

11 December 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
on the Second Anniversary Celebration of Universal Health Coverage
(UHC) Day**

Today we celebrate the second anniversary of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Day.

Good health is something that each and every one of us cherish and desire.

It is a precondition for human development and economic growth, an indicator of progress towards sustainable development and a fundamental human right of every person around the world.

With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we have the most comprehensive roadmap for a better world – one without poverty, one of peaceful societies, of shared prosperity and a flourishing environment.

That roadmap includes a commitment to promoting physical and mental health and well-being and the extension of life expectancy for all through universal health coverage and access to quality health care.

Health is an intrinsic aspect of human welfare, and thus worthy of pursuit in its own right. Beyond this however, progress towards Universal Health Coverage is also essential to eliminating poverty.

Furthermore, the lessons from the Millennium Development Goals, and most recently from the Ebola epidemic, have impressed upon us the importance of a functioning and effective health system which is capable of withstanding shocks.

Universal health coverage is absolutely fundamental to this. It cuts across all of the health-related goals and epitomised the SDGs' strong focus on equity and reaching the poorest, most disadvantaged people everywhere.

As leading economists from 44 countries declared in September, investment in universal health coverage will bring enormous benefits – in times of crises it mitigates the impact of shocks on communities, while in times of calm it fosters more cohesive societies and productive economies.

Let us use today's celebration of Universal Health Coverage day to tie our efforts together in a more cohesive way and turn it into a movement towards our shared goals.

Let governments, civil society, international organizations, researchers and the private sector work together so that we can deliver the resources and the new, innovative, people-centred approaches to enable all people to enjoy equitable access to quality health services without fear of impoverishment.