Speech of the First Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade of the Republic of Tajikistan Mr. Saidrahmon Nazriev

At the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries

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Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan. Allow me to begin by expressing our appreciation to UN-OHRLLS and the WTO for organizing this important event where likeminded states get an opportunity to exchange their views on the progress made up to date and common challenges ahead of us.

The challenges and disadvantages of countries that lack territorial access to the seaports or the countries that are distant from them have been noted in the works of Adam Smith around two hundred years ago. Although today such problems are recognized by the United Nations, since then the advances in technology and logistics as well as the market economy have not helped to overcome main challenges faced by the LLDCs in today’s world.

Tajikistan being a landlocked country itself is surrounded by landlocked countries and has one of the longest distance to the sea among the LLDCs, which is about 3,100 km. This makes the situation of Tajikistan even more challenging.

In order to harness the benefits of Multilateral Trading System Tajikistan has joined the WTO in March, 2013. The year of 2015 will be noted in Tajikistan’s history as a remarkable year as our Parliament has ratified both the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the Protocol of amendment of the TRIPS Agreement, and also hosted the Dushanbe Third China Round Table on WTO accessions. We believe that the implementation of the TFA and the amended TRIPS will deepen Tajikistan’s integration into the world trading system and accelerate the reforms in relevant sectors. We call and encourage other members to follow in the same spirit. As you may recall, for Tajikistan, like for other landlocked countries, the implementation of the TFA Agreement and in particular its transit related provisions, is not only a question of commercial interest but also a matter of survival.

Since the adoption of APoA Tajikistan has paid special attention to the promotion of regional trade, and has achieved remarkable results in improving its transport system and implementing a special approach towards the issue of transit and communication potentials.

The system of “Single Window” for import, export and transit has been introduced in order to simplify customs procedures. The Apostille Convention was ratified and is being
implemented. We also set up four active Free Economic Zones in order to encourage investors and implement the National Program on promoting trade and transportation.

Moreover, Tajikistan hosted a number of international and regional events, most notably the following:

- Tenth meeting of the Intergovernmental Commission of the International Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA),
- High Level International Conference on the development of transit potential of Central Asia for the period until 2023, and
- First Investment Forum on the Implementation of the OIC Plan of Action for cooperation with the countries of Central Asia.

The above events were focused on creation of an environment conducive to transit, improvement of transport safety, environmental protection, application of flexible tariff policy and trade promotion.

As you might be aware the construction of an energy bridge between Central Asia and South Asia (CASA-1000), aimed at promoting export of electricity from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to the energy markets of Afghanistan and Pakistan has been launched recently in Tajikistan. There is no doubt that the implementation of this project will increase industrial production and ensure energy security in both regions. This is an excellent example of cooperation among the states addressing common challenges.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite certain progress, LLDCs still have to deal with multiple challenges that interfere with their long-term development.

Poverty and inequality, inadequate industrial capacities, inadequate infrastructure, dominating share of raw materials in exports, low per capita energy supply, and youth unemployment remain the key problems in LLDCs. In addition, sustainable development of LLDCs is undermined by climate change and natural disasters, including desertification, degradation of land and glaciers.

We therefore welcome and call upon states to pay special attention to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action and to their implementation. We firmly believe that in today’s challenging global environment implementation of these documents will help LLDCs to resist any forms of protectionism, with the aim of achieving the sustainable global growth and balanced rules based Multilateral Trading System.

Thank you for your attention.