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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the Special Thematic Event “Building Synergy and Coherence in
the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in the
context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda”**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is my pleasure to welcome you to this Special Thematic Event on “Building Synergy and Coherence in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda”.

I welcome State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh and Chair of the Development Cooperation of the OECD, Mr. Erik Solheim who will be delivering Keynote addresses, as well as the other speakers who will share their views today.

Last September, our leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development – a seminal, in fact, revolutionary universal agreement.

This agreement provides us with a framework through which to address many of the world’s greatest challenges.

And given its moral authority and public legitimacy, it has, I believe, the capacity to usher in a new era of global cooperation.

The 2030 Agenda was of course accompanied by other outstanding achievements in 2015.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda has provided us with a framework for change and action across six different means of implementation that can underpin the SDGs.

And the Paris Agreement has set an extraordinary target for the world on mitigation, adaptation and resource mobilization.

Today, we discuss how best to ensure that those agreements are implemented in a way that is coherent with the Istanbul Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries.

In some respects this is a significant challenge.

At the global level, in particular, parallel processes of follow-up and review could create significant additional reporting and administrative burdens on countries that are already stretched to the max.

On the other hand it is crucial that the IPOA and similar agreements are not somehow pushed to one side.

It is imperative, therefore, at the General Assembly and at the High Level Political Forum, for example, that we find a balance between integration and dedicated consideration of the situations facing Least Developed Countries.

But more importantly, that coherence must find its expression at the country level.

The most recent comprehensive stocktaking exercise of the Istanbul Programme of Action, for example, paints a mixed picture in terms of how LDCs are progressing developmentally.

While some countries have made considerable progress in some areas, others remain broadly stagnant.

Recurrent natural disasters, public health emergencies, conflicts and climate change pose serious threats to their development efforts.

If we are to achieve the SDGs, therefore, these countries must receive our focus and fullest support.

These countries need strong international support to build resilience against shocks and crises; and to advance the type of structural transformation of the economy that can enable them to achieve sustained economic growth.

That is why Agenda 2030 calls for a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development.

And that is why our commitment to prioritizing those furthest behind first must materialize in the funding and policy decisions of international partners, including the UN development system.

The mid-term review of the Istanbul Programme of Action in Antalya in May is therefore taking place at an important juncture.

It provides us with an opportunity to strengthen commitments to support LDCs so that they can graduate from the LDC category and collectively we move forward with the SDGs.

To make this happen, the voice of LDCs must be heard and it must be listened to.

I therefore invite you all to actively contribute to today's discussions – a summary of which will serve as an input to the mid-term review.

I thank you.