

12 January 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the Panel Discussion “Moving Forward with the Reform of the
United Nations”**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, good morning to you all.

Let me begin by thanking the Elders and the Mission of Liechtenstein for convening this panel discussion.

Since its establishment 70 years ago, this Assembly of nations has overseen some major successes and regrettably, some glaring failures.

To learn from its failures and respond to our 21st century world, the United Nations must continuously reform and renew itself.

Today, we are discussing three aspects of such reform.

First, on how best to ensure that the United Nations fulfils its objective of “*sav[ing] succeeding generations from the scourge of war*”.

Collectively, on several occasions, we have failed in this regard, and in-doing so, we have failed to prevent or act in the face of mass atrocities.

The UN Security Council – holding the primary responsibility for international peace and security – has, especially, been found wanting.

Though much remains to be done to ensure that past atrocities are not repeated, the launch here last year of the Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, was an encouraging step forward.

The second issue is that of UN Security Council Reform.

In a dramatically changing world, with increasingly complex challenges, greater inter-connectivity and a series of new and emerging threats, the UN Security Council must be representative, credible, effective and efficient.

In this context, the need for Security Council reform is undeniable.

Discussions on this subject are, of course, sensitive and difficult, and there are many different positions among the membership.

But a matter of such importance can only be addressed when a spirit of compromise prevails. That is why I appointed Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg, as the new Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations, and I look forward to following this process during the remainder of my term.

Lastly, the selection and appointment of the next Secretary-General will be one of the most prominent issues for the General Assembly this session.

As you know, last session, through Resolution 69/321, member states decided unanimously to enhance the role of the General Assembly in the process and to make the process more transparent, more inclusive and more rigorous.

On 15 December, the President of the Security Council and I took the first step in this process by circulating a joint letter to the membership providing a description of the process ahead; highlighting the importance of transparency and inclusivity; and inviting candidates to be presented in a timely manner.

We will also, on an ongoing basis, jointly circulate the names and the CVs of candidates to the position – something which has already started last month.

The joint letter officially provides criteria for the candidates, reminds us of the need to guarantee equal opportunities for women and men, and encourages Member States to consider presenting women as candidates for the position (as well as men).

It also offers candidates informal dialogues or meetings with the membership – something which should be of interest to all serious candidates.

The number of meetings to be held will depend on the number of candidates put forward, and the speed to which they are put forward.

However, my intention is to hold these dialogues in the course of the spring and I hope to conduct the first meeting in early April.

In this regard, I ask that candidates are presented as soon as possible, and ideally by the end of March.

The meetings themselves will be as open and transparent as possible, and the large interest from the media and civil society will be kept in mind in terms of format etc.

Specific details will be fleshed out in the months ahead and I will be seeking informal advice and views from member states and others – including through a small retreat over the coming days – so as to make the process as effective as possible.

Excellencies, there is clearly much to be done to reform and improve the functioning and effectiveness of this organization.

For my part, during this anniversary session, I can assure you that overseeing the process for selecting the next Secretary-General is among my highest priorities.

And I very much look forward to continued engagement with all of you on this and other issues over the coming period.

Thank you.