Please Check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

I associate my statement with those made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, LDCs, and LLDCs, respectively, and wish to underscore few points of critical importance from my national perspective.

I thank the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS for his comprehensive presentation of the Secretary-General’s reports under this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

We could not agree more that LDCs are the most vulnerable segment of the world community. Special needs and challenges of these countries deserve special attention in order to deal with the severe structural and developmental challenges facing them. The United Nations duly recognized the special conditions of these countries long ago. LDC issues that begun with the listing as a separate the group by the UN in 1971 -- deliberated through LDC conferences every decade since 1981 -- were acknowledged in Rio Principle 6 in 1992, having emphasized further in the subsequent development agendas. The 2011 Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA) sets an ambitious target of graduating half of LDCs from the category by 2020.

Forty-five years down the road, the plight of LDCs remains the same, with many of them sliding further into the quagmire of poverty. From 25 in 1971, they are now 48. Only 4 countries have been able to graduate along this journey. This reality highlights the gravity of LDCs’ concerns.

The Mid-term Review of IPOA earlier this year has warranted our most sincere and collective efforts for the goals to be realized.

In complementing one of the overarching goals of IPOA many LDCs have come forward with announcement of their ambition of graduation. But they continue to face unprecedented challenges owing to their structural weaknesses apart from natural disaster related challenges. Therefore, we underscore the importance of ‘Sustainable and Smooth Graduation Process’ as envisaged by the 2014 Kathmandu Declaration, by ensuring an enhanced, predictable and continued international support.
Mr. Chairman,

The core issue here is not the mere acknowledgment of their specific challenges but the assurance of the means of implementation - its sources, reliability, predictability and sustainability. The realization against the commitments, however, has long been far less than needed and incoherent. Nepal appreciates those development partners that have met their ODA commitments and strongly encourages others to follow suit, and earmark 0.15-0.20 percent of their GNP to the LDCs. It is also important to align cooperation to LDCs’ priorities with a focus on building productive capacity.

The role of technology is vital to help develop LDCs. The acquisition, transfer and diffusion of technologies and corresponding know-how to accelerate their development trajectory are a sine qua non. In this context, Nepal welcomes the oparenalization of Technology Bank for LDCs from 2017 and expresses its gratitude to Turkey for hosting it. We call upon all relevant stakeholders to lend support for its successful operation.

Countries which are both LDCs and LLDCs face even more challenges mainly due to high cost of doing business and undertaking development activities. Landlockedness is now known to make development 20% costlier and incur double price for export, compared to their transit neighbours. By enabling their meaningful participation in global value chains and international trade, we need to convert landlockedness into landlinkedness.

In our own experience, Nepal continues to face complex challenges to development efforts. Lack of direct access to sea, expensive development infrastructure and poor connectivity have cumulative negative effects on our overall development works and make our products less competitive, resulting in increasing trade deficit. Therefore, development of connectivity, trade facilitation, transfer of technology and investment promotion have been our priority.

To conclude, Mr. Chairman, Nepal is of the view that overarching goal of eradicating extreme poverty by 2030 and attain sustainable development will not be achieved without taking LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS fully on board. It has been one year since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and we cannot afford to spend more time for its full implementation. The IPOA, VPOA and SAMOA Pathway, the integral parts of the Agenda 2030, merit sincere implementation for galvanizing our efforts and sustaining the progress towards meeting SDGs. The momentum triggered by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement should be preserved and kept reenergized. Without the full and timely implementation of these agendas, the SDGs will not be realized. Nepal calls for commitments, partnerships, cooperation and concerted efforts from all sides. We pledge our continued support and commitment to working together with fellow member states and all stakeholders.

I thank you.