

3 February 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the Informal meeting of the General Assembly on the
intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable
representation on and increase in the membership of the Security
Council and other matters related to the Council**

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

I am very pleased to be here at the first meeting of the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council Reform during this GA session, focusing on the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

In the past 70 years, the world has undergone profound change – political, social, economic, environmental and technological.

In the area of peace and security, that change has brought with it innovations such as UN peacekeeping, special political missions; a strong framework of international law.

But during that period, we have also seen the emergence of challenges and threats that are increasingly complex and more numerous.

In this context, it is essential that the UN organ with primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security is up to task – that it is representative, transparent, effective and efficient; that it is capable of fully fulfilling its mandate in line with the spirit of the UN Charter.

Yet 10 years have passed since the World Summit Outcome called for early security council reform.

And fifty years have passed since the Security Council was last expanded to include additional non-permanent members.

Clearly, discussions on this subject are sensitive; and there are different positions among member states.

But sensitivity and differences should not become excuses for inaction.

A matter of this importance should not be kicked down the road any further.

In this regard, the General Assembly decided through GA decision 69/560, to immediately continue the Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform in the 70th session.

In October, therefore, I appointed Ambassador Lucas to Chair this process, and to act on my behalf.

And as I have said previously, I stand ready to support her however I can, during the weeks and months ahead, and I call upon all member states to do likewise.

Going forward, I feel it is important that we move beyond repeating what are now well known positions.

Instead, as Ambassador Lucas has suggested, we should seek to use this process to identify the areas of convergence between the positions and proposals of Member States.

The 31 July text and its annex can be useful basis for such discussions of substance.

Today, Excellencies, you are focusing on one of the five key issues of the Security Council reform: the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly.

This is a matter where we have in fact seen some progress over recent years and it is one that I have experienced first-hand these past five months.

This session, the level of joint activity by the Council and the Assembly has increased significantly due to the on-going Peacebuilding Architecture Review and the process for selecting the next UN Secretary General.

On 15 December, for example, the President of the Security Council and I circulated the joint letter soliciting candidates for the position of the next Secretary General.

Since then, we have also circulated to the membership the candidates presented thus far, and will continue to do so in the months ahead.

Further interaction took place in November, when the General Assembly considered the Security Council's annual report.

This is an important aspect of the transparency and accountability that the wider membership expects vis a vis the Security Council.

And while there have been improvements in the report in the recent years, there have also been calls from Member States to further improve its analytical quality.

In addition, since taking office, I have sought to promote effective cooperation, coordination and the exchange of information among the Presidents of the principal organs of the UN and the Secretary General.

I have held monthly meetings with the Presidents of the Security Council, and stayed in close contact with them on issues of common interest and joint activity.

I have also sought to keep the membership fully informed of this interaction including by circulating monthly memos of my contact with the President of the Security Council.

Excellencies, the key points concerning the relationship between the Security Council and the General Assembly are clearly highlighted in the text and its annex of 31 July, and discussions on this issue have been ongoing in these intergovernmental negotiations for many years now.

As you can see, some of these key points are either already being implemented or being discussed and dealt with in other formats such as the Ad Hoc Working Group on GA revitalization.

It is important that today's discussion takes this into account so that they can be as fruitful as possible.

Excellencies, to conclude, the task ahead of you is not simple.

But looking back at 2015, we should draw confidence from the ability that member states have shown to overcome challenges through diplomacy.

And we should remind ourselves that when we engage on issues in good faith and with as much flexibility as possible, progress is possible.

I therefore wish you all the very best in the meetings planned by the Chair over the coming months.

Thank you.