’s remaining judicial work is now focused in the Appeals Chamber. During the reporting period, the Appeals Chamber rendered three judgements concerning five persons in the Ndahimana, Ndindiliyimana et. al., and Bizimungu cases. In addition to those issued during the reporting period, on 29 September 2014, the Appeals Chamber delivered a further three judgments concerning four persons in the Karemera & Ngirumpatse, Nizeyimana, and Nzabonimana cases. I also note that the Ngirabatware appeal, which originates from the Tribunal’s final trial, is currently pending before the Mechanism and remains projected for completion before the end of 2014.

I am pleased to report that as of 29 September 2014, the Appeals Chamber has completed all of its work with the exception of one case, Nyiramasuhuko et al. ("Butare") which involves six persons and remains projected for completion in 2015. It will be no small feat to complete an appeal of this size in such a relatively short time. That the completion remains on track without any further delays despite the unprecedented amount of pre-appeal work and the complexity of the case is a testament to the dedication of all of the judges and their staff in the Appeals Chamber. In light of the latest projected completion date of the Butare appeal judgement and the involvement of the ICTR judges in cases before the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, a request for extension of the terms of office of the judges in line with projected completion of our work was recently made. I hope that the Member States will support this request, as it is crucial for the Tribunals to complete the remaining work and reach orderly completion of our mandates.

I feel that it is incumbent upon me to take this opportunity to commend the Appeals Chamber, as well as the entirety of the staff of the ICTR for their continued hard work. The
significant progress we have achieved towards the completion of our mandate and the transition to the Mechanism would not be possible without their persevering efforts. As we near the end of our mandate and continue to work to complete the final appeal without delay, the staff who remain at the ICTR are among the most dedicated and professional individuals in the organisation. This is evidenced by the fact that many have sacrificed opportunities for more secure and lucrative employment prospects in order to see their work through until the end. I hope that Member States will continue to encourage the Secretariat and other UN entities to strongly consider applications from ICTR staff members, particularly those who remain with the Tribunal until its closure.

Turning to cases referred to national jurisdictions, the ICTR transferred Bernard Munyagishari to Rwanda in July 2013, marking the second and final transfer from the ICTR to Rwanda of an accused in custody. There are now four cases pending in national jurisdictions from ICTR indictments – two in Rwanda and two in France. Six fugitive cases have also been transferred to Rwanda, leaving only three fugitives to be tried by the Mechanism. The function of monitoring the referred cases now rests solely with the Mechanism. During the reporting period, however, the Tribunal provided staff to assist the Mechanism with monitoring the two cases transferred to Rwanda as well as the two cases referred to France. Staff from the Judicial and Legal Affairs Section of the Tribunal based in Arusha acted as interim monitors of the proceedings in Rwanda during part of the reporting period, and an Appeals Chamber staff member in The Hague continues to act as interim monitor for the cases transferred to France. Both have submitted regular reports to the Mechanism, and the Tribunal has followed the progress closely and will continue to provide support as required until its closure. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the staff members who have agreed to take on these important roles in addition to their core duties,
and to commend them for ensuring that serving as monitors has caused no detriment to their regular workload.

I will now provide you with an update on the transfer of archives to the Mechanism. The ICTR worked vigorously during the reporting period to continue the work of preparing its records for preservation by the Mechanism, which will also ensure ease of access to them for posterity. In that respect, the Tribunal continues preparing its paper, electronic, and audio-visual records for transfer to and management by the Mechanism. This work is done in collaboration with the Mechanism in order to ensure that the records will be easily manageable after their transfer. In addition to the inventory and appraisal of the ICTR records and planning and implementation of the transfer process, the Tribunal is also working on the redaction of audio-visual records of trial proceedings.

These records, most important for ensuring that the events in Rwanda will never be forgotten, may also serve as roadmaps for the creation of future international tribunals and, possibly almost as importantly, can be used to further empower domestic courts and educate the world on the importance of challenging impunity. Despite persistent staffing challenges, the Tribunal has made significant progress in the preparation and transfer of its records to the Mechanism. As of 1 October 2014, the Mechanism has received approximately 47% of the physical ICTR records which will be housed in the Mechanism’s archives. This does not include the Prosecutor’s archives, which I will discuss next. I especially thank all of the staff working on this important project and commend them on the work they have completed with distinction.
I next turn to the Office of the Prosecutor ("OTP"), which has made significant progress towards completing the prosecution of ongoing appeals, monitoring the cases referred to national jurisdictions, and ensuring a smooth and efficient transfer of functions, archives and records to the Mechanism. During the reporting period, the OTP continued litigation on 26 appeals in seven cases. The OTP also handed over responsibility for the tracking of fugitives to the Mechanism and provided support to Rwandan authorities in the prosecution of crimes and in preparing for the transfer of cases from the Tribunal. The OTP formally transferred one OTP archival facility along with the records of 27 cases for archiving to the Mechanism during the reporting period. The processing of Prosecutorial records continues and the entirety of the OTP archives is expected to be finished upon the completion of all appeals.

The OTP has also been exemplary in its work on a number of projects that will be important in shaping the legacy of the Tribunal. Through these projects, it has strengthened the capacity of national criminal justice systems to effectively and efficiently prosecute international crimes. In September 2013, the OTP published a manual on the tracking and arrest of fugitives from international justice. This initiative will assist national authorities, like Rwanda, to track and arrest outstanding fugitives. The prosecution of cases of sexual violence also continues to be an important objective of the OTP. In order to empower those in charge of prosecuting violence against women, the OTP released a best practices manual on the prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence in Kampala in January 2014. National and international prosecutors from around the world will benefit from both manuals.

I now return to an important concern that the ICTR has raised in both the General Assembly and Security Council for years, that of relocating acquitted persons and those released after serving their sentences. Since 2011, the Security Council has called upon Member States to assist the Tribunal with the relocation of acquitted and released persons who are currently
residing in Arusha. The Tribunal continued during the reporting period to search for host countries for the nine acquitted and three convicted released persons. We are happy to report that the number of acquitted persons in Arusha was recently reduced to eight. In that regard, I must commend the Kingdom of Belgium for its recent agreement to reunite one of the Tribunal’s acquitted persons, Augustin Ndindiliyimana, with his family who live in Belgium.

However, apart from the recent acceptance by Belgium of one acquitted person, there have been few developments in this area despite tremendous efforts, especially by the Registrar who works constantly to find solutions. These efforts have been made through meetings with representatives of several African and European countries including the Government of Rwanda. More recently, Rwanda has provided assurances that the acquitted and released persons are welcome to return to Rwanda and that they will not be harmed or prosecuted and that their properties will be handed back to them. However, the acquitted and released persons are reluctant to return due to fear of prosecution and reprisals from others and there is no means for the Tribunal to assess the existence of any perceived threats they allege.

As I have stated in the past, I remain deeply concerned that no solution has yet to be identified. While Members States continue to voice support for the relocation of these persons, and the recent progress in Belgium is a step in the right direction, much more is needed if the ICTR hopes to make any progress prior to its closure. As of 1 January 2015, the Mechanism will take over the formal responsibility for relocation, with assistance from the Tribunal until the resolution of the problem or our closure. The urgent assistance of all Member States is essential to making sure that we do not fail to relocate the remaining eight acquitted persons and three convicted released persons in Arusha.
This has been a remarkable year, especially since April marked the passage of 20 years since the Genocide in Rwanda. To pay homage to the over 800,000 men, women and children killed in April 1994, the ICTR led and participated in commemoration events throughout the Great Lakes region. These types of events help facilitate the healing process in Rwanda and ensure that the international community never forgets, never again closes its eyes to genocide, and honours those who lost their lives by learning from the events in Rwanda in an effort to ensure our ultimate goal of ending these types of tragedies from ever taking place. I wish to especially thank the Government of Rwanda for inviting representatives from the Tribunal to participate in its official 20th commemoration event, which demonstrated Rwanda’s tremendous resolve in rebuilding its society, especially its judicial mechanisms, after the genocide and further reminded the international community of the need for truth, justice and reconciliation in the wake of such atrocities.

As the Tribunal approaches its own milestone, the 20th Anniversary of its creation by the Security Council, we remain committed to preserving the legacy of the ICTR and to sharing developed practices and lessons learnt with other international and domestic judicial mechanisms as part of efforts to continue the fight against impunity. To highlight the achievements and the lessons learnt by the ICTR and to discuss its impact on the development of international humanitarian law, the administration of justice, and the promotion of the rule of law, particularly in the Great Lakes Region, the ICTR plans to hold a legacy symposium and other events in Arusha that will culminate with a ceremony commemorating the establishment of the ICTR on 8 November 2014. The Symposium will bring together experts in the field of international justice, including jurists, academics, civil society members and others who will reflect on the legacy of the ICTR and the future of international justice.
Before closing, I would be remiss if I did not also emphasise the efforts made by the Tribunal to ensure that the affected communities and the international community understand the ramifications of the genocide and the lessons we have learnt in our battle against impunity. In this context, the Office of the Registrar continues to play a key role through outreach programmes aimed at the training of legal professionals as well as conducting genocide awareness workshops, media outreach events, and distributing materials about the ICTR and the genocide to schools, local governments and members of the public.

Further, the sharing of developed practices between the international criminal tribunals and the International Criminal Court has also been an important initiative launched by the Tribunal this year. The goal of these developed practices workshop is to bring together legal officers from the international and hybrid criminal tribunals to discuss and share developed practices and lessons learnt. However, these important workshops will not be able to continue without further funding. It is our hope that Member States will consider supporting this important initiative.

Distinguished Members of the General Assembly, your Excellencies, it remains my honour to address this Assembly once more. With only one appeals case remaining the Tribunal's mandate is nearly complete. On behalf of the entire Tribunal, I wish to express our gratitude to your governments for supporting the work of this Tribunal and helping in our collective fight to challenge impunity. But there is still work left to do. I have full confidence that with the support of Member States, the ICTR’s commitment to the sentiment that never again should flagrant violations of international criminal and humanitarian law go unpunished will continue to evolve in a meaningful way and lead to the eventual realisation of our goal to end impunity.

Thank you very much.