

21 September 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Peace Bell Ceremony, on the occasion of the International Day
of Peace**

Excellencies, Mr Secretary General, Under Secretary General Gallach, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am honored to join you today to commemorate the International Day of Peace.

Peace, of course, is a prerequisite for sustainable development, shared prosperity and human rights.

Indeed, the desire for lasting peace was the driving force behind the birth to the United Nations 70 years ago.

Yet despite the spread of peace across many parts of the globe, peace is still denied to too many people, in too many places today – people trapped in senseless conflicts; people affected by terrorism and violent extremism.

At the United Nations, we have a very heavy responsibility to reduce not increase tensions and to address the root causes of conflict and violence.

And because the nature, scale and complexity of conflict has changed substantially in the last 70 years, we must adjust our thinking and seek new ways to address challenges to international peace and security.

During my Presidency, I will do my utmost to help move the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development forward from next week's commitments to fifteen years of action. This Agenda is crucial to ending on-going conflicts and to preventing the onset of new and ever more dangerous ones.

I will support member states to explore ways to strengthen the UN system's role and coherence in peace and security, including how best to respond to the various reviews under way. We will also continue discussions, mandated by the Assembly, on UN Security Council reform.

And having visited Hiroshima just three weeks ago and been reminded of the horrors of nuclear warfare, I hope that member states will work together to rebuild confidence in the area of nuclear and conventional disarmament and scale back risks.

Let the bell of peace ring out therefore in praise of those leaders who choose the path of dialogue and peace over aggression and war; in solidarity with those suffering in the absence of peace – women disgracefully targeted during conflict, families who have lost loved ones, internally displaced persons and refugees with no choice but to flee; and as a timely reminder for those with the power and responsibility to resolve conflicts.

I hope that, during this anniversary year, member states will find ways to bring an end to some of the world's major conflicts – in Syria and the wider Middle East, in a number of African countries, in parts of Europe and beyond; so that together, we can move closer to the vision of the UN Charter.

Thank you.