

27 September 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
at the High Level Event on Youth “#Generation2030: Torchbearers
for the SDGs”**

Your Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, Honourable Ministers, Youth Delegates, Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon to you all.

I am greatly encouraged by the energy and commitment on display at the Summit these past few days – and in this room in particular.

It fills me with great hope that you are indeed all ready for action. Because, in many respects, the year ahead is even more crucial than the one that has just past. It will go a long way to determining whether the 2030 Agenda becomes a vehicle for truly transformative change or yet another missed opportunity.

The power and responsibility to ensure that SDG implementation gets off to a good start lies with all of us who have participated in this Summit and in its preparatory process.

The 2030 Agenda is, in particular, for young people. If we succeed, it is the new and coming generations that will harvest the results of a more peaceful harmonious and sustainable world. If we fail, it is them that will be left with a global environment of more devastating conflicts, huge forced and uncontrolled migration because of climate change, and fewer resources for human development.

The involvement and participation by young people in the global preparatory process for the Agenda 2030 was hugely influential. Your work at the local level, your engagement with international decision makers; your activity online on social media and your participation in international campaigns, was unprecedented.

But the slogan, ‘nothing about us without us’, applies to implementation as much as it did to the preparation. You must not only be the torchbearers for the SDGs; you must be the driving force for their realisation.

Government ownership is not enough. You must spread the word about the SDGs so that they are “owned” by the people.

Government action alone will not be enough. You must take direct action, innovate and help your governments to implement these goals.

Promises are not enough. You must be a strong voice to hold your governments to account for what they have signed up to this weekend.

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Ladies and gentlemen, as a teenager some 55 years ago, I was looking for a framework to help improve our world and, for all its flaws, I found it in the United Nations.

Today, as President of the General Assembly, I will do my utmost to ensure that the UN's new vehicle for change, the 2030 Agenda, gets off to the best possible start. I will convene three high-level events in 2016 for that very purpose. I will build on the inclusive approach taken by my predecessors and on our excellent relationship with the SG's Special Envoy on Youth, Mr. Ahmad Alhendawi, in order to provide a platform for all stakeholders, particularly young people, to identify opportunities for partnerships and for change.

We must not let this opportunity pass. Young people can drive the change we need. But all of us must play our part and demonstrate "a new commitment to action".

Thank you.