

30 June 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the Tribute to the memory of His Excellency John W.
Ashe, President of the sixty-eight session of the General Assembly**

Mr Secretary General, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, it was with great sadness that I learned of the passing of His Excellency John W. Ashe, last Wednesday.

Mr Ashe was a friend and colleague of many in this hall today.

He was a leading Caribbean diplomat who was deeply involved in international affairs for over thirty-five years.

He was a faithful servant of his country and a member of the diplomatic service of Antigua and Barbuda since 1989.

His career saw him embark on a journey from the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 to Rio+20 Summit in 2012 and finally to the Summit to adopt the 2030 Agenda last September.

He was centrally involved in a range of multilateral processes – chairing the fifth committee, chairing the Group of 77 and China; and serving on the governing bodies of major UN funds and programmes.

He served as Permanent Representative to the UN for over 10 years.

His passion for progress on matters of poverty, inequality and environmental degradation was immense.

And his drive, during the 68th session, for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda, was critical.

Indeed, perhaps his finest achievement will not be felt for decades to come.

For it was under his stewardship that the ground-breaking proposal from the Open Working Group on SDGs was brought forward from the 68th to the 69th session and ultimately into the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

Once again, I wish to convey my sincere sympathies to the delegation and Government of Antigua and Barbuda, to Mr Ashe's many friends and former colleagues and of course, to Mr Ashe's wife and two children who last week lost a husband and a father, at the young age of 61.