

2 October 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Special Event on International Day of Non-Violence**

Minister Swaraj, Mr. Secretary General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen good morning.

What better way to end this historic week than by honoring Mahatma Gandhi – the man whose principles are echoed in the very foundations of this Organization!

While in India just over one month ago, I had the honor to visit the Raj Ghat – the memorial site of Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi – where I was reminded of the philosophy of non-violence and the wise words of this honorable man.

‘Non-violence,’ he said, ‘is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.’

These words resonate with the very principles of the UN Charter; with the UN’s promotion of peaceful settlements to disputes, and the primacy of reaching solutions through diplomacy and other peaceful means.

Yet despite much progress these past 70 years, as we look around the world today, we see conflicts tearing communities and countries apart. We see brutality from violent extremists. And we see impunity for the various forms of violence carried out against women and children.

Clearly, Gandhi’s vision remains but a distant possibility for far too many people.

During this 70th session, however, there are many opportunities to bring that vision closer to a reality.

I am personally inspired by the revolutionary 2030 Agenda which was adopted exactly one week ago this morning. Now, all actors must focus on making early progress and on rapid implementation so as to advance for the dignity, prosperity, peace and human rights of our shared humanity.

I am greatly encouraged also by the momentum that is building around the current Climate negotiations. Since we arrived here 10 days ago, we have seen multiple financing announcements and the submission of independent national determined contributions

(INDCs) by over 70 countries, including by India just yesterday. This demonstrates that our approach is working, that universality is happening. But now and over the coming months, we must ensure not only that an agreement is reached in Paris; but that it is sufficiently ambitious to avert catastrophic climate change, to give hope and opportunity to millions of people around the world.

Finally, like many of you, I too have been greatly saddened by the recent images of refugees, internally-displaced persons and migrants suffering for lack of assistance, left stranded for our lack of humanity. But given the solidarity expressed at Wednesday's meeting on this subject, I am hopeful that in the weeks and months ahead, all member states can summon the compassion required to take good care of their brothers and sisters. And I implore all countries involved to find common ground to bring an end to the conflicts behind this crisis.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As Dr. Martin Luther King Junior, another great supporter of non-violence, once stated: "At the center of non-violence stands the principle of love".

Let us show that love this year by working tirelessly together for the betterment of our people and our planet.

Thank you.