

9 February 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the briefing for stakeholders on the PGA's High Level Thematic
Debates**

Good afternoon everyone.

I am very glad that so many of you could join us to discuss preparations for the three High Level Thematic Debates that I will hold this session.

Before beginning my tenure as President of the General Assembly for the 70th session, I had heard many great things about the process which delivered the Sustainable Development Goals.

I had heard about how global consultations informed those processes; how the negotiations themselves were webcast live; how civil society and others had access to the meetings; and how they were given dedicated time to relay their experiences and outline their priorities to member states.

And I committed in my acceptance speech to build on those excellent examples during my Presidency.

In processes like the World Summit on Information Society and in the preparations for the General Assembly Special Session on the world drugs problem, I believe that that standard of inclusion has been maintained.

And I am particularly keen to do likewise with the unique process we have ahead of us for selecting and appointing the next UN Secretary General.

I am also keen to ensure that the work ongoing regarding the engagement of indigenous peoples in the UN and the finalization of the 2030 Agenda follow-up framework, uphold the principles of openness, inclusion, and participation.

Today, however, I wish to speak about my own three thematic debates.

I will do all I can to make these debates as inclusive, participatory and above-all as effective as possible.

I will ensure participation in terms of preparatory processes and in the various segments of the meetings themselves.

But as many of you know, the real benefit of attending these events is not so much the ability to speak at them but the ability to organize, press and push around them.

In this sense I will be encouraging participants to engage directly and honestly with each other at various side-events around and during these events.

Overall, I am focussed on delivering events that add real value for those most responsible for peace, development and human rights in our world, with meaningful stakeholder engagement at its core.

If we succeed in making these events as interesting and engaging as possible, then I believe that we will be setting an excellent examples for future gatherings at the UN.

Given that we are celebrating the 70th anniversary of the UN, the three events will seek to take a snapshot of the current state of play on each of the pillars of the UN; highlighting what work lies ahead of those seeking to become the next UN Secretary General.

In its own way, my hope is that each of them will also support implementation of the SDGs.

I will now hand over to my Chef de Cabinet Mr Tomas Anker Christensen, who will provide greater details on the specific arrangements for each event.

There will also be an opportunity for questions thereafter.

Thank you.