Ambassador Sam Kahamba Kutesa  
President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly  
United Nations  
New York, New York  

20 September 2014

Your Excellency,

**Why natural resources are a critical component of a post-2015 SDG framework**

The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Thematic Group on the Good Governance of Extractive and Land Resources\(^1\) has followed closely the progress of the various post-2015 processes to define the sustainable development agenda and shape a preliminary set of goals and targets. We were pleased to see that the issue of natural resources has been included in key UN reports, including the High Level Panel Report and, recently, the Outcome Document of the Open Working Group. We write to urge the General Assembly in its 69th session to support the continued inclusion of natural resource management in the Sustainable Development Goals framework.

The proper exploitation of natural resources and management of their revenues will be critical for many developing countries, particularly some of the poorest, for achieving and financing of the SDGs. The number of developing countries dependent upon natural resource revenues has increased rapidly in recent years. Today over sixty low- and middle-income countries depend upon natural resources as a major share of their exports, including, as you know, your home country of Uganda. Despite this increasing resource wealth, more than 1.5 billion people in these countries live in extreme poverty subsisting on less than two dollars a day—and the number is rising. Notably, this poverty amidst wealth is significantly higher in resource-rich countries with weak governance than in those with strong governance.

The ability of resource-rich countries to progress and particularly to overcome extreme poverty depends upon the wise use of those resources. Resource-driven economic and social transformation in developing countries can be achieved, but that realization requires a number of steps: i) a policy and regulatory environment that is conducive and competitive for business development, while protective of local rights and interests; ii) a robust and transparent legal and fiscal framework to ensure shared benefits from resource extraction; iii) careful management of revenues and their dedication to social and economic development; iv) stronger linkages between the extractive sector and other sectors of the local economy, including through infrastructure development and supply chains; v) improved governance and management systems across the entire minerals value chain; and vi) the building of capable institutions and smart multi-stakeholder partnerships to generate benefits for all.

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\(^1\) The Sustainable Development Solutions Network, established under the aegis of the Secretary General, mobilizes scientific and technical expertise in support of sustainable development problem solving. The Thematic Group comprises leaders from academia, civil society, private companies, international institutions, and government agencies, who contribute in their personal capacity.
The good governance of extractive and land resources cuts across all the dimensions of sustainable development, and the Sustainable Development Goals framework would be incomplete without a target for the governance and use of natural resource wealth. It also provides a critical link between the post-2015 and Financing for Development agenda going forward. We look to the General Assembly to include this crucial issue in its upcoming debates.

Sincerely,

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SDSN Thematic Group Member Signatories:

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2 All members have signed in their personal capacity, not on behalf of their institution or company.