Statement

By

H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom,
Foreign Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

At

The 71st United Nations General Assembly

September, 2016

New York
Mr. President,
Excellency, Under-Secretary-General Ambassador Gyan Chandra Acharya,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, at the outset, to express my delegation’s appreciation to you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of our Group.

My delegation would also like to congratulate the delegations of Zambia for their marvelous work done in terms of articulating our group’s interest in various meetings over the year.

Mr. President,
It was just last year we adopted the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sustainable development goals, which are well framed and articulated for the way ahead of us. Instantly, this year’s meeting of our group couldn’t have been more opt and timely for materializing our discussion on the implementation of these international agreements in an integrated and coherent manner with the Vienna Programme of Action.

Undoubtedly, since the adoption of the Vienna Program of Action, we Land Locked Developing Countries have shown a remarkable progress in terms of addressing the challenges that we face due to lack of territorial access to the sea. Indeed, the Programme of action has allotted us the opportunity to prioritize areas of action and maximize our efforts in addressing the hurdles that we face from remoteness to world markets and high transit costs.

In this regard, we landlocked countries in collaboration with transit developing countries have been establishing effective transit systems on the basis of common interest. Most notably, we have maximized our benefits from the development of transport infrastructure facilities through promoting regional integration.

But again, the enormous challenges of our group still linger on us. Lack of territorial access to the sea aggravated by remoteness from world markets and high transit costs and risks continue to
impose serious constraints in export earnings, private capital inflow and domestic resource mobilization.

**Mr. President,**

No doubt, last year was full of historic moments in terms of framing various international agreements. But now, it is time to take action by implementing those international agreements in an integrated and coherent manner with the Vienna Program of Action.

As we have agreed, the primary responsibility of mainstreaming and implementing the program of action in an integrated and coherent manner with other international agreements relies on national governments and that of our group. But at the same time, if we are to achieve the SDGs and also the Vienna Programme of Action, we need to secure a renewed and strengthened global partnership.

**Mr. President,**

As a LLDC country, Ethiopia has taken bold measures in mainstreaming the program of action into national development plans and also sectorial development strategies. Particularly, we have mainstreamed the program action in to our national logistics strategies of the Maritime Affairs Authority.

Though, landlockdness has been a major challenge for countries like that of mine, Ethiopia have managed to sustain high economic growth over the last decade. Particularly, through expanding infrastructure, we have succeeded in reducing high trade costs and increasing competitiveness. In this regard, the Government of Ethiopia has allotted a largest share of national budgets for infrastructure development and regional integration.

**Mr. President,**

We are extensively engaged in the construction of roads and railways with the aim of both enhancing the integration of different sectors within our economy and strengthening regional integration. In this regard, I would like to specifically mention about the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway construction. Over the past five years, 90 percent of 656 km railway line project running
From Addis Ababa to Djibouti border was effectively constructed, while design studies have continued for other similar projects.

The Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport, which involves Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan, is also another testimony of how the Government is committed to overcome challenges posed by landlockdness as well as ensure regional integration. Undeniably, our collaboration with our neighboring and transit countries is a good start to achieve the targets of the program of action. But again, we have a long way to go.

Mr. President,

We need to underline the fact that South-South Cooperation, and triangular Cooperation remains to be vital for us, the LLDCs, particularly in the areas of infrastructure development, transit transport cooperation and sharing of best development experiences.

A renewed and strengthened global partnership is also needed more than ever to accompany us, the LLDCs, in harnessing benefits from international trade through structural transformation of economies and also maintaining inclusive and sustainable growth. As our group have much more to accomplish in the years ahead, we need to redouble our efforts to accomplish the targets set in the Vienna Programme of Action.

I thank you!