

22 April 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the closing of the UN General Assembly Special Session on the
World Drug Problem**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a few minutes, I will have the honour to close the 30th Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem.

Over the past three days and indeed in the months and years leading up to this session, I believe we have witnessed a truly historic process – a process of reflection culminating in a moment of genuine realization.

You, the member states, have worked hard to adopt an outcome document on the world drug problem that reflects where the world, as a whole, is at today.

At the same time, you have identified important issues and set your sights on even greater heights on our way to 2019 and beyond.

You, the stakeholders – members of civil society, academia, the scientific community, parliamentarians, women, the youth, children – have also contributed greatly to our debate.

With your experience and expertise, you have brought home to us the immense human cost of this problem and indeed, at times, of the approaches we take to address it.

As we move forward, I hope that efforts will be made – administrative and otherwise – to strengthen your engagement in this process.

Excellencies, over the past three days, together, member states and civil society alike, have delivered a clear message: that you care about the world drug problem.

Or more precisely, that you care about the people most affected by the this problem.

More than ever before, the global consensus recognizes that the solution to this problem lies in a more humane, public-health oriented, human rights compliant; evidence-based approach that addresses this issue in all its complexity.

In addition, member states have shown that they are willing to debate how best to address this problem; that they are willing to listen to different views, to different experiences.

It is my firm wish and my steadfast hope that this feeling of common and shared responsibility; this pledge to flexibility and openness, to consensus and commitment, permeates future discussions of the World Drug Problem.

Valuable as these discussions have been, however, right now, we need to do more.

People suffering from addiction; communities torn apart by drug-related crime; people who need controlled substances for medical purposes and others, need more.

They need a renewed commitment to action at the local, national and global levels.

They need a more comprehensive and humane approach to the world drug problem now and in preparation for 2019.

They need action for the health and wellbeing of humanity, as mentioned in our international conventions.

They need interventions that have proven to work and perhaps as importantly: they need honesty about those that have failed.

Excellencies, over the past few days, I have heard many stress that the 2030 Agenda cannot be achieved unless we achieve the world drug problem – and I could not agree more.

As you leave here, therefore, as we gear up to address this problem in the context of the SDGs, I encourage you to be mindful of the key principles behind the 2030 Agenda – the commitment to leave no one behind; to advance a more people-centred approach; to achieve a sustainable and just world.

To conclude, I wish to thank once again the co-chairs of the roundtables for their work and for the presentation of the salient points of the discussions.

I also wish to thank the UN agencies and the UN Secretariat both in Vienna and here in New York, for their constant support and assistance in preparing this Session.

And, finally, I thank all of you, member states, civil society and others stakeholders for your contribution to UNGASS 2016 and your continued commitment to address more effectively, more humanely, this complex world drug.

Thank you.