

United Nations Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly, at the Visit of his Holiness Pope Francis

Your Holiness, Heads of State and Governments, Mr. Secretary General, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman.

It is my great honor to welcome you, Pope Francis, Bishop of Rome, to the General Assembly of the United Nations – as head of the Roman Catholic Church, and as a defender of the dignity of humanity and the life-support systems of our planet.

When you recalled previously how inseparable the ‘bond is between concern for nature, justice for the poor, commitment to society, and peace’, you spoke directly to the three pillars of the United Nations – and to the interdependency and interconnectedness between these three pillars.

That is the message at the heart of the new and very ambitious 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development . Here we confront the injustices of poverty, marginalization and discrimination. We recognize the need to reduce inequalities and to protect our common home by changing unsustainable patterns of consumption and production. And, we identify the overwhelming need to address the politics of division, corruption and irresponsibility that fuel conflict and hold back development.

As Your Holiness has stated, we are indeed, “united by the same concern”. In two months’ time, at the Climate Conference in Paris, that unity will be tested. We can, and we must, find the wisdom and courage to adopt an ambitious [legally binding] climate agreement to protect people and planet.

Similar urgency and unity is required to bring an end to the conflicts and violent extremism affecting many parts of our world today. To date, our collective response to these crisis, and to the plight of millions of displaced people and refugees has been, at best, inadequate, and, at worst, a failure of our humanity.

The need for this great hall to address these crisis with leadership and action, in the spirit of solidarity, dialogue and tolerance, cannot be overstated.

Therefore we have been looking forward so much to listening to Your Holiness’ address to the General Assembly of the United Nations.

I welcome you once again.