

6 November 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the Breakfast Meeting of Friends of the Future of the United  
Nations**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, good morning to you all. I thank Ambassador Desra Percaya for inviting me to address the Friends of the Future of the United Nations.

This is a defining time for the United Nations. Whether it is the 2030 Agenda, the conflict in Syria, the global humanitarian and refugee crisis or the current climate negotiations, the demands on this Organization are ever-increasing.

During this anniversary session, it is my hope that the UN membership will use the opportunities before us to help the Organization meet those demands. Let me therefore touch briefly on four of these.

The first and perhaps most pressing issue is the need for a comprehensive and more effective response from the international community to the current **humanitarian and refugee crisis**. On 19 November, I will hold an informal meeting of the General Assembly where I hope member states and other actors will identify specific aspects of such a response on three major issues – providing protection to refugees and strengthening resettlement programmes; ensuring adequate, predictable and effective financing for humanitarian action; and enhancing support for those receiving countries that are bearing the greatest burden.

Of course, bringing an end to on-going conflicts around the world would massively alleviate the refugee crisis and in this regard, it is crucial that the talks in Vienna deliver a peaceful settlement to the conflict in Syria.

The **second** issue, and a major priority of my Presidency, is to see early progress on **implementing the 2030 Agenda**. The first test since the September Summit is in less than one

month's time, and the necessity of leaving Paris with an ambitious climate agreement cannot be overstated.

At the same time, during this crucial first year of implementation, we need action, not just talk. We need a rapid shift to sustainable patterns of consumption and production; a surge in investment in sustainable infrastructure; greater access to technology and major efforts to empower women and girls. We also need to strengthen countries' ability to collect taxes both domestically and internationally and to see more and more private companies, investment funds and pension funds align their activities with the sustainable development paradigm. And finally, after the hard work of Paris, we need to begin the hard work of addressing climate change. These will be among the main areas of focus of my first high-level thematic debate on 11-12 April, where I will also seek to highlight key partnerships that are already making an impact on the new Goals.

To maintain focus over the next fifteen years, we also need a robust and workable framework of follow-up and review. The parameters of this framework have already been decided but the upcoming report from the Secretary General can identify details on a series of issues that can make this framework operational. In particular, we need details on the High Level Political Forum, on reviews at different levels and on the relationship between reviews done by different intergovernmental bodies. This will no doubt require further consideration from member states and I stand ready to facilitate that discussion as necessary.

**A third area** where there is significant scope for action this year is the area of **Peace and Security**.

Three major reviews are under way on Peace Operations, Peacebuilding and Women, Peace and Security, as well as a number of other relevant processes. Although these may be distinct, they are closely interconnected and it is important that we consider the common themes emerging from them and what they tell us about how to enhance the effectiveness of the UN in matters of peace and security. We need to give concrete meaning to preventive diplomacy, the search for political settlements and the role of regional organizations. We also need to look at the capacities required to resolve intractable conflicts and address asymmetrical threats.

A number of networks of think tanks, practitioners and others from across the world are preparing a series of discussions on these issues. I have encouraged them to work together and to engage with you, the member states as they do so. My hope is that those discussions can inform my second high-level thematic debate on 10 and 11 May. I will arrange for my Office to seek your views and suggestions on this exercise in the coming weeks.

Of course, one can't speak about global peace and security without addressing the need to reform the Security Council. Following on from the progress made last session, I have recently appointed Ambassador Lucas of Luxembourg to chair intergovernmental negotiations this session, pursuant to decision 69/560. In my view, it is important to avoid a mere repetition of previously stated positions and, instead, to advance text-based negotiations.

**Finally**, another very important issue for this session is strengthening the **transparency, accountability and effectiveness** of this organization and the General Assembly in particular.

The 70<sup>th</sup> session provides us with an opportunity to bring greater transparency and rigour to the process for determining the next UN Secretary General. Over the coming period, I, together with the President of the Security Council, will circulate a joint letter to the membership setting out the entire process. There are a number of critical aspects to this but in my view, the holding of meetings between candidates and the General Assembly; and the inclusion of a significant number of female candidates in particular, can significantly improve that process.

It is also essential, especially in light of recent events, that we move to guarantee the integrity and independence of the Office of the President of the General Assembly. **In this regard, earlier this week I set out three core principles that I and my office will adhere to: first, integrity and impartiality; second, transparency and accountability and third, professionalism and effectiveness. In addition, however, I encourage the Ad Hoc Working Group on GA Revitalization to consider ways to further strengthen the Office.**

Excellencies, this is but a snapshot of the opportunities before us during this historic session, some of which require urgent action. I stand ready to engage with all member states as we renew our collective commitment to action.

During the coming weeks I plan to meet with the regional groups and explore these ideas. I look forward to the discussion with you this morning.

I thank you for your attention.