

14 January 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the briefing by the Secretary-General on his priorities for 2016**

Mr Secretary General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, you are very welcome to this briefing on the Secretary-General's priorities for 2016.

At the outset, let me express my sincere condolences to all those who lost their lives and have been affected by the recent terrorist attacks in Istanbul and earlier today in Jakarta. These attacks highlight once again the shared threat of terrorism which united, we the General Assembly must address.

Excellencies, 2015 was a year to remember for multilateralism – a year of major breakthroughs particularly in the area of sustainable development.

Yet on so many fronts, our world, our peoples and this community of nations continues to face major challenges.

Conflict, violence and terrorism are causing widespread death, tensions and instability.

Hundreds of millions of people continue to live in extreme poverty and hunger while global inequality soars.

Climate Change is right now threatening the lives and livelihoods of our world's most vulnerable people.

And perhaps most disappointingly of all, we have seen a rise in intolerance and discrimination, and a widespread failure to protect the rights of protesters, women, migrants and refugees – the very human rights which this organization was established to protect over 70 years ago.

Here in the General Assembly, we have a great deal of work ahead of us.

During the remainder of this session alone, we will address issues ranging from HIV/AIDS to the World Drug Problem; from the global humanitarian and refugee crisis to the process for selecting and appointing the next Secretary General.

In addition, as you will be aware, I will be holding three high-level thematic debates in April, May and July on each of the three UN pillars.

Mr Secretary General, as you embark on your final year in office, I wish you the very best in strengthening the effectiveness of this Organization and assisting member states in addressing our common global challenges.

Concluding remarks

As the Secretary General mentioned, he will hold a high-level signing ceremony of the Paris Climate Agreement here in New York on 22nd April.

Given the strong interlinkages between the 2030 Agenda and the Climate Agreement, I am considering changing the date of my High Level Thematic Debate on SDGs and Climate implementation, so that it takes place on 21st April.

I am currently looking into logistical implications and will inform member states of my final decision as soon as possible.