

21 April 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the Opening of the High-level Thematic Debate on Achieving the  
Sustainable Development Goals: Lunch on Partnerships for SDG  
implementation**

Good afternoon everyone and welcome.

I am delighted to see that so many of you could join us for today's Debate and for this lunch, in particular.

We are, I believe, on the threshold of a global transformation.

A sustainable and just world is possible. We must make it inevitable.

The time has come for us to roll up our sleeves and get to work – to deliver on commitments made in 2015.

Over the next 2 hours, we will focus on a key tool for doing just that – collaboration and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Many of you will have seen, first-hand, how partnerships brought a surge of finance, technology, innovation, expertise to achieve the MDGs.

Others of you are steeped in the climate arena, partnering with each other and thousands of others outside these walls.

You have delivered truly inspiring initiatives in recent years.

M

Partnerships and initiatives on health, energy, agriculture, education and cities etc, provide us with many lessons.

They show us how we can work better together and reach farther, faster.

They demonstrate how actors across sectors and boundaries can unite around a common vision for economic and social advancement.

They help to raise standards, increase ambition levels and, most importantly, deliver some truly outstanding improvements in people's lives.

Effective partnerships can create coalitions of willing actors that can share and diffuse knowledge, costs and expertise.

And they can open new markets and prepare the ground for innovative and strategic developments.

The transformation demanded by the 2030 Agenda, requires all this at scale.

It requires partnerships that work together and respond to the integrated, indivisible and universal nature of the SDGs.

Partnerships that deliver catalytic change to address deeply rooted problems like poverty, inequality, injustice and environmental degradation.

Partnerships that insist on the highest possible standards of transparency, accountability, inclusivity, and governance.

Much of this, however, depends on the engagement of a diverse range of actors, which requires, amongst others, that we overcome challenges relating to trust and understanding between those actors.

Finally, it will require leaders and early movers.

Each of you – representing Member States, business, civil society, UN system, financial institutions, academia and other stakeholders – are leaders in your own fields.

You have the experience to make partnerships work and you have immense capacity to move the SDGs forward.

But, together, you can move them even further.

Our excellent moderator, former Al Jazeera news anchor Ms Ghida Fakhry, will guide our discussion over the next two hours.

She will help you to identify the essential elements of partnerships, as well as the actions that must be taken to create a new wave of truly ground-breaking SDG partnerships.

I look forward to frank discussion, fresh ideas and, hopefully, the seeds for future collaborative actions.

Thank you and Bon Appetit.