

30 June 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the opening of the Adoption of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism
Strategy Review**

Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,
Welcome.

The tragic events in Istanbul this week have reminded us of the threats and dangers posed by terrorism in our world today.

Once again, those left behind are in mourning and I wish to take this opportunity to convey my sincere condolences to the people and government of Turkey for their painful loss.

The senseless killing of innocent civilians from terrorist acts has become all too frequent these past few years.

It demands a response from the international community that is both commensurate to the challenge we face and focussed on both the short and the long term.

We must – through much closer cooperation – redouble our efforts to combat terrorism and prevent violent extremism.

In this context, the consultations on the global counter-terrorism strategy have given us a unique opportunity to discuss how to make the UN more relevant, more credible, more legitimate and more capable in responding to terrorism.

During today and tomorrow, we will discuss the latest challenges that we must face as an international community in this area and how better to respond to these criminal and unjustifiable acts, regardless of their motivation, wherever, whenever and by whosoever committed.

Together in this hall, we have to discharge our mandate as the competent organ, with universal membership, to address the issue of international terrorism.

We celebrate this year the tenth anniversary of the Strategy.

Ten years ago we expressed our commitment to take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism in a decisive, unified, coordinated, inclusive and transparent manner.

We all agree that the acts, methods and practices of terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, are activities aimed at the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, at threatening territorial integrity and the security of States and peoples and at destabilizing legitimately constituted Governments.

In these last years, we have been alarmed by the acts of intolerance, and violent extremism conducive to terrorism, violence, including sectarian violence, and terrorism in various parts of the world, which claim innocent lives, cause destruction, displace people and divide communities.

To all the victims of the senseless violence we offer our solidarity and our support.

But in this year, I call on all of you to also offer to our peoples a commitment to concrete action to keep the Strategy relevant and contemporary in the light of emerging new threats and evolving trends in this area.

We can include a commitment not to let our differences prevent us from reaching a consensus on the importance of our actions to tackle the heinous acts and to provide the proper framework for our common action.

I wish to recognize the commitment and flexibility shown by all delegations during the negotiations of the review of the GCTS. I call on all of you to renew your efforts in this regard.

We cannot allow ourselves to send a message of disunity to the world when our peoples and our community of nations face such a grave challenge.

I wish also to thank the Secretary-General for his commitment and leadership on this topic and in particular for his initiative and plan of action on preventing violent extremism.

That plan has allowed member states to engage in a fundamental conversation on how to prevent those whose message of intolerance – religious, cultural, social – has had drastic consequences for many regions of the world and has challenged our shared values of peace, justice and human rights.

Finally, I wish to thank the co-facilitators, the Permanent Representatives of Iceland and Argentina and their legal experts.

Their commitment, efforts and leadership will allow us to agree to an outcome that sends a common message from the international community on this critical subject.

Doing so will enable the UN to continue to improve its response to new and evolving threats to international peace and security, to the 2030 Agenda, the pursuit of the rule of law and the realization of human rights for all.

Thank you.