

**Your Excellency Sam Kutesa, Foreign Minister of Uganda and President of the General Assembly,**

**Your Excellency Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,**

**Your Excellencies,**

**Distinguished Delegations,**

I come from a region where my generation lived through challenging conflicts. This inspired me to go into public life so as to be able to address this General Assembly today, as President of the Republic of Panama, at a time when the world is experiencing conflicts and very serious situations which call for all of us to take action.

I am addressing you on behalf of a noble, good and peaceful Panamanian people whom I salute from this podium.

Panama is a peace loving country, which has granted me the opportunity to lead a government that is steering our foreign policy to one of unity and consensus in accordance with our geographic location and the mandate of being a nation that defends peace and the common good for all the inhabitants of this beautiful Planet.

Despite the serious conflicts experienced these days throughout the world, there is peace in America, our continent.

The most important challenges we are presently facing are: inequality; the fight against organized crime, drug and human trafficking; and, the regulation of migration flows to more developed economies.

These challenges are being addressed by the governments of the region but demand further coordination.

As leaders we must understand that in order to achieve and maintain peace in the world, we must first lead our nations along the same path.

This is why I am committed to social justice and to strengthening the Rule of Law, leading an honest, human government that is in touch with the people; a government which strength relies on the principle that public office is for the service of others; a government that is putting our country's resources for the benefit of the Panamanian people, the region and the world.

Fourteen years ago, the international community of Heads of State and Government, gathered in this General Assembly, approved the Millennium Declaration which defined the global development agenda in order to face common challenges and improve the standards of living of their peoples.

All 193 countries in the world have different political systems, beliefs, religions and cultures that must be respected. In spite of these differences, we all face common challenges.

That is why, in order to secure the wellbeing of our citizens, our governments are called to find unity of criteria for strengthening the multilateral systems, which must be activated, with all our might, to combat threats and common problems.

Amidst conflicts and difficult situations at the global level, there are strong messages of hope: Volunteer physicians from all over the world are making progress to fight Ebola in Africa; and, several countries are united in the fight against terrorists' atrocious crimes that affect innocent people and threaten international peace and security.

Panama is aware of these collaborative efforts and supports them. We express our solidarity with all victims and their families.

I am convinced that the men and women we elect to public office must serve only the people who elected us and manage the power temporarily granted to us with the purpose of improving the quality of life of our population.

Politics is called to be one of the strongest expressions of social service because it is the search for the common good.

The greatest legacy which I will strive to build during the next five years is to leave the Panamanian people a functional democracy; to strengthen the Rule of Law, where public servants are accountable only to the Nation, with strong institutions, accountability and without impunity so that honest and transparent administrations might be guaranteed.

All governments have the obligation to ensure that government resources are used exclusively in the service of our citizens, and that all public works and projects have the people's interests in mind.

With this mission, along with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, I became President of my country this past July 1<sup>st</sup>, fully committed to installing a government that will continue fostering the economic growth enjoyed by Panama; while giving priority to public investment that has greater impact on the quality of life of all Panamanians.

With an average domestic economic growth of 7%, increasing foreign investment, legal security, low inflation and unemployment rates, and a consolidated democratic system, we are making progress in fulfilling the proposals on which basis I was elected.

During our mandate:

1. We have taken strong measures to curb speculation in the cost of food.
2. We are working so all Panamanian families have adequate housing with access to drinking water, basic sanitation, water supply, sewage and solid waste treatment plants.

I would like to finish by sharing with you a statement that has accompanied me since my youth:

“The time has come to put our capacity in service of others.”

May God give us the strength to continue to build together a better world for our citizens and for future generations.

Thank you very much.

*Note: This is a courtesy translation. Kindly compare to original text in Spanish.*