

THE COMMITMENT

PARTNERSHIP AGAINST POVERTY: *The Road to Turkey 2011*



INSIDE

- Overview: UN Conference to Assess Decade of Development Progress in Least Developed Countries...2
- Message from USG Cheick Sidi Diarra...3
- Caribbean Small Island Developing States Advocate Stronger Development Programmes...3
- African LDCs Still Vulnerable to Violence and Poverty...4
- United Nations Launches Website for LDC IV Conference...4
- Preparing for the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries...5
- Upcoming Conference on Least Developed Countries will Focus on the Constraints of Vulnerable Countries...6
- Resource Mobilization for Least Developed Countries...7
- Upcoming Events...7
- Newsworthy...8



United Nations

UN OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

OVERVIEW

UN Conference to Assess Decade of Development Progress in Least Developed Countries

The world's 49 least developed countries are assessing the impact of development initiatives in their states over the last decade, in preparation for the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC IV).

The findings of these country-level assessments will feed into the agenda of LDC IV, which is scheduled to take place in Istanbul, Turkey, early next year. The goal of the conference is to measure progress in implementing the 10-year Brussels "Programme of Action" (adopted in 2001) and to identify and adopt new strategies for filling critical gaps on the road to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Least developed countries belong to a UN category of states that face severe human development challenges, such as extreme poverty, food insecurity and economic and environmental vulnerabilities. The Brussels Programme, adopted during the Third Conference on Least Developed Countries, is a comprehensive development strategy aimed at reducing poverty, improving governance, building capacity, and mobilizing financial resources, among many other efforts.

While some economic and social progress have been made in these countries, new challenges threaten to reverse that progress and deepen social disparities between rural and urban areas. Absent a plan to mitigate emerging threats such as climate change, the energy crisis and the global economic downturn, least developed countries face risk of further poverty and distress.

With the conclusion of the Brussels

Programme this year, the UN General Assembly decided to convene the high-level LDC IV (Resolution 63/227) to assess the Programme's effectiveness to date and determine new policies needed to tackle these new global challenges. The event encourages conference stakeholders to share best practices and lessons learned from the last 10 years, reaffirm the global commitment to supporting LDCs and mobilize international support for least developed countries.

Preparations for the conference are already under way at the national and regional levels. Following broad-based, participatory assessments at the country level, two regional meetings will take place with the participation of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Social and Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific. Toward the end of the year, an intergovernmental preparatory committee will negotiate a draft outcome document reflecting country- and regional-level findings.

The conference will open with an inaugural ceremony followed by general debate and a review of the draft with a goal of achieving consensus among key stakeholders. The conference coordinators underscore the importance of transparency in the preparatory process as well as broad participation throughout LDC IV. The process will engage the input of UN agencies, international organizations, private sector, civil society and other stakeholders. Multiple tracks during the conference will also allow for substantive discussions on various topics.

The sponsor and coordinator for LDC IV is

the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS). UN-OHRLS was created in 2002 to help implement the Brussels Programme of Action. ■

THIS ISSUE

This quarterly issue of *The Commitment* offers a snapshot into the flurry of preparatory meetings and initiatives that have commenced around the globe, in anticipation for the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) next year.

The goal of the LDC IV Conference is to assess the progress of implementing a 10-year development strategy known as the Brussels Programme of Action, which aims to improve economic and social conditions in the world's 49 most impoverished countries. A parallel objective of the conference will be to identify new domestic and international policies for continued sustainable development between 2011 and 2021.

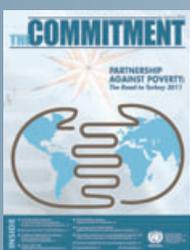
In early 2011, a variety of preparatory meetings will take place at the country, regional and international levels. This issue highlights initial report findings from a number of regional review conferences that have already taken place, including the following two events:

- The African Regional Review Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (March 2010), to assess development progress in African LDCs (plus Haiti)
- The Asia-Pacific Regional Review Meeting in Dhaka, Bangladesh (January 2010), to assess development progress in Asian-Pacific LDCs (plus Yemen)

The conclusions and recommendations from the "outcome" statements of these meetings will ultimately feed into the overall debate at the conference.

This issue also features an article on the visit of UN Under Secretary General Cheick Sidi Diarra to the Turkish government, which will play host to the five-day event.

Another article in this edition details the launch of a new website dedicated to LDC IV events and background information, as well as an interview with Nepalese Ambassador to the UN Gyan Chandra Acharya.



The logo of the Fourth United Nations Conference (LDC IV) scheduled to take place in Istanbul, Turkey, early next year. The goal of the conference is to measure progress in implementing the 10-year Brussels Programme of Action.

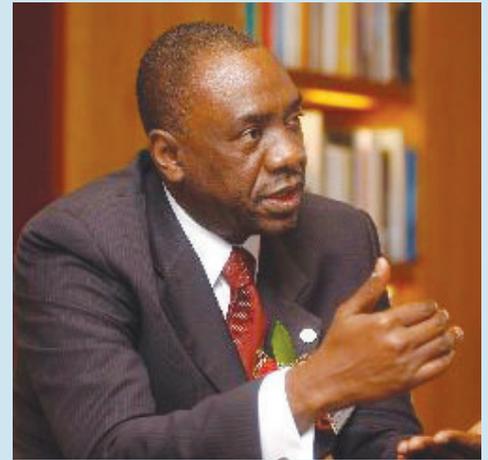
Message from USG Cheick Sidi Diarra

With just over 12 months to go before the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, I must say that I am pleased with the progress that has been made so far, and am happy to report that preparations are well underway and moving along smoothly. I should remark that on a recent trip to the host country, I was heartened by the overwhelming political support for the Conference. I came away from many of the discussions I had in Turkey feeling comfortable that the country has the necessary commitment, capacity and drive to ensure that a successful and meaningful meeting takes place in 2011. The next step on our journey towards Turkey 2011 includes several planning missions to Istanbul, during which several experts from various departments throughout the United Nations

system will attempt to marry the needs of the Conference with the reality on the ground. This is indeed a challenge, but I have no doubt that the UN team will deliver.

Even though LDC IV is consuming much of our time at UN-OHRLS, we still remain actively involved with our other constituencies, namely the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Under the formidable supervision of my Director, Ms. Lakshmi Puri, the SIDS team is formulating a series of advocacy platforms which will serve to highlight the challenges facing this group of vulnerable countries. After consultation, the team has developed core messages which are currently being refined in order to produce concrete results.

Also, I would like to draw your attention to the recent publication produced by my



USG Cheick Sidi Diarra

Office focusing on the impact of the financial crisis on the landlocked developing countries. The research is thorough and the outcome quite startling. Needless to say, much needs to be done to avert the fallout of LDCs from the economic turmoil.

Finally, I would like to invite you to log onto our recently launched LDC IV website, which provides an overview of the Conference and how you can participate. ■

Caribbean Small Island Developing States Advocate Stronger Development Programmes

By Allyn Gaestel

The Caribbean Small Island Developing States are vulnerable to climate change and food insecurity, but with a strong platform they can unite to improve the livelihoods of their citizens.

The Caribbean states met in Grenada

in March to review the five-year implementation of the Mauritius Programme of Action Strategy for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The Mauritius Strategy highlights the unique development needs of

SIDS and lays out a plan for prioritizing development actions. The meeting examined how Caribbean states have employed the strategy to direct development and how efforts can be refocused to be even more effective.

Lakshmi Puri, the director of the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and SIDS (UN-OHRLS), attended the conference and spoke to MediaGlobal about the suggestions she presented to the island states.

Island states are experiencing climate change more rapidly and visibly than other nations, Puri told MediaGlobal. Among the numerous unique challenges these states face is their vulnerability due to their size. Many also are dependent on foreign aid and markets for their financial growth, which makes them vulnerable to fluctuations in the



The Caribbean states met in Grenada in March to review the five-year implementation of the Mauritius Programme of Action Strategy for the sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Lakshmi Puri, the director of the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and SIDS (UN-OHRLS) is in the front row, second from right.

African LDCs Still Vulnerable to Violence and Poverty



Africa's Least Developed Countries remain highly vulnerable to violent conflict and extreme poverty, in spite of notable economic and governance progress over the last decade, according to a recent development review in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The African Regional Review Meeting was convened on March 8-9, 2010, to prepare for the Fourth UN Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC IV) in Istanbul, Turkey, early next year. The two-day review sought to assess the progress of the Brussels "Programme of Action" in the most impoverished African countries (plus Haiti) and to propose policies for advancing development goals over the next decade. The event produced an "outcome" report whose findings will feed into the broad-based, participatory debate at LDC IV.

African LDCs have seen important development gains over the last decade, including improvements in economic growth, democratic governance, gender equality and primary education, the report states. But these advances have failed to make serious headway in reducing overall levels of poverty. Perhaps most troubling is that these gains are increasingly becoming eroded by acute food and energy shortages and emerging challenges such as climate change and the global economic crisis, the report states. Food insecurity has grown more severe; flooding and other natural

disasters caused by climate change have also imposed immense strains on these countries.

To tackle these challenges, participants of the review meeting underscored the need to strengthen productive capacities particularly in the agricultural sector. A lack of focus on the agricultural sector in national public policies has proven problematic, as the bulk of the populations live in rural areas. Export-led strategies have also led to natural resource exploitation, rather than diversification, which makes countries more vulnerable to external shocks.

The report also stresses the need to improve existing infrastructure – through technology upgrades and improved governance – as a means for enhancing the ability to integrate these countries into the global economy.

Mobilizing financial resources remains another challenge for many African countries, including the difficulty of generating domestic revenue and heavy reliance on official development assistance, remittances, debt relief and foreign direct investment and other external sources.

Finally, violent conflict continues to hamper the potential for African LDCs to sustain development progress. Peace and security are prerequisites for economic and social improvements. Continued efforts are needed to provide security, promote conflict mediation and build the economic and social capacity of citizens in these countries.

One week prior to the Regional Review, Addis Ababa also hosted the Civil Society Assembly for Assessing Developing Challenges in African LDCs. With 34 representatives from African civil society and the United Nations, the meeting sought to strengthen alliances between civil society organizations and the governments of Least Developed Countries and to enhance the contribution and participation of African civil society organizations (CSO) in the LDC IV conference and beyond.

The event focused on the impact of the financial crisis on African LDCs, the status of the Brussels Programme and Millennium Development Goals on African LDCs, and the food crisis, livelihoods and the impact of climate change on these countries.

While CSOs have helped to develop, implement and monitor policies in African LDCs, they have had a more limited role in mobilizing financial resources, as civil societies have limited contact with financial institutions such as the African Development Bank, IMF and World Bank, the report states.

Both events in Addis Ababa were co-organized by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), and the Regional Bureau for Africa of the UN Development Programme. ■

United Nations Launches Website for LDC IV Conference

The United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS) has launched a new website in support of a major conference next year dedicated to the world's most impoverished countries.

Scheduled for early 2011 in Istanbul,

Turkey, the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC IV) seeks to assess the progress of implementing key development efforts over the last decade and to identify a strategy for tackling emerging development challenges in the next decade, such as climate change and the global economic downturn.

The main purpose of the new website is to provide timely information and useful resources about the five-day conference, including the goals of LDC IV, a calendar of upcoming events, and details on various preparatory activities already underway at the country level. Conference documents can also be found on the website, such as relevant UN

Preparing for the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries

To garner support for the upcoming Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC IV), a top United Nations official paid a high-level visit to the Turkish government, who will host the conference early next year.

Cheick Sidi Diarra, the UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), visited Istanbul, Turkey in April 2010, with a mission that was twofold: to extend appreciation to the Government of Turkey for the offer to host the Conference; and to impress upon the Turkish authorities the significance of the event not only for least developed countries, but for the UN system as a whole. LDC IV will be the first such high-level conference after the 2008 global financial crisis, and its outcome is expected to contribute to shaping the development agenda of LDCs in the coming decade.

Designated as the focal point for the proceedings, the role of UN-OHRLS is to ensure effective, efficient and timely preparations for the Conference and to further mobilize and coordinate the active involvement of the organizations of the United Nations system.

With just over a year to go before the five-day conference takes place, Diarra's visit was part of a wide range of preparations under way for this major event. Scheduled to take place in the first half of 2011, the international event is expected to draw between 6,000 and 8,000 participants, including Members States, private sector, civil

society and other development players.

Whilst in Ankara, which formed the first part of the mission, the Under Secretary General met with key decision makers within the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mr. Diarra highlighted during his discussions the need for Turkish authorities to muster political support for the Conference through the nation's position in various international organizations. He underscored that as an active member of today's globalised world, Turkey is well-placed to use its transatlantic ties to raise the profile of the conference and encourage high-level political support. Also whilst in the administrative capital, contacts were established with the Environmental Ministry, the Commission for Science and Technology, the Ministry of Trade, parliamentarians and business organizations.

"In Ankara, there was definitely an overwhelming sense of support and encouragement. There is both broad political commitment to the process and its outcome, but there was also an awareness of the need for concrete deliverables" Mr. Diarra told MediaGlobal. The High Representative added that a key objective of his visit was also to explain to the relevant stakeholders the importance of translating the political support into tangible benefits for LDCs in medium and long-term. "It is fundamental that we appreciate that decisions from LDC IV will have to be sustainable" he noted.

In Istanbul, the USG met with both the Governor of Istanbul Mr. Muammer Guler and the Deputy Mayor of the city Mr. Kadir



USG Diarra met with Deputy Mayor of Istanbul Mr. Kadir Topbas during his trip to Turkey in April.

Topbas, both of whom assured him of their commitment to assist the United Nations in every possible way to ensure a successful staging of the Conference. Both high-level officials stressed that Turkey has in the past undertaken two significant meetings in Istanbul namely the World Water Forum in 2009 which some 30,000 participants attended. As well as, the World Bank/IMF Annual meeting in October 2009 where more than 10,000 participants were accommodated.

"After my discussions with both the Governor and the Deputy Mayor, I am indeed confident that Turkey has the necessary infrastructure, expertise and capacity to carry out LDC IV Conference." Diarra said. ■

resolutions and outcomes of recent preparatory meetings.

In addition to the event itself, the site serves as an online resource for understanding what Least Developed Countries are and for outlining the key development challenges faced by the 49 countries that belong to this group.

The website launch advances the

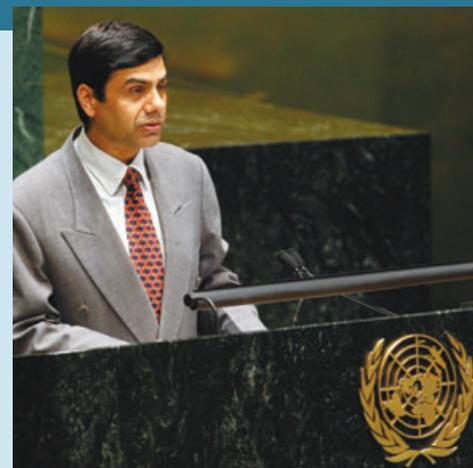
conference goals of promoting transparency in the preparatory process and encouraging inclusive dialogue among diverse stakeholders, including Member States, various UN agencies, international organizations, civil society, academia and the private sector. The site has been a collaborative effort between the Web Services Section of the



UN Department of Public Information and UN-OHRLS, the conference coordinator. A new Facebook page for the conference also provides updates about the latest conference developments and events. ■

Upcoming Conference on Least Developed Countries will Focus on the Constraints of Vulnerable Countries

Nosh Nalavala in conversation with Ambassador Gyan Chandra Acharya, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations



Ambassador Gyan Chandra Acharya, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations addresses the General Assembly.

Nosh Nalavala: *Ambassador Acharya, UN resolution 63/227 mandates holding LDC IV in 2011. This will be a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Programme of Action 2001-2011. Do you feel that the international community has fulfilled its commitment to the promises they made in Brussels in 2001?*

Ambassador Acharya: When you look at the Brussels Programme of Action there are two parts to it. One part is the national commitment amongst the LDCs in order to attain the objectives that were set forth in partnership with the international community. The second part is about the international commitment. When we say international commitment, we believe that promoting the interest of the LDCs and making them inclusive in the international system is not only in the interest of the LDCs, but also it is in the interest of the international community as a whole. That is why there is a compact between the two. From the perspective of the commitment that was made 0.15 to 0.2 for the LDCs out of the 0.7 for the entire international community, that has not been met.

What challenges do you see the LDCs facing at this time?

One of the major challenges of the LDCs is that there are structural difficulties amongst the LDC countries that are different from the challenges of development in other countries. That is because it is basically related to our very low level of economic activities, very high level of poverty, a very narrow base of economic export-related activities, and high dependence on international assistance for economic activities. We feel that whether it is access to the markets, enhancement of our productive capacity, focus on our social and human development capacities, we see that there are many, many deep-rooted challenges in the LDCs, in which we need international commitment as much as national efforts.

In July last year you had a preliminary meeting for the upcoming conference when the High Representative for LDCs rang a warning bell. His exact quote was, "the LDCs currently have the highest occurrence of poverty ever, and this might worsen as a result of the global financial and economic crisis." As the Chair of the LDCs, what urgent steps are being taken under your stewardship towards alleviating poverty?

There have been two reports on this, one by the ILO and another by FAO. These reports have indicated that many people, especially in the vulnerable countries, including the LDCs are already suffering from increased poverty because of the economic crisis. How is it affecting us? We are worried that the overall level of assistance has come down. The expectation was to reach a higher level. Of course the aim is to reach 0.7 percent, but the average is about 0.4 percent. It is very clear that the international assistance is not going to countries where it is needed most. Secondly, many of the countries are suffering from the food crisis and the price of food is really high in the international market and many of the LDCs are food deficit countries. If they do not have the capacity to import food there is the problem of hunger and there is poverty.

Increase in ODA would help?

There has to be a comprehensive approach to it. There has to be a fund to assist the countries that experience food deficit not only in the short run, but also for long-term support for agricultural development, seed development and climate-related issues.

Is there a fund for LDCs on the cards?

Yes, there is a fund in the works with the FAO to deal with the food crisis. There has been some commitment from a number of developed countries, to help the FAO to come out with fund and programmes to help us.

Do you know the financial component of the fund at this time?

I think it is about \$3 billion, but we are asking for more because there are problems in so many countries. Similarly, there is also a fund that was announced in Denmark, about the Climate Change Fund. This would be like 10 billion dollars a year from 2010 to 2013. We hope that this fund will be established as early as possible, because climate change is already having a negative impact in many countries.

Let's go to the 49 LDCs, do you think they will achieve the MDGs?

That is a big challenge. Of course there are only five years to go before the MDGs accomplishment. If you look at the latest reports which are coming out from UNDP, they indicate that if we are taking this as business as usual, many of the countries, especially the LDCs may not be able to meet the MDGs.

Out of the eight, which do you think are the most difficult ones?

Basically number one, which is the poverty-related issue and the hunger-related goal are the most difficult to meet. Then probably the maternal deaths related goal would be one of them, followed by the child related goals, which encompass children mortality rate and education.

The impact of climate change on the LDCs is devastating. Countries like Nepal and Bangladesh are not immune. What steps are being taken to alleviate the situation? What are your expectations from the developed countries? How will you present the case at the LDC IV conference on climate change . . . ?

Climate change is now a major international issue. We want to ride on this wave. Secondly, the LDCs have the least capacity to withstand, and they are not contributing to climate change. So, from the perspective of justice, it is very important for the LDCs, and thirdly, because we are receiving the disproportionate impact of climate change, it is not only an issue of economic impact, it is an issue of livelihood.

What is your major agenda at the LDC IV?

We have had two conferences in preparation to LDC IV. One was held in January this year, and the other one in Africa. They have come out with major analyses of the situation in each of the LDC countries because these regional conferences focused on an internal assessment of the Brussels Programme of Action. What I can see is that there are four or five areas on which we will be focusing, on the basis of these two regional conferences. One, how do we really make sure that our national efforts and national capacity are enhanced to deal with the social and human development

agenda because after all it is the people who contribute to economic growth. And secondly, how do we really enhance the productive capacity, of the key development sectors – the infrastructure and agricultural sector – for many LDCs? Third, the new global crises have disproportionately impacted all countries, whether it is the economic and financial crisis, the food crisis or the climate change crisis. Unless these four things are in place, we will not really be making any progress. And the fourth, which is very important, is effective monitoring. How can we have a more effective follow-up, monitoring, and review mechanisms than what

we had in the past? The major problem that we face today is that we only have one review at the time, but maybe we should have a continuous review mechanism so that if there are challenges within, we will deal with them, if there are challenges at the international level, they should be discussed in partnership with the international community, and we think that it will contribute to international growth, it will contribute to international security, and it will contribute to international stability. ■

Transcription by Rebekah Mintzer

CARIBBEAN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES... continued from page 3

global economy.

Island states are “very insecure” in terms of their isolation, their dependence on imports for food and energy, their lack of connectivity, and even their dependence on consumer goods and external financial flows, Puri told MediaGlobal. [They have] “very high dependence on external financial flows to GDP ratios” she added.

Yet these vulnerabilities can also be leveraged as strength with the use of the right tools and a positive framework. Climate change, for example, presents both a vulnerability and opportunity for SIDS. While island states are already experiencing the adverse impacts of climate change and have raised global attention to this problem, they also are strong candidates for climate change programmes because small amounts of investment can go a long way in improving their countries.

“One drop of aid can make an ocean of difference” Puri said. “Smallness can be an advantage as much as it is a vulnerability factor and [SIDS can] become laboratories of green development, green growth, green production, green energy.”

UN-OHRLS has a very specific mandate. The office advocates for the needs of these countries to be integrated into the global conversation and development framework. They also offer strategic advice to the countries.

At the Grenada meeting, Puri emphasized the need to create deliverable and measurable goals based on the Mauritius Strategy. She also highlighted the importance of bringing local issues to the global community, particularly globally significant themes such as food security, environmental sustainability, and the accessibility of marine and coastal resources. The Caribbean nations will continue to work to implement these suggestions as they prepare for the inter-regional meeting in May. ■

Resource Mobilization for Least Developed Countries

By Rebekah Mintzer

With the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Istanbul, Turkey planned for 2011, evaluations are already underway to determine how far LDCs have economically and socially developed, and how far they still need to go. A panel at Columbia University held in May – Resource Mobilization for LDCs’ Sustainable Growth and Development – offered many perspectives and opinions on how public and private sectors can best engage in funding socio-economic development, and how funds can be used more effectively on the ground.

that foreign aid is essential to the development process and that many wealthier countries have not lived up to their original aid promises. Panelists also stressed that LDCs must not become completely aid-dependent or misuse funds. All panelists agreed that the role of the private sector in development cannot be downplayed either.

The current global financial crisis has caused many LDCs to lose a great deal of needed support from both the public and private sectors. The idea that these countries are at the mercy of a crisis they had no part in causing, was a topic of great concern among panelists and participants alike:

“How can we turn this crisis into an opportunity and seek to get better terms and engagements and voices and participation of LDCs in global processes and also how can we get them a stimulus package?” Puri asked. “I think one lesson is that if they [wealthy countries] can spend billions to rescue countries and economies, at least they can spend a few billion to rescue 49 countries from the poverty trap.” ■



Photo by Rebekah Mintzer

Lakshmi Puri participated in the panel at Columbia University along with Julius Kiiza, a Visiting Fellow at the Center for Global Development.

“I think it [the panel] was very illuminating because it brought into play a policy practitioner’s perspective, it brought into play a researcher’s perspective, the national, regional, and global perspective,” said Ms. Lakshmi Puri, Director of the UN Office for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS).

There was consensus among panelists

upcoming events

OHRLS: Workshop for LDC National Focal Points
January 2011, New York

First Meeting of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee on LDC-IV
January 10-14, 2011, New York

Second Meeting of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee on LDC-IV
April 18-25, 2011, New York

newsworthy



GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IMPOSES STRAINS ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

The initial impact of the global financial and economic crises has cost the world's 49 least developed countries (LDCs) an estimated \$71.5 billion in total income loss, according to a recent United Nations report.

This loss amounts to 30 percent of the GDP of affected LDCs and compares with the \$28.2 billion in official development assistance received by these countries in 2006. Coping with these shocks will require drastic actions from leaders of these countries as well as the international donor community, the report states.

Least Developed Countries belong to a UN category of states that face structural impediments to sustainable economic growth. While the exact impact of the global crisis has varied amongst Least Developed Countries depending on their trade specialization, the crisis is

likely to have a detrimental impact on poverty and growth across the board in these countries, according to the report.

Produced by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), the report also makes several national- and international-level recommendations for mitigating these negative effects.

Among those recommendations is the need for LDC governments to implement countercyclical spending; to maintain real spending per user in education, health and other social services; and to use monetary policy to stimulate investment.

At the international level, donor countries should fulfill their pledges of official development assistance to provide much-needed financial support for least developed countries. With developed nations directly affected by the financial crisis, official development assistance and foreign direct investment – both important sources of funding for impoverished countries – have been on the decline.



LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES LIKELY TO TAKE HIT FROM ECONOMIC CRISIS.

Almost all Landlocked Developing Countries can expect a substantial decline in the rate of their output growth as a direct result of the global financial and economic crises, according to a recent United Nations report.

Landlocked developing countries are acutely vulnerable to the consequences of the global economic crisis, given their unique challenges with regard to international trade. Because they lack direct access to the sea, landlocked countries tend to face higher transportation costs and require transit through neighboring countries to access opportunities for cheap and direct trading contacts.

The report, produced by the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing

Countries, and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), explores the potential impact of the global crisis on Landlocked Developing Countries while also analyzing the response of international institutions to this crisis and presenting domestic policy options for the governments of these countries.

In the short run, most Landlocked Developing Countries are likely to experience "quite negative" impacts on their general welfare, continued investment and the maintenance of transport-related infrastructure, the report states. While countercyclical monetary and fiscal policies may help lessen these adverse effects, Landlocked Developing Countries will need external resources to mitigate output contraction and avoid macroeconomic instability.

A major concern is that the level of support the international community may offer for mitigation efforts is unclear, the report adds. ■



MediaGlobal

Voice of the Global South

United Nation Secretariat, Suite S-301

New York, NY 10017

MEDIAGLOBAL is an independent international media organization, based in the United Nations, creating awareness in the global media on social justice and development issues in the world's least developed countries. Launched in 2006, MediaGlobal is headquartered in New York with offices in the United Nations Secretariat. With a strong focus on the global South, MediaGlobal disseminates news stories globally on economic development, global health, food security and the impact of climate change on developing countries.

The Commitment is published in cooperation with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. For information, contact us at:

Telephone: 609.529.6129 and
Email: media@mediaglobal.org

Publisher and Editor
Nosh Navalava

Coordinators
Fred Kirungi
Ricardo Dunn
Lena Bera

MediaGlobal Correspondents (at the United Nations)

Allyn Gaestel
Rachel Pollock
Rebekah Mintzer
Robin Wallace
Kevin Moore