

21 March 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
on the occasion of the International Day of Nowruz**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is a great pleasure to join you to celebrate the International Day of Nowruz and I would like to thank the Permanent Missions who organized this event for extending this invitation to me.

Nowruz symbolizes welcoming and the celebration of Spring – after a few dark months and some days of cold, snow and rain here in New York, it is timely here as well.

It is a beautiful tradition celebrated for over 3000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions.

Included in the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list since 2009, Nowruz highlights the importance of living in peace and harmony not only with nature but also with each other.

It showcases the World's diversity and offers an opportunity to deepen the ties among peoples and cultures.

It helps to foster dialogue, mutual understanding and respect by reaching across borders, beliefs and languages.

It strengthens the ties between diverse peoples and places, reflecting centuries of interaction among civilizations.

Nowruz's message of peace and harmony can be traced back during three millennia .

This common cultural heritage of humanity strengthens our commitment to a peaceful and sustainable world – a commitment that is now very much at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

So I wish you all enjoyable celebrations today and I wish those of you, who see this as the beginning of the New Year, a very happy one for you and for all of us.

Thank you.