



Ad Hoc Working Group to further Study and Strengthen the Smooth Transition Process – 6 June 2012

Intervention of the EU Delegation

- [Excellency, Co-Chairs, Ambassador Diarra, Ambassador Chowdhury, dear Colleagues,]
- On behalf of the EU and its Member States, I want to thank Ambassador Bowler and Ambassador Grauls for co-chairing this group. They did so in a remarkable way. I would also like to thank the many colleagues that have been involved in the work of the group.
- The EU and its Member States have engaged from the first in the work of this group. We see the graduation and smooth transition processes as challenging but positive ones to be celebrated. If the Istanbul Programme of Action is to succeed, then indeed countries need to graduate out of the LDC category.
- We have tried during the various meetings to explain what we do in partnership with LDCs. Our engagement is strong, transparent and predictable.
- We have commented in detail on the draft recommendations in the last meeting, so I will not repeat them here. As it was recalled, we note that this report is not intended to necessarily reflect consensus positions but summarizes key issues and proposals made by Member States and by experts in the last months, some of which fall into the purview of individual Member States or outside the direct remit of the General Assembly, as in the case of trade measures.
- I will just highlight here a few recommendations which we believe are key:
 - The central issue of stronger national transition strategies to be put in place early on so as to be the framework within which partners can work and which can determine key challenges and best mix of supporting actions.
 - There can be no one-size fits all solution. Transition strategies must be tailor made to each country so as to reflect the specific context, opportunities and vulnerabilities.
 - We are not looking at already setting up new programmes but at ensuring better coordination and coherence of existing ones.
 - More predictability is also needed from the United Nation decision making process. We agree with the proposal to better ensure expeditious and time-framed action by the General Assembly on graduating countries, to conclude the work of ECOSOC.
 - The main focus should be on the predictability and orderly phasing out of benefits post graduation, rather than on their extension. More broadly, as per the Istanbul

programme of action, we have to remain mindful that the recommendations of this group will have to be taken forward within existing resources.

- We continue to strongly encourage trading partners, including emerging economies and developing countries in a position to do so, to provide duty-free quota-free access to LDCs. We also agree with the proposal to maintain market access benefits for a clear and known period of time after graduation as the EU does.

- To conclude, the EU and its Member States are strongly committed to reinforcing their partnership with LDCs as they graduate. Graduation is a success story and entails genuine potential in terms of inclusive growth, trade and investment. It is in this spirit that we will fully engage in the resolution to be negotiated this autumn.**
- Thank you.**