

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

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**MESSAGE TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE NETWORK OF SCHOOLS
OF PUBLIC POLICY, AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION (NASPAA)
Brooklyn, New York, 15 October 2015**

Delivered by Mr. Robert Orr, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Climate Change

It is a pleasure to greet this year's conference of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration.

As someone with a master's degree in public administration from one of your members -- the Kennedy School of Government -- I have tremendous appreciation for the work you do to promote the practice and the spirit of public service.

We at the United Nations recognize your schools as vital training grounds for future leaders, public servants and public service professionals. The United Nations system has benefitted greatly from your efforts. Hundreds of our staff members have had post-graduate training in schools of public policy, affairs and administration. Today they are often found at the frontlines of UN missions, working with peacekeepers, coordinating emergency relief, promoting human rights, providing technical assistance, fighting climate change and advancing sustainable development.

At a time of increasingly complex and connected global challenges, the United Nations needs more such graduates to help serve the peoples of the world. That is always the case, but this year it is especially so. The year 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the Organization -- a moment to reflect on our achievements and setbacks, and strengthen our efforts. This year has also witnessed the landmark adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development -- a plan to guide us toward an end to poverty, shared prosperity and peaceful societies on a healthy planet. Implementing this transformative agenda will be a mission for all of us.

Achieving the SDGs calls for capable public administration. As we learned over the past 15 years during the remarkable global mobilization behind the Millennium Development Goals, where there is inadequate public administration, progress has been stunted. That is why Sustainable Development Goal 16 and its 10 targets place such great importance on effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. We must invest in human resources; support the acquisition of knowledge and skills; promote innovation and elevate standards of professionalism, integrity and ethics. Your schools have a key role to play.

Just as we ask for your heightened engagement, so are we calling on Governments to rethink the way they do business. Governments that do not deliver services with accountability, efficiency, equity and inclusion risk planting the seeds of exclusion, alienation and instability. That means Governments must change traditional sector-based approaches, get rid of silos and reform the administrative structures that reflect these mindsets but which are ill-equipped to deal with the cross-cutting challenges of sustainable development.

A transformational agenda requires transformational leadership. We need people who can uphold the highest standards of integrity, who do not shrink in the face of hardship, and who not

only respect diversity but flourish in it. We need people can think not only globally, but differently - who can think horizontally, vertically and outside the box – all at once. We also need more women at all levels of the United Nations; we have been calling for Planet 50-50 by 2030 – and we must lead by example.

The United Nations wants to deepen our ties with your network and with institutions of higher learning across the world. For too long, the academic community was woefully under-represented in UN processes and discussions. Over the past five years, the United Nations Academic Impact has sought to change that by creating a vibrant network of students, scientists, think tanks and institutions such as yours. We want to do more to align the work of colleges and universities with the goals and values of the UN, and we invite NASPAA to join the Academic Impact as a partner organization.

This is a time of test, turmoil and transition for the international community, as armed conflicts rage, extremism spreads, inequality grows, the impacts of climate change gather force and the number of refugees and displaced persons reaches levels not seen since the Second World War. But this is also an era of great opportunity. We have an inspiring new agenda to guide us, and better tools, technology, knowledge and wisdom than ever before. We look forward to working with you to promote education in global citizenship, to make the SDGs a reality and to promote a safer and more sustainable world for all.

Please accept my best wishes for a successful conference.
