

20 April 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the Solemn sitting of the International Court of Justice**

*Statement made by H.E. Mr. Antonio Gumende, Permanent Representative of Mozambique in his capacity as Vice-President of the General Assembly on behalf of H.E. Mr Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly*

Thank you Mr. President.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the President of the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the UN General Assembly, His Excellency Mr Mogens Lykketoft.

Your Majesty, Mr Secretary General, Mr President and distinguished members of the Court, Madam President of the ICC, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I deeply regret that, due to the Special session of the General Assembly on the World Drug Problem, I am not able to be with you for today's celebration.

Allow me, however, to share with you this message of support and recognition from the UN General Assembly.

At the outset, allow me to thank His Majesty the King for the commitment and support that the Netherlands continues to provide to the Court.

Ladies and gentlemen, a little over six months ago, leaders of the world embraced the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – a moment of genuine hope that was crystallised only months later through the momentous climate agreement in Paris.

The message from these two agreements to people across the world is clear: world leaders are solidly committed to ending the moral outrage of global poverty and hunger; and to delivering shared prosperity alongside a flourishing planet.

Equally clear, however, is the fact that unless the rule of law and international law, whose norms play an ever increasing role in our global society, are at the heart of the implementation efforts, then we will be doomed to failure.

Because, as our General Assembly has solemnly declared, the commitment to an international order based upon international law, together with the principles of justice, is essential for peaceful co-existence and co-operation among States.

Indeed this intrinsic relationship has been present and recognized since the first discussions that would give rise to the United Nations, and it is recognized even further in the integral role that the Charter assigns to the Statute of the Court.

Today we can congratulate ourselves on 70 years of close collaboration between the General Assembly and the Court in the promotion of the ideals and aspirations of the United Nations.

Along every step of the way, we have worked together for a more peaceful and just world: since the first advisory opinion was requested, since the first election of distinguished jurists from across the world to the Court, since the first of many demonstrations of support from the Assembly for the Court and its role.

We can also congratulate ourselves on the fact that Member States and even whole regions have repeatedly shown their confidence in the Court.

And I am sure that more and more Member States will turn to this judicial organ, recognize its compulsory jurisdiction or submit their disputes to it, further strengthening the rule of law at the international level.

During the past seven decades, this Court has shown how much the title by which is popularly known is fully deserved: it is a *world court*, truly universal not only in its openness to all states, but also in terms of the enormous range of issues with which it deals: boundary disputes, diplomatic protection, genocide, use of force, and even the development of environmental law and human rights among others.

The function of the Court in clarifying international law through its advisory opinions has been fundamental for the United Nations and for the General Assembly in particular.

From the normative value of GA resolutions and their relation to the *opinio iuris* to the complementary functions with the Security Council in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Court has delineated the role of our Organization and the scope of the powers and functions of its principal organs.

In the end, the ideals and aspirations that we in the General Assembly reflect in our debates and resolutions have a great deal in common with the world of international law.

For they show us the world as it is, the world as it should be and the world that we must strive for it to become.

In this common endeavour, Mr. President, members of the Court, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations has the full trust and support of the General Assembly.

I wish you every success into the future in your important mission.

And I wish you all a very enjoyable anniversary.

Thank you.