

15 December 2015

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the High-level Meeting on the overall review of the implementation
of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society
(WSIS)**

Mr. Secretary General, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to welcome you to this High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS).

Let me begin by congratulating you all on reaching consensus on the outcome document which is scheduled for adoption tomorrow.

Once again the membership of the United Nations has proven that through perseverance, commitment and compromise, we can advance and make great things happen together.

I would also like to congratulate and sincerely thank the co-facilitators, Ambassador Janis Mazeiks and Ambassador Lana Zaki Nusseibeh, for their able leadership throughout.

Excellencies, ten years ago, world leaders declared a “common desire and commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented Information Society”.

In doing so, they underscored the power of information and communication technology (ICT) and its ability to contribute positively to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Since then we have made great strides along this path as levels of ICT access, use and skills have continued to improve across the world.

According to ITU's annual *Measuring the Information Society Report*, 43.4% of the world population is now online, and mobile–cellular subscriptions have reached almost 7.1 billion. ICT has played an increasingly important role in promoting economic and social development, such as enhancing productivity, facilitating trade, creating quality jobs, providing ICT-based services such as e-health and e-learning, and improving governance.

While recognizing these achievements and this great potential, we must not lose sight of the remaining challenges.

Various forms of digital divides still exist within and among countries.

Progress on ICT has not been mirrored by broad-based sustainable development in many countries.

New challenges have emerged relating to Internet stability and security, data ownership and exercise of human rights online.

Today's outcome document recognizes many of these challenges and the work that lies ahead.

It recognizes also the linkages between ICTs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Adopted just three months ago, that Agenda carries forward the unfinished business of the MDGs.

And, in the SDGs, it sets out an ambitious sets of targets to end poverty, advance shared prosperity and ensure environmental sustainability worldwide over the next 15 years.

Both the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda have recognized that ICT will be among one of the key cross-cutting enablers for meeting those targets. And there are a number of actions we can take to make this happen.

We must, for example, ensure that ICT is integrated into the implementation strategies of the SDGs.

We must create an enabling policy and regulatory environment at all levels for investment, development and spread of ICT. We must step up our efforts to provide equitable and affordable access to ICT and improve capacity and skills to make use of them, especially in the developing world and for marginalized communities.

We must ensure that governance of the Internet promotes an equitable distribution of resources, facilitates access for all and ensures a stable and secure functioning of the Internet.

And we must guarantee that fundamental freedoms and other human rights that are exercised offline are equally exercisable online.

Finally, based on experience of what works over the past ten years, we must enhance multi-stakeholder collaboration and action among all stakeholders to achieve the WSIS vision and the SDGs.

Excellencies, the adoption of the outcome document from this meeting will mark the conclusion of the WSIS+10 review process.

But it will also mark the beginning of a new phase of the journey – a journey that seeks to fully harness the power of ICT to realize the SDGs and to leave no one behind.

In spite of the many challenges in this area, we know we have the knowledge, skills and resources to make this happen.

So let us leave New York this week recommitted to working together and reenergized to take immediate action.

Thank you.