

24 February 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the opening of UNDP @ 50**

Heads of State and Government, Honourable Ministers, Under-Secretary General Helen Clark, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour to welcome you to the General Assembly hall to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the UN Development Programme.

The ‘advancement of social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom’ has been a core objective of the United Nations since it was founded some 70 years ago.

And it is through UNDP, the UN programme established to address global poverty and exclusion, that member states have most explicitly sought to fulfil that objective.

During its 50 year history, UNDP, with the consistent support of development partners, has worked directly with developing countries across the world to save millions of people from lives of poverty and hunger.

It is an organization that has grown with the United Nations; that has a geographical footprint that corresponds to our multi-polar world and a mandate that reflects the complexity of the global challenges we face today.

As we begin fifteen years of concerted action to realize the Sustainable Development Goals, the task ahead of us is daunting.

But success is possible, if all of us play our part.

Given its mandate; its function as resident coordinator at country level; its presence in over 170 of the world poorest and most vulnerable countries; and its role as chair of the UN Development Group, a dynamic UNDP will be and must be at the very heart of a dynamic response from the UN development system.

Together, you must deliver as one; advocate loudly for SDG action; work hand in hand with member States and other partners; and promote accountability for last year's commitment.

Ladies and gentlemen, as we celebrate the 50th birthday of UNDP, let us send a special message of gratitude to all those who have worked and who continue to work so diligently in pursuit of the noble objectives of this Organization.

And let us vow to work together over the next fifteen years to move from noble objectives to outstanding achievements for our people and our planet.

Thank you.