

23 October 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the Launch of Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action  
against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes**

Her Excellency Ms Aurelia Frick, High Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, distinguished ministers, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address this meeting today, taking place as it does as our Organization celebrates the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the UN Charter. A Charter which captures so simply and effectively the ideals of peace, human rights, justice, and social progress that we continue to strive for.

The United Nations was founded “*to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war*”. Nevertheless, we have seen that on several occasions, we collectively have failed to prevent or act in the face of mass atrocities. And the UN Security Council – holding the primary responsibility for international peace and security – in particular has failed in this regard.

It is my pleasure therefore to be present today as the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes is launched here at the UN. An initiative which seeks to ensure that past atrocities are not repeated on our watch; an initiative targeted at making the Security Council fit for the next 70 years.

This initiative has caught my attention especially because of its unique appeal to all UN Member States emphasizing our shared responsibility to prevent mass atrocities. Indeed, all states have a role to play in improving the Security Council's response to atrocity crimes and share ownership of this important issue.

I believe this voluntary political commitment, which contains a pledge to support timely and decisive Security Council action in situations involving atrocity crimes, as well as a pledge not to vote against credible draft Security Council resolutions aimed at preventing or ending these crimes – is an important step in gathering political momentum and commitment to the idea of voluntary restraint of the use of the veto in situations involving mass atrocity crimes.

I would like to congratulate the members of the cross-regional Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group and in particular Liechtenstein for spearheading this initiative. I am also pleased to see that 92 Member States so far have given their commitment to the Code of Conduct and I am sure that many more will follow suit in the months ahead.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have provided us with an excellent example of how member states can work together to improve the overall functioning and effectiveness of the UN's systems and organs. In this anniversary year, I encourage you all to continue to work together, to find common cause and to bridge differences so that we can move ever closer to the vision at the heart of the UN Charter.

I thank you.