

15 January 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the Informal Meeting of the General Assembly — Briefing by the  
Secretary-General on his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism**

Mr Secretary General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, you are very welcome to this briefing on the Secretary General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

Today, sadly, violent extremism is on the rise across the world.

In the last six months alone – even this week – a number of your governments and your people have been confronted by waves of terrorist attacks, violence and intimidation.

The pain, fear and destruction caused by these acts presents real and difficult challenges for all member states.

As a phenomenon, violent extremism is not new.

The chilling danger of our age is the risk that radicalized individuals gain access to – and then proceed to use – tools that can inflict mass killings and significant destruction.

Already, some extremists are skillfully exploiting the internet to spread, like never before, their message of hate and violence.

Confronting and preventing violent extremism is fundamental to protecting our societies and populations.

But to be truly effective, our approach to prevention must stay faithful to our common humanity and to our aspirations to secure peace and security, sustainable development, rule of law and respect for human rights.

I therefore commend you, Mr Secretary General, for taking this important initiative and preparing this Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

It is a timely one, particularly given that the General Assembly will review the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy later this year.

Through this Plan of Action, you seek to stimulate a global debate on this complex issue and discuss how better to use the tools and resources we have to address the drivers of this phenomenon.

And I look forward to working with you and with the entire membership in bringing that discussion forward.

I now invite the Secretary-General, to take the floor.

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### **Concluding remarks after the last speaker**

Mr Secretary General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you all for your contributions to today's informal briefing.

Judging by the interventions we have heard, it is clear that the issue of preventing violent extremism is very high on our collective agenda.

It is a phenomenon which, in different ways, affects each and every member of this Assembly and millions of innocent people around the world.

In the Plan of Action, the Secretary General calls on all Members States to use the voice of the General Assembly to send out [and I quote]: “a resounding call to unity and action”.

Following today's briefing, I will consult further with Member states on how best to respond to this call, how to maintain momentum and move this matter forward in a speedy manner.

This includes, as indicated in my invitation to this briefing, a formal meeting of the plenary dedicated to discussing this Plan of Action, which I will convene as soon as possible.

Thank you.