Statement by the representative of the delegation
of the Republic of Kazakhstan
Ms. Aziza Yeshmagambetova
at the Second Committee meeting under agenda item 23 (b)
Groups of countries in special situations
Follow-up to the second United Nations Conference
on Landlocked Developing Countries

Mr. Chairman,
Your Excellency Under-Secretary-General,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Our delegation aligns with the statement made by Zambia on behalf of the LLDC group. The Almaty Programme of Action (APoA), first developed in 2003, has helped create new linkages and strengthen existing partnerships between LLDCs, transit developing countries and partners, including multilateral institutions. Since 2003, LLDCs have achieved superior short term average GDP growth rates, and even managed to double their share of global merchandise exports. Now the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan attaches great importance to the Vienna Programme of Action and its six priorities. We are eager to implement this programme as a means to achieving two interrelated goals of 1) blunting the most limiting effects of landlockedness, and 2) fulfilling our ambitious national goal of joining the top 30 developed countries of the world by 2050.

Mr. Chairman,
As of now, a number of specific actions stipulated in the Vienna Programme of Action are already being mainstreamed within the President Nursultan Nazarbayev’s 100 Concrete Step Programme that was unveiled this past summer. This comprehensive national plan calls for drastic and yet urgent reforms in all key sectors with the goal of upgrading human and institutional capacities, enhancing public sector service delivery, as well as boosting economic productivity, diversification, and competitiveness.

We are confident that as we reform our education, legal and judicial systems, with greater sensitivity to domestic and foreign private sector concerns and needs, our development partners - new and old - would find Kazakhstan an attractive destination for their capital, technology and businesses.

Consistent with the Vienna Programme of Action, Kazakhstan is focused on addressing the bottlenecks and inefficiencies in its transport networks. We have committed resources to streamline and upgrade our road, rail, airport and pipeline infrastructure. We have also addressed issues related to soft infrastructure at the borders by modernizing our customs operations as well as eliminating border controls.

The 100 Concrete Steps initiative also calls for the reorganization of our production and trading systems away from reliance on a few agricultural products and high bulk raw materials. Kazakhstan of the future is expected to be an economy that is largely oriented towards global value chains, manufacturing and industrial activity. This industrialization aspiration, together with the development of a robust private sector and the entrepreneurial class is expected to be primary drivers of our economy and sources of high paying employment opportunities for the young generation.
Mr. Chairman,

As the furthest country from any seaport, Kazakhstan understands the necessity of developing effective transit systems and transport infrastructure and therefore our long-term development plan, our Strategy 2050, seeks to make Kazakhstan one of the thirty most developed economies by 2050. Many of the challenges we seek to address in our plan correspond with the objectives of the Almaty Programme of Action as well as Vienna Programme of Action: eliminating trade and transit barriers and developing logistics infrastructure are the top priorities.

We are actively working on building new railway lines, the rebuilding and renovation of more than 20,000 kilometers of highways, upgrading of airport infrastructure, and developing a national merchant fleet and marine ports. We have also undertaken soft infrastructure upgrades along transit corridors and major border crossing points. In addition, we also have four international aviation corridors.

Distinguished delegates,

We are acutely mindful of our place and standing in this group - for it was in our financial capital, Almaty, that the global community first met to deliberate on how to deal with the challenges of landlockedness and remoteness from global markets. Kazakhstan wishes to reassure countries in similar situations as our own, that we stand ready to support one another. We continue to share our expertise and knowledge with countries of the global South in the realm of energy, health and agriculture.

Sustainable energy has become an important issue in our time, even for countries with greater fossil fuel endowment. Both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Vienna Programme of Action call for the attainment of goals related to sustainable energy for all, including in landlocked countries and other countries in special situations. In line with this important goal, please allow me to inform and invite all of you to Astana EXPO-2017 - a Specialized International Exhibition that will take place in the summer of 2017 in our capital, Astana, under the theme “Future Energy”.

We are confident that the EXPO would provide useful insights to how industries, communities and peoples can have access to clean, affordable and renewable energy sources. We are particularly keen for the participation of the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Excellencies,

Please allow me to conclude by saying that this is a momentous occasion for the landlocked developing countries. The Vienna Programme of Action together with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provide clear guidance on how our counties can address and defeat many of the difficulties that hold us back from realizing broad-based and sustainable prosperity. We must strive to integrate these programmes into our national development framework, priorities and strategies. While landlockedness is a situation from which we cannot graduate, several high industrialized but landlocked countries inspire us to push the limits and reach for greater heights. We are confident that, if successfully implemented, these two programmes would transform our economies and firmly put our countries on a clear path for economic prosperity and resilience.

Thank you for your attention.