

Statement

By

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**H.E. President of the General Assembly,
H.E. the Secretary-General,
Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I, first of all, thank the UN General Assembly for electing H.E. Sam Kutesa, our foreign Minister, as the President of the UN General Assembly for the year 2014/15. As you all know, the UN system needs reform to reflect the new needs and realities in the World today. Uganda will use this time to make a small contribution towards the reform of the UN and its organs in terms of pushing for the African agenda on this issue. Those reforms, as will be agreed by all of us, will strengthen the UN, not otherwise.

Africa, Uganda included, is, at long last, emerging from the long night of decline the African continent has been through in the last 500 years, eversince 1472 when the Portuguese started encroaching on the African Coastline.

These 500 years witnessed great traumas inflicted on the African continent: slave trade, colonialism, neo-colonialism, plunder, human heamorrhage and even genocide in some cases.

These traumas resulted in haemorrhage of the population and the depopulation of the African continent to the extent that by 1900, the population of the whole of Africa was only 133 million people while that of China, which is only one quarter of the land area of Africa, was 489,000 million people; in other-words, four times greater than the population of Africa at that time.

These traumas on Africa were possible on account of both internal weaknesses and also external factors. That foreign aggression caused serious distortions in African societies. There was, for instance, the very well organized kingdom of Kongo on the Atlantic coast by the time the first Portuguese, Diego Cao, got there in about 1483.

This kingdom covered parts of Northern Angola, Cabinda, parts of the Republic of Congo and Western parts of the DRC. As a consequence of the actions of colonialism, that polity declined and disintegrated. It is only now that the modern countries of that area are regenerating that portion of Africa.

It is these distortions and the original endogenous weaknesses of Africa that the present generation of Africa leaders have been addressing. In many African countries, positive results are beginning to manifest themselves. The middle class in Africa is now of the magnitude of 313 million people which has boosted the purchasing power of Africa to US\$ 2.5 trillion. This purchasing power is growing at the rate of 3.2% per annum.

This growth and expansion of African GDP and purchasing power is in spite of inadequate roads, inadequate railways, inadequate electricity, etc. When these strategic bottlenecks are addressed, the sky will be the limit as far as Africa's potentialities are concerned.

One bottleneck that has bedeviled Africa has been the espousing of the pseudo-ideology of sectarianism of religion or tribe as well as chauvinism vis avis the women. It is this pseudo-ideology that has fuelled most of the conflicts in Africa. We are also witnessing the same pseudo-ideology causing havoc in the Middle East and North Africa. When uninformed outsiders link-up with these pseudo-ideologists, the permutation is most tragic. The sectarian ideology is pseudo and bankrupt because it is at variance with the people's real interests of symbiosis, exchange of goods and services as well as integration for mutual benefit. Only parasites revel in such schemes. This pseudo-ideology should be banished and treated with the contempt it deserves.

On the side of socio-economic transformation, Uganda is busy building hard surface roads, electricity systems, the railways, ICT networks, a universal education system and a pan-Ugandan health system. Together with our neighbours, we have integrated our markets in the EAC

and COMESA. We also partner in common security solutions. Therefore, Africa as well as the individual African countries are becoming more credible partners with any serious actors beyond our shores. Uganda needs and welcomes investments, trade access, tourists and, in some cases, security partnerships that are approved by the African Union from our partners in the World, many of whom are members of the United Nations.

I thank you.