

27 January 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the United Nations Holocaust Memorial Ceremony**

Mr. Secretary General, Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Among us today are people with their own horrible and painful experiences related to the Holocaust. We honor them all well as we to honor and remember the millions of innocent men, women and children who were so heinously persecuted and murdered by the Nazi regime.

We are here to remember the millions killed because of their Jewish faith and other faiths, their race or ethnicity, their sexual orientation, disabilities, political persuasion and, perhaps above all, their powerlessness.

And we are here to unite, as the General Assembly did in 2005, to recognize the Holocaust for what it was and to learn from the past so as to avert such traumas in the future.

Sadly, the evidence over the past 70 years, suggests that we still have not put the lessons from the past into practice. We still see anti-Semitism, racism and discrimination against the vulnerable tolerated across the world.

We still see hate speech and actions by governments which incite hatred of others.

And, since the end of World War II, we have seen further genocides and mass atrocities that could have and should have been averted.

All of us, therefore, at the United Nations and beyond have a responsibility to take greater steps to promote tolerance, human rights and human dignity.

This includes “The Responsibility to Protect” or R2P – a doctrine which recognizes the vulnerability of populations in many regions of the world, and calls on the international community to intervene to protect them.

And it includes a responsibility to educate and promote awareness of the Holocaust, as the United Nations Outreach Programme has done these past 10 years.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is so important that we are joined here today by people who have survived the Holocaust, by representatives of the minorities that were targeted through the Holocaust and by those who have fought hard to achieve some semblance of justice for victims.

Let us listen carefully to their stories and their music.

And let us remind ourselves of our responsibility to give true meaning to the call to ‘never again’ let such horrors visit innocent people in our world.

Thank you.