

8 March 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
On International Women's Day: "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for  
Gender Equality"**

Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, Under Secretary-General Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen.

Last year, the international community took a big step forward by placing the rights of women and girls and gender equality at the very heart of the 2030 Agenda.

The 17 goals and 169 targets outline very clearly what we need to do to reach Planet 50/50 by 2030.

The question for us on this International Women's Day is how we will do it.

To me, there are four ways that we can step it up.

One, we can empower women and girls.

In Denmark last year, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the moment when the rights of Danish women to vote and stand for election were enshrined in the constitution – a very big “step up” at that time.

But today, we must go much further – we must increase the participation of women not just in politics but across society, in our schools, our communities, our homes and our places of work.

Two, we can tackle gender stereotypes head-on.

Why should gender-based violence be accepted as the norm? Why should others control the bodies and the futures of women and girls? Why is it not ok for men to show fear or weakness; or to take on the role of primary care-giver?

Three, we can lead by example.

We can accept our own individual responsibility.

Here at the UN, we could step up by increasing gender parity in the UN system; in the ranks of the Missions to the UN; in the number of female Permanent Representatives or by appointing the first ever female UN Secretary-General – a glass ceiling for women for over 70 years now!

And four, we can work together.

We need to move beyond action from experts, governments or the UN in the traditional sectors.

We need to engage actors across all of society – civil society, academia, the media, the private sector, financial institutions and others who have a major impact on the lives of women and girls.

Ladies and gentlemen, for too long, we have talked about Gender Equality.

Planet 50/50 is within our sights. So let's get to it.

Thank you.