

2 June 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,  
President of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly,  
At the Graduation Ceremony of the United Nations International  
School**

Mr. Deputy Secretary-General, Secretary of State Kerry, Under-Secretary-General Nambiar, Assistant Secretary-General Adlerstein, Distinguished guests, Trustees, Teachers, Parents and of course the Class of 2016, good afternoon to you all.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the Board of Trustees and the Leadership of UN International School, for inviting me to be part of this important event.

This day will no doubt be a very memorable one for many of you – not only for the UNIS students graduating this year, but also for their friends and parents, the faculty and the United Nations family.

I congratulate each and every student graduating today, with a big thank you to all the teachers and a bravo to the parents.

This hall has of course been home to many other great moments.

Indeed many of you will recall that only last September, leaders from all 193 members of this Organization gathered here to unite around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In doing so they made a promise to their citizens and to each other to transform our world for the better – for people and planet alike.

At the center of that promise is the idea that every boy, every girl, every young person in our world will be ensured access to quality education.

The students with us today, in fact everyone here in this chamber, will recognize how fundamentally important education is – not just in terms of securing better jobs or better leaders; but because education is the front line for the promotion of the universal values that this Organization stands for.

Through quality education, we can ensure that the values of tolerance, fairness, equality, justice, sustainability and respect for diversity grow in strength from one-generation to the next.

And in a world of growing inequality, intolerance and populism; where too little is being done to respond to the global climate emergency; where violent extremism is spreading, and where millions are suffering either in conflict situation or while fleeing from those conflicts; such values were never more critical.

Excellencies, Mr. Deputy Secretary-General, the UN International School educates children to become an active and caring force in shaping a better world.

In this fast evolving world, it requires continued support from Member States and other entities so that it can further provide the highest standards of academic excellence, foster creativity, and promote values that are grounded in the United Nations Charter.

For this family of nations, this would be a truly rewarding endeavor.

Thank you.