

24 September 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
at the opening of the 39th Annual Meeting of the Ministers for
Foreign Affairs of the Member States of the Group of 77 and China**

Madam Chair, Honorable Ministers, Mr Secretary General, Executive Secretary, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is a privilege to address the Group of 77 and China at this important meeting.

At the outset, I wish to extend my heartfelt condolences to the families and communities affected by the tragedy at the Hajj pilgrimage, to the representative of Saudi Arabia and to all affected countries. It is particularly saddening that during this time of celebration for Muslims around the world, so many people will now be left grieving for their loved ones. At this difficult time, our thoughts and prayers are with them all and with those who assisting in rescue operations.

Let me begin by commending you Excellency, Ms Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, for your leadership during a very busy year. Let me congratulate also Thailand for its election as the next Chair of the Group.

Heads of State and Government are gathering to adopt a revolutionary sustainable development Agenda.

After years of negotiations, now is the time for action. Supporting implementation is thus the main priority of my Presidency.

Over the next year, we must all place the new Agenda at the heart of both our national policies and priorities and the work at the UN, on its 70th anniversary.

In the immediate future, agreeing on a universal and ambitious outcome in Paris on Climate Change must have the highest priority.

In 2016 it will be of utmost importance to immediately kick off implementation of the agreements on SDGs, financing and climate. We will do this at expert level, but in order to maintain political momentum, I will in April convene a high-level thematic debate, where I hope you will come in great numbers.

We need to mobilize finance, facilitate access to technology, catalyze action on climate resilience, including in infrastructure, and build capacities. We must also ensure the success of the global partnership and full, concrete and efficient involvement of all stakeholders, from governments and the sub-national level, to the private sector, the financial community, and civil society.

To address the specific needs and provide dedicated support to the most vulnerable countries – African countries, Least Developed Countries, Small Island States and Landlocked Developing countries – we need rich countries to live up to their longstanding commitment to minimum 0.7 pct. of national income in ODA.

But even more we need an international cooperation and a national institution building to secure that rich companies and individuals pay taxes where they earn their money.

And in particular we need to create a stable regulatory and taxation framework for business that makes it obvious that green investment is the best investment, not only in the long perspective and for the common good, but also for private investors here and now.

Enhancing North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation will also be critical. Solidarity among developing countries and the expansion of their collective action, also through a strengthened office of South-South cooperation, can help promote and enhance the interests of developing countries within the UN system.

In addition, as the Agenda itself says, there will be no peace without sustainable development, and no sustainable development without peace. We must therefore unite our efforts to resolve conflicts and the heartbreaking refugee crisis.

Finally, in relation to administrative and budgetary issues, I appeal to all to work with partners to ensure a timely and consensual conclusion of fifth committee work during the 70th session.

Excellencies, your support will be critical in moving from commitments to action. I look forward to engaging with all of you in an inclusive and constructive spirit. My door is always open.

I thank you for your attention.