

11 December 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the Commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the World Summit
for Social Development**

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, you are very welcome to this high level plenary discussion commemorating the 20th Anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development.

This Summit was one of the largest policy-focused gatherings of that time attended by over 14,000 participants, including delegates from 186 countries, with 117 of them represented by heads of State or Government.

At that Summit, Member States adopted the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action – a global social contract putting people at the centre of development.

In doing so, member States agreed to advance social development through ten commitments ranging from eradicating poverty and reducing inequality, to promoting social integration based on the enhancement and protection of all human rights.

They agreed also to promote international peace and security; accelerate development in Africa and the least developed countries; and to mobilize resources for achieving social progress.

And they presented economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable development while proposing a holistic approach to development practice by acknowledging sustainability as the overarching development framework.

The MDGs and the Monterrey Consensus, agreed just 6 and 8 years later respectively, became important vehicles through which to pursue the objectives of the World Social Summit in particular poverty eradication.

Those Goals did not however fully capture the integrity and breadth of the 1995 Summit Outcome.

And, despite phenomenal progress in some areas these past fifteen years, it is clear that a more comprehensive approach capturing the three dimensions of sustainable development and focussed on addressing root causes, is needed.

Thankfully, that new approach is now found at the heart of the recently adopted 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Crucially, poverty eradication remains at the very core as it has done since Copenhagen.

But if we have learned anything from the 1995 Summit, it is that this time round, we must not lose momentum.

Representatives from Government, the scientific community, the private sector, civil society and various parts of the United Nations – must therefore come together and begin the hard work of implementation.

We must dedicate ourselves to fifteen years of targeted and transformative action.

During this 70th session, in particular, we must demonstrate that the shift towards a low-carbon, climate resilient, peaceful and prosperous world is not only feasible but already happening; and that sustainable development is not just a possibility but an inevitability.

Thank you.