

**United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least
Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small
Island Developing States**

(UN-OHRLLS)

**Report of the 15th Annual Ministerial Meeting of
Landlocked Developing Countries**

**Held on 22 September 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in
New**

Summary

On 22 September 2016, the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) held their 15th Annual Meeting in New York in the sidelines of the 71st session of the General Assembly³ high-level general debate from 10:00am to 1:00 pm in conference room 5 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. H.E. Mr. Munkh-Orgil Tsend, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia chaired the first hour of the Ministerial Meeting in his capacity as the Vice Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries. Thereafter, H.E. Mr. Damcho Dorji, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bhutan chaired the remaining period of the Meeting in his capacity as bureau member.

~~7KH 0HHWLQJ ZDV FHQWHUHG RQ WKH~~³*Coherence in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Vienna Programme of Action*". It was acknowledged in the Meeting that the recognition of LLDCs and the awareness of their special needs and challenges have increased globally as evidenced by the increased number of references to the LLDCs in recent international development frameworks including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Ministers and representatives of LLDCs shared their experience on the achievements made in the implementation of the six priority areas of the VPoA, namely: (1) Fundamental Transit Policy Issues; (2) Infrastructure Development and Maintenance; (3) International Trade and Trade Facilitation; (4) Regional Integration and Cooperation; (5) Structural Economic Transformation; and (6) Means of Implementation. They stressed that despite the impressive progress made by the LLDCs as a Group, geographical constraints and inadequate infrastructure continued

Agenda and other development processes including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the outcome document of UNCTAD 14 and others. At the end of the meeting, Ministers of LLDCs adopted a Ministerial Communiqué, which called for all stakeholders to work together to effectively implement the VPoA.

A. Introduction

1. The Government of the Republic of Zambia and Chair of the LLDC Group in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High-Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-

and Social Affairs, commended LLDC Governments for their energetic engagements during the negotiations on the SDGs. He underlined that the theme of the meeting was very timely and that fostering coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the VPoA was a priority for the High-level Political Forum.

13. Mr. Wu Hongbo also called for aligning the 2030 Agenda and the VPoA with other development frameworks including: Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Outcome Document of the UNCTAD XIV, and the Geneva Declaration adopted by the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs.
14. He concluded his remarks by assuring the meeting that DESA has made and would continue to make renewed efforts in collaboration with OHRLLS to provide unrelenting support to Member States in the coherent implementation of the SDGs, to harness synergies of all aforementioned agendas, and to tailor VXSSRUWWRHDFKFRXQWUΨVSHFLILFFLUFXPVWDQFHV
15. In her statement, **Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of UNDP**, highlighted four strategic actions needed to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda at the country level: (1) supporting the mainstreaming of the VPoA into national agendas and accelerating the integration of the SDGs into national plans, strategies and budgets; (2) greater international support for LLDCs; (3) harmonizing reporting systems for the two agendas; and (4) continued strong national leadership for the implementation of SDGs and the VPoA including dedicated support from national and international partners for sufficient resources to meet the special needs of LLDCs.
16. Ms. Helen Clark stressed that supporting LLDCs on the implementation of the two agendas was a high priority for UNDP. She highlighted the achievements

22. In his statement, **H.E. Mr. Sirodjidin Aslov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the**

Group to continue close interaction and advance common interests that are included in the VPoA and SDGs, and to especially support their initiative of the Second World Nomad Games.

26. **H.E. Monsieur Stýphane Sanou, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso**, noted that the VPoA was an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, which required a coherent and integrated implementation. He stressed the importance of financing, capacity-building and technological support needed to achieve the objectives of the two programmes. He noted that major programs in the field of transportation were underway in Burkina Faso to reduce the geographic disadvantage via the Transport Sector Program (Programme sectorial des transports), and the sub-regional and regional initiatives. The activities led to an increase of more than 50% of paved road network, rehabilitation and maintenance.

towards infrastructure development, particularly roads and railways linking the country with the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks; accession to the WTO in early 2013, which led to the deepening of economic integration into the regional and global economies and resulted in the substantial increase in trade and services; and participation in the ASEAN Economic Community and free trade areas. He underlined, however, that despite the progress that has been achieved; his country still faced challenges and needs more coherent and comprehensive cooperation with neighboring countries and development partners in addressing the special development needs of the country.

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increase export competitiveness. He also encouraged all delegations to actively participate in the sustainable transpo

by Zambia to address the six priorities of VPoA. He noted that Zambia in conjunction with other LLDCs and transit countries in the sub-region had developed supportive institutional frameworks, such as transport and trade facilitation bodies or coordination committees, road funds and border facilities. Further, Zambia had engaged neighboring Countries and has signed simplified trade agreements and Bilateral Transport Agreements with countries such as Angola, Botswana, Congo Democratic Republic, Namibia and Tanzania respectively in an effort to harmonize trade and transport policies. Zambia has prioritized infrastructure development cutting across all sectors and aims to transform itself into a hub in the areas of Information Communication Technology, Power Generation and Distribution, Tourism and transport Facilitation, among others. Zambia is undertaking joint projects such as the Kasungula Bridge with Botswana. He indicated that Zambia is focusing on value addition to mineral processing and agricultural primary products as well as promoting tourism and crop diversification as these have the greatest potential to contribute to rapid diversification of the economy. He finally called for the establishment of special windows and facilities such as a dedicated fund for LLDCs to complement implementation of the programmes and activities of member states.

42. **H.E. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations**, emphasized that the VPoA should be implemented effectively in full synergy and perfect coherence with the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai expressed appreciation to IHSDO¶ LPPHGLDWH WUDQVLW QHLJKERXUV ,QGLD &KLQD DQG %DQJODGHVK II understanding, goodwill and support throughout. He stressed that freedom of transit should not be constrained under any circumstances or pretext to disrupt the flow of goods and services which must be fully and unconditionally adhered to by all transit countries. He also highlighted the importance of development and maintenance of transport infrastructure linking the LLDCs with their transit countries and the necessity of an enhanced level of foreign investment for infrastructure development.

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Communique. He noted that tKH&RPPXQLTXHUHDILUPVWKH/'&URXS

G. Ministerial Communiqué

We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), have met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on 22nd September 2016, on the occasion of the 71st session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, **DQG KDYH KHOG RXU GHOLEHUDWLRQV XQGHU WKH WKHPIH** *in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Vienna Programme of Action”*,

Recognizing that the lack of territorial access to the sea, aggravated by remoteness from world markets and high transit costs and risks, impose serious constraints on export earnings, private capital inflow and domestic resource mobilization of LLDCs and therefore adversely affects their overall sustainable development,

Recalling the Almaty Declaration and the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the special needs of the landlocked developing countries within a new global framework for transit cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries, adopted in August 2003,

Recalling the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the Decade 2014-2024, adopted in November 2014 (A/RES/69/137), which provides a comprehensive plan of

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Recalling further the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of LLDCs at the margins of the 10th Ministerial Conference of the WTO held in Nairobi, Kenya on 16 December 2015,

Welcoming the declaration adopted at the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs held in June 2016 in Geneva under the theme - Harnessing the trade potential of the LLDCs to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Recalling the outcome documents of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIV), held on Nairobi, Kenya, from 17 to 22 July 2016, and the Ministerial Communiqué of the Landlocked Developing Countries adopted on 16 July 2016 prior to that session,

Recalling also the Call for Action adopted at the High Level Symposium on SDG 6 and Targets: Ensuring that No One is Left Behind in Access to Water and Sanitation, held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, from 9 to 11 August 2016,

Welcoming also the Ministerial Declaration of the 2016 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social &RXQFLORQWKHWKHPH?QVXULQJWKDQQRRQHLVOHIWEHKLQG'

Recalling Resolutions 700 (XXXVI) and 711 (XXXVI) adopted at the Thirty-Sixth Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, resolution 71/3 adopted by the seventy-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and resolution 934(XLVIII) adopted by the Eighth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic

integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development ± economic, social and environmental. It is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity that also seeks to strengthen universal peace in

DC. We stress that the Forum should address the infrastructure needs of the landlocked developing countries in a focused manner;

16. *We stress* that cooperation on fundamental transit policies, laws and

29. *We welcome* the Paris Agreement as a means to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, which is one of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. We look forward to its prompt entry into force and ambitious action by all, as well as the mobilization of resources to assist its implementation;
30. *We request* strengthening a regional integration framework; transit countries

35. *We appreciate*

Action into their programme of work, to support the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action within their existing mandates;

42. *We stress* that in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should continue to ensure coordinated follow-up to and effective monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, and to undertake advocacy efforts at the national, regional and global levels. We also stress that the Office, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, should continue to work on developing relevant indicators for measuring the progress on implementing the Programme of Action in landlocked developing countries, within their existing mandates;
43. *We invite* partner countries and the international financial and development institutions to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund established by the Secretary-General to support the activities related to the follow-up to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;
44. *We call on and encourage* all LLDCs that have not yet done so to ratify the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, in order to bring it into the full operation for the benefits of all LLDCs members, which will contribute to strengthening our capacity to undertake research and analysis and to negotiating for and benefit from bilateral and multilateral trade and transit agreements;
45. *We welcome* the High-Level Meeting on Economic Diversification implemented by the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries from 1 January 2017 that will provide important evidence-based policy recommendations to assist the LLDCs on how to build their productive capacities, diversify their economies and undergo structural transformation;
46. *We welcome* the High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Energy for all in LLDCs through Innovative Energy Services in Austria, from 24 to 25 October 2016, and further reaffirm the importance of universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services for all;
47. *We welcome* the High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of Landlocked Developing Countries that will be held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, from 13 to 14 October 2016 and the first Global Sustainable Transport Conference that will be held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, from 26 to 27 November 2016. The outcomes of these meetings will feed into the process of defining new strategies, cooperation initiatives and policy recommendations on trade and transport issues in line with the Agenda 2030;
48. *We reaffirm* our strong commitment to the full implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs that is an integral part of the Agenda 2030.

Furthermore, we call for a revitalized, renewed and strengthened global partnership between landlocked developing countries and the transit countries, their development partners and other stakeholders;

49. *We welcome* the establishment of the Group of Friends of the LLDCs and appreciate the efforts undertaken by the Group of Friends in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs, and encourage their continued engagement to assist the process of addressing the special challenges and needs of the LLDCs;
50. *We appreciate* the important role played by the Office of the High

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10. Ethiopia

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11. Kazakhstan

H.E. Mr. Yerzhan Ashikbayev, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of Kazakhstan
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15. Malawi

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