



## Media Advisory

4 June 2015

### Ministers from Least Developed Countries in Africa to meet at the World Expo in Milan

#### WHO

Ministers of Foreign Affairs and senior officials from African Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and will come together for a three day meeting at the [Expo Milano 2015](#), the universal exhibition that Italy will host from May to October 2015 on the theme: “Feeding the Planet – Energy for Life”. The event will be opened by H.E. Mr. Paolo Gentiloni, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Italy.

#### WHAT

The Ministerial Meeting of African LDCs on “Structural Transformation, Graduation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda” is co-organised by the Government of Italy and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States ([OHRLLS](#)).

Ministers attending the event will focus on ways to support African LDCs to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the attainment of the goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action and in particular to make progress in poverty eradication, peace and development for graduating from the LDC category.

The meeting will explore concrete actions for socio-economic transformation of African LDCs and aim to accelerate progress by African LDCs towards meeting the criteria which will enable graduation from the category. In this respect agriculture, food security and access to energy are crucial factors and will be at the core of the substantive discussions during the Meeting.

#### WHY

This is a key time for Least Developed Countries to ensure that they are well represented in the [new development agenda](#). The results of the meeting will feed into the intergovernmental process related to the Post-2015 development agenda and the Third Conference on [Financing for Development](#). The Milan Ministerial Meeting is uniquely positioned to create an opportunity, away from UN Headquarters and the negotiating rooms, for the LDCs and their development partners to embark, in an open

dialogue, to find a common understanding of how these processes can better integrate the key priorities, goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action and ensure that they reflect LDCs' financing needs.

## **WHEN**

8 - 10 June 2015

## **WHERE**

The meeting will take place at the Italian Pavilion, Expo 2015, Milan. Press are invited to attend the whole event which starts with an opening session at approximately 9.30 am 8 June 2015

## **ACCREDITATION**

Press are requested to complete the accreditation procedure at <https://accreditation.expo2015.org/mediahome.aspx?lang=EN> and kindly write an e-mail to [accreditamentostampa@esteri.it](mailto:accreditamentostampa@esteri.it) to confirm their participation.

In order to allow the background check process to be carried out, the registration shall be completed at least 2 working days prior your arrival.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Least Developed Countries (LDCs) represent the poorest and weakest segment of the international community. They comprise more than 880 million people (about 12 per cent of world population), but account for less than 2 percent of world GDP and about 1 percent of global trade in goods.

[The Istanbul Programme of Action](#) (IPoA) adopted at the Fourth UN Conference on LDCs in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2011 constitutes an ambitious agenda by the international community with the overarching goal to overcome the structural challenges faced by the LDCs in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the LDC category.

The IPoA sets an ambitious objective of enabling at least half of all LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020. The IPoA is an ambitious set of targets which is due to be reviewed at a mid-term meeting next year. It is the first global programme of action for LDCs containing a section on "graduation and smooth transition", recognising the need to consolidate development gains and ensure that they do not slide back into the category.

This is the first time that an entire group of countries has resolved to exit from a category defined by poverty and vulnerability. The adoption of the IPoA graduation goal is thus a watershed event in the history of the UN in the field of development. Reaching it will entail structural socio-economic transformations in countries that have been largely left behind in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

<http://unohrlls.org/milan-ministerial-meeting/>

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