Statement

by

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on the
presentation of the IPoA at the
Brainstorming meeting on the way forward for the
implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries

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Excellencies
Distinguished colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Fourth UN Conference has adopted a comprehensive, ambitious and result-oriented 10-year Istanbul Programme of Action and the Istanbul Declaration. The new PoA has set an ambitious overarching goal of enabling half the number of LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020.

The Istanbul Programme of Action contains five clearly defined objectives and eight principals. It has 47 goals; some of them are quite significant such as striving to provide 100 per cent access to the Internet by 2020, ensuring access to energy for all by 2030 etc. LDCs have committed to undertake 126 actions, the development partners have committed to undertake 102 actions and 16 actions will be taken on jointly to implement the priority areas of the Istanbul PoA.

The fundamental premise of the new Programme of Action is built on a wider and deeper political consensus that goes way beyond the traditional concept of “donor-recipient relationship”. The preamble of the outcome document recognizes that solidarity, cooperation and partnership with least developed
countries are not only moral imperative; they are also economic and political ones. The outcome document aptly recognizes that eradication of poverty and hunger in LDCs contributes towards ensuring global stability and prosperity in a sustainable manner. Least Developed Countries are no longer considered to be a basket case rather they represent an enormous human and natural resource potential for the world economic growth, welfare, prosperity and food and energy security.

The Istanbul Programme of Action represents a shared vision and common aspiration of LDCs and their development partners based on commitments, accountability and partnership. The outcome document recognizes that LDCs, as the most vulnerable group of countries need effective national policies, enhanced global support and appropriate mechanisms at all levels for achievement of the Programme of Action.

Compared to Brussels, the new Programme of Action contains a qualitative shift in the development strategy for the next decade. The main focus of the Brussels Programme of Action was export-led growth strategies, while IPoA emphasizes on building a critical mass of viable and competitive productive capacity in agriculture, manufacturing and services; diversification; infrastructural
development, enhanced investment, vibrant civil society and private sector and structural transformation. Such a shift in the focus is expected to enable LDCs to build their real economies on a strong footing with value addition, value retention and products diversification.

The eight priority areas of the Istanbul Programme include (i) building productive capacity including in infrastructure, energy, STI and private sector development; (ii) agriculture, food security and rural development; (iii) trade; (iv) commodities; (v) human and social development including women’s empowerment; (vi) multiple crises and emerging challenges such as climate change and sustainability; (vii) mobilization of resources for development and capacity building; and (viii) good governance at all levels that includes democracy, respect for all human rights, transparency and accountability and equitable governance at the international level.

The IPoA recognizes that LDCs have the ownership of and primary responsibility for their own development. LDCs will enjoy necessary policy space and flexibility to design their own policies.

LDCs have made much stronger and enhanced commitment on doing their part in creating conducive domestic environment and thereby implementing the goals
and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action. Development partners are also committed to a stronger international support measures in all priority areas.

I want to mention some of the value-additions as well as concrete commitments and key deliverables in the IPoA, which are as follows:

- Elaboration of “partnership” that includes traditional donor countries; United Nations System, including Bretton Woods Institutions and other multilateral financial and development institutions; developing countries, within the framework of South-South cooperation; private sector, civil society and foundations.

- Commitment by the countries of the South to support the effective implementation of the Programme of Action, within the framework of South-South cooperation, will be significant compliment to North-South Coopertaion. Besides other relevant areas, developing countries will make further efforts in improving technology cooperation arrangements with LDCs;

- Active engagement of the civil society, private sector and parliamentary tracks in the Conference, its preparatory processes and in the implementation and follow-up of the IPoA;
• Agreement on a balanced role of state and market consideration, in which states will create an appropriate enabling stable, transparent and rules-based economic environment for the effective functioning of markets and create social safety nets to protect the most vulnerable and ensure inclusive growth.

• Commitment by the development partners to integrate the PoA into their respective national cooperation policy framework and by LDCs in their development strategies.

• Strong commitment by all to achieve all MDGs by 2015 and make further significant progress by the end of this PoA.

• A goal of doubling the share of LDCs exports in global exports by 2020 and commitment to ensure timely implementation of DFQF market access, on a lasting basis, for all least developed countries.

• Strong reaffirmation of fulfilling the ODA promises by 2015 as made in the Brussels Programme of Action and agreement on reviewing the ODA commitment for further enhancing resources to LDCs after 2015;
• Resisting the imposition of unreasonable restrictions on labour migration and developing short-term migration by the development partners.

• Enhancing the share of assistance to LDCs by the development partners for Aid for Trade.

• Adopting investment promotion regimes by the development partners such as insurance, guarantees and preferential financing programmes, such as export credits, risk management tools, co-financing, venture capital and other lending instruments, and private enterprise funds for investment in LDCs.

• Strong emphasis on technological innovation and technology transfer to LDCs and undertaking a study with the aim of establishing a Technology Bank and STI (Science, Technology and Information) supporting mechanism, dedicated to LDCs. Development partners have committed to provide enhanced financial and technical support for this sector including concessional start-up finance for LDC firms which invest in new technologies.

• Developing risk mitigation strategies, such as national facilities for crisis mitigation and resilience in LDCs with the support of their development partners.
• Exploring the feasibility, effectiveness and administrative modalities of a system of stockholding to deal with humanitarian food emergencies or to limit price volatility. LDCs and their development partners will jointly act on to reduce price volatility and free movement of food supplies.

• Providing full and timely financing for the implementation of the HIPC Initiative and the MDRI by the development partners and specific debt relief measures for LDCs which are not HIPC as well as temporary debt standstills between debtors and all creditors. Providing increased grant-based and concessional financing to ensure debt sustainability of LDCs.

• Strong emphasis on dynamic, broadly-based, well functioning and socially responsible private sector in LDCs for increasing investment and trade, employment and innovation. Commitment by the development partners for enhanced financial and technical support in this regard.

• Strong call for the establishment and full operationalization of the Green Climate Fund and pledges by the development partners to promote and facilitate clean development mechanism projects in LDCs and to respond to the needs of people displaced as a result of extreme weather events.
• Establishing an ad-hoc working group by the General Assembly to further study and strengthen the smooth transition process.

• Extension of existing travel-related benefits to delegates of the graduated country for a period appropriate to the development situation of the country.

• Ensuring mutual accountability of LDCs and their development partners for delivering their commitments undertaken under this Programme of Action.

• Inclusion of the IPoA in the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMR) and the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF).

• Ensuring good governance, gender equality & empowerment of women, rule of law in LDCs as well as strengthening voice and representation of LDCs at the international forums.

I am sure this is not an exhaustive list. There are many other important decisions in the Istanbul Programme of Action.

The most challenging task ahead of us, now, is to develop a comprehensive
roadmap for the implementation of the Programme of Action, so that our efforts move in a concerted, coordinated and coherent manner. Our last session today is dedicated to discussing the roadmap. I will not go into details. However, let me highlight few points.

The OHRLLS envisages to vigorously pursuing implementation efforts in a coordinated and coherent manner engaging all 5 tracks that were engaged in the preparatory process, namely inter-governmental track, parliamentary track, CSO track, private sector track and UN coordination track.

The General Assembly will continue its annual follow-up on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action. ECOSOC as the central mechanism for integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to outcome of the UN Conferences will put the Istanbul Programme of Action on top of its agenda. These two UN bodies can undertake effective follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Mainstreaming the Istanbul Programme of Action in the development strategies of LDCs, development cooperation framework of the development partners and the Programme of Work of the UN System organizations and other international organizations are vitally important. Our own research has revealed that due to
lack of integration of earlier Programmes of Action by LDCs and their
development partners were one of the primary reasons for remaining them as
“an unfinished agenda”. We will attach special emphasis on the mainstreaming
issue in a targeted manner.

The implementation process of the IPoA has already begun. The General
Assembly has endorsed the IPoA on 17 June 2011. Informal consultation on the
ECOSOC resolution on LDCs is almost concluded. Executive Boards of UNDP,
UNFP and UNOPS; and UNICEF have adopted important decisions on
integrating the IPoA in their respective Programmes of work. I have learnt that a
similar decision is being tabled in the Executive Board of UN-WOMEN. The
UNDP decision, this year, invited the United Nations Development Group
(UNDG) to integrate the IPoA into its work plans.

As part of the core mandate of our office in full mobilization and coordination of
all parts of the United Nations system, we are going to utilize all relevant
coordination mechanism of the UN System. We have made a presentation to
EC-ESA deputies. We are also going to make a presentation to the High-level
Committee on Programmes (HLCP).

We will work in close cooperation with all of you present here. In all our efforts,
we very much count on your continued support and cooperation.

I thank you for your kind attention.