

12 February 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the plenary meeting of the General Assembly, to take action on  
draft resolution A/70/L.31/Rev.1, under agenda item 9 (Report of the  
Economic and Social Council), and to consider agenda items 16  
(Culture of peace) and 117 (The United Nations Global Counter-  
Terrorism Strategy): report of the Secretary-General (A/70/674) and  
document A/70/675**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, you are very welcome to this plenary debate of the General Assembly to consider the Secretary-General's Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

You will recall that the Secretary-General briefed Members informally on 15 January about the plan.

Today, we will take action on a short, procedural resolution welcoming the Secretary-General's initiative.

In doing so, we have delivered a clear signal that the General Assembly is gravely concerned by the issue of violent extremism.

I thank all Members for their cooperation and constructive engagement in the preparation of this resolution.

Today, sadly, violent extremism is on the rise across the world.

All too often, a number of your governments and your people have been confronted by waves of terrorist attacks, violence and intimidation.

The pain, fear and destruction caused by these acts presents real and difficult challenges for all member states.

As a phenomenon, violent extremism is not new.

In our age, the risk is that radicalized individuals gain access to – and then proceed to use – tools that can inflict mass killings and significant destruction.

Already, some extremists are skillfully exploiting the internet to spread, like never before, their message of hate and violence; messages that are so contrary to the commitment to peace that brings us together in this hall.

Confronting and preventing violent extremism is fundamental to protecting our societies and our people.

But to be truly effective, our approach to prevention must stay faithful to our common values and our common humanity.

And it must secure peace and security in a manner that respects human rights and the rule of law, and advances sustainable development.

I commend the Secretary General for his timely initiative and for preparing his Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism.

Collectively, we must tackle this issue with the urgency it so obviously requires.

Today's debate is an opportunity to advance the global debate on this complex issue and to discuss how better to use the tools and resources we have, to tackle the drivers of this phenomenon.

I look forward to hearing your contributions.

Thank you.