

5 February 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, on the follow-up  
and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we now move on to another piece of the 2030 Agenda jigsaw – the framework for follow-up and review.

And I welcome Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson and Under Secretary General Wu who have joined the panel for this meeting.

Last September, building on existing systems going back as far as Rio+20, Heads of State and government agreed to a framework to follow-up and review of SDG implementation.

They agreed that ideally member states would engage in frequent reviews of progress at the national, regional and global levels.

They agreed that those reviews should look at how we are progressing on all 17 SDGs and that they should adhere to a number of key principles such as inclusion, participation, capacity-building, transparency and so on.

They also agreed, however, that while the HLPF would be the center-piece at the global level, additional information and proposals were required in order to clarify exactly how it will work;

How it will conduct its reviews under the auspices of ECOSOC each year and provide political guidance every fourth year under the auspices of the GA;

And how the entire system of follow-up and review at the global level would all work efficiently, coherently together – from the FFD Forum to the ECOSOC functional commissions; from the work of second, third and other committees to that of other intergovernmental fora in Geneva, Nairobi and elsewhere.



Compared to the work you conducted last year – agreeing goals for our world for fifteen years – this is perhaps not that exciting.

And compared to the urgent need for action at the country level or indeed across the UN System in response to the new Goals, to some this may not seem so pressing.

But in my view, finalizing these arrangements is actually fundamental to successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Not because meetings in New York will suddenly reverse climate change or end poverty, but because they provide us with key opportunities to maintain political commitment over the next fifteen years.

After all, the commitments made last July and last September are not legally binding, they are voluntary.

Implementation cannot be enforced and there are no penalties for missing targets.

The HLPF therefore can help us to foster other drivers of implementation.

It must help generate buy-in at home, through political leadership, transparency, and both media and public awareness.

It can help generate momentum, through examples of early action, something I will seek to do through my High Level Thematic Debate on April 21st.

And it can help foster collaborative action and on a type of peer pressure – whereby different actors demonstrate the progress they are making and, and in doing so, encourage others to do likewise.

But to succeed, to fulfil its potential, we must give the HLPF the space and the tools it needs. This is not about deciding on what it will do but about clarifying how it will do it.

We must enable it to attract real decision makers – our political leaders and leaders from other sectors too.



And we must ensure that it adds real value – helping us to know whether and why we are on track globally or not; helping leaders to identify better strategies to overcome implementation challenges; or providing opportunities to mobilize additional support and partnerships.

In many respects, this is what the Secretary General's Critical Milestones report seeks to do.

Building on the inputs from member States and others, it appears to me to be a very solid piece of work.

It is both sensitive to the challenges in this area and sensible in the proposals that it makes – which is no small achievement given the complexity and scale of the issues covered.

And I am delighted that Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson and Under Secretary General Wu have joined us to provide an overview of the report's contents and the thinking behind them.

After we hear from our panelists, we will have time for interventions, questions and comments.

Today, I hope that we look at the options it proposes with an open frame of mind, with a view to seeing where action is most urgently needed to set us on the way to effective follow-up and review at the global level.

I am aware of course that some of you may need more time to digest the report, once it is released in all six official UN languages, but I do encourage you to make good use of this opportunity.

At the end of the meeting I will come back to the issue of how we might best take these matters forward.