

22 January 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the Global Goals Dinner – World Economic Forum**

Ladies and Gentlemen, Honourable Prime Ministers, Secretary of State Kerry, good evening to you all.

“This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom”.

Thus begins the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I hope one day, in the not too distant future, that these words, this 21st Century Charter, will resonate as deeply and meaningfully as the opening words of the Charter of the United Nations, agreed just seventy years ago.

Because in their own unique way, the Global Goals for Sustainable Development are revolutionary.

Revolutionary in that they apply to everyone. Not just to poor countries. Not just to rich countries. And, not just to nation states.

Revolutionary because they respond to our complex world, to its inter-dependencies, inter-connectedness, fantastic opportunities and great disparities.

And revolutionary because they deliver a resounding message to the world: That We the Peoples will work together over the next fifteen years:

- To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- To give everyone a fair shot at life including through gender equality.
- To achieve greater prosperity for all, spread more evenly across society and across the world.
- To attain that prosperity alongside a flourishing environment and a stable climate.
- And finally, to deliver, as American poet James Oppenheim once said, *“not just bread, but roses too”* – through peace, justice, human rights and an end to discrimination.

Clearly, this new Agenda is supremely ambitious.

And achieving it will not be easy.

But with leadership and collaborative action, on a scale perhaps not yet seen, success is possible.

Right now, we must focus on getting off to the best start possible.

In my view, we have about one year to make these goals stick, to make them an intrinsic part of the fabric of global development .

That is why I am delighted to speak to you all this evening.

For I believe that our world needs a signal from everyone in this room and at this forum; a signal that those with power and privilege will live up to their responsibilities; that you are serious about achieving these Global goals; and that everyone else should be too.

In April, I will hold a high level meeting in New York where I want to highlight examples of words on a page are leading to actions on the ground.

I want leaders like Ms Solberg or Mr Kerry, for example, to say: ‘My government has reviewed the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement, and overall, this is what we plan to do’ – not just in terms of international assistance or foreign policy, but domestically too.

I want leaders like, Dr Rui Maria de Araujo, to say, ‘Here’s how Timor Leste intends to meet these goals. Who wants to partner with us to make this happen?’

I’d like Mr Polman or Mr Vestberg, for example, to show how Unilever or Ericsson plans, over time, to bring their own business practices into line with these Goals, on issues such as taxation, environment etc.

Through examples like these, from actors like these, we can ensure that these voluntary Goals have their own team of committed supporters; and that they gain traction where it matters most:

- In the minds of politicians and the laws, policies and budgets of governments;
- In board rooms and core business practices of all companies, including the global finance industry;
- In the policies and operations of international organizations like the United Nations, the World Bank and the G20;

- In the research strategies of academic institutions and the imagination of the next Thomas Edison or Steve Jobs;
- And perhaps most importantly of all, in the broader public conscience, the demands of civil society, the expectations of our youth and those who hold us to account.

Ladies and gentlemen, 2015 brought about some major breakthroughs in multilateralism, but these will have been for nothing, if they do not lead to real improvements in people's lives.

As Dr Martin Luther King Jr once said:

“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable. Even a superficial look at history reveals that no social advance rolls in on the wheels inevitability. Every step towards the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.... This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.”

I therefore look forward to working with all of you over the coming months to take such vigorous and positive actions.

And, in doing-so, to pave the way to successful implementation of these great and revolutionary Global goals.

Thank you.