



**United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least  
Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small  
Island Developing States  
(UN-OHRLLS)**

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**Report of the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Ministerial Meeting of  
Landlocked Developing Countries**

**Held on 22 September 2016 at the United Nations Headquarters in  
New York**

## Summary

On 22 September 2016, the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) held their 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in New York in the sidelines of the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the General Assembly's high-level general debate from 10:00am to 1:00 pm in conference room 5 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. H.E. Mr. Munkh-Orgil Tsend, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia chaired the first hour of the Ministerial Meeting in his capacity as the Vice Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries. Thereafter, H.E. Mr. Damcho Dorji, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bhutan chaired the remaining period of the Meeting in his capacity as bureau member.

The Meeting was centered on the theme "*Harnessing Coherence in the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Vienna Programme of Action*". It was acknowledged in the Meeting that the recognition of LLDCs and the awareness of their special needs and challenges have increased globally as evidenced by the increased number of references to the LLDCs in recent international development frameworks including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Ministers and representatives of LLDCs shared their experience on the achievements made in the implementation of the six priority areas of the VPoA, namely: (1) Fundamental Transit Policy Issues; (2) Infrastructure Development and Maintenance; (3) International Trade and Trade Facilitation; (4) Regional Integration and Cooperation; (5) Structural Economic Transformation; and (6) Means of Implementation. They stressed that despite the impressive progress made by the LLDCs as a Group, geographical constraints and inadequate infrastructure continued to impede their export competitiveness, production capacities, as well as resilience to external shocks. In that regard, Ministers underscored the efforts that need to be further intensified to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA, including mainstreaming of the VPoA into regional, national and sectoral development strategies, establishing efficient transit transport infrastructure, improving trade facilitation, and enhancing regional integration and cooperation.

Calls were made for LLDCs to ratify relevant international legal instruments such as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, the TIR Convention and the multilateral agreement on the establishment of the International Think Tank on LLDCs. The LLDCs were also called upon to actively participate in the Global Infrastructure Forum to voice their concerns. They were also encouraged to seize every opportunity to promote economic diversification of their economies and integration into global and regional value chains. Calls were also made for strengthened partnership between the LLDCs, their transit neighbors and development partners. Furthermore the Meeting underscored the need for firmer and widened North-South and South-South cooperation and an enhanced level of financial and technical support from development partners, and international and regional organizations. The meeting also called for dedicated funding and facilities to support the infrastructure needs of the LLDCs.

The Meeting emphasized the importance of fostering strong synergy and coherence at all levels in the implementation, follow-up, and review of the VPoA with the 2030

Agenda and other development processes including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the outcome document of UNCTAD 14 and others. At the end of the meeting, Ministers of LLDCs adopted a Ministerial Communiqué, which called for all stakeholders to work together to effectively implement the VPoA.

## **A. Introduction**

1. The Government of the Republic of Zambia and Chair of the LLDC Group in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High-Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), organized the 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries that was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 2016, in New York. The Meeting was held in the sidelines of the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the General Assembly's high-level general debate. The Meeting was held from 10:00am to 1:00pm in Conference Room 5 at the United Nations Headquarters.
2. H.E. Mr. Munkh-Orgil Tsend, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia chaired the first hour of the Ministerial Meeting in his capacity as the Vice Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries. Thereafter, H.E. Mr. Damcho Dorji, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bhutan chaired the remaining period of the Meeting in his capacity as bureau member.

## **B. Attendance**

3. The meeting was attended by delegates, including Ministers and representatives, of the following LLDCs, transit countries and development partners: Afghanistan, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Paraguay, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Representatives from ECO, UNDP, DESA, OSAA and the UN-OHRLLS also attended.
4. The complete list of participants is presented in section H.

## **C. Opening of the Meeting**

5. The meeting was officially opened by H.E. Mr. Munkh-Orgil Tsend, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, in his capacity as Vice Chair of the Group of LLDCs. Opening statements were also made by Mr. Gyan Chandra Archarya, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), and Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
6. In his opening remarks, **His Excellency Mr. Munkh-Orgil Tsend, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia** noted that LLDCs have worked hard to ensure recognition of the Group in recent global development agenda as both the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognize the special needs and challenges facing LLDCs. He also stressed that other global frameworks that are relevant to the LLDCs' special needs include the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the outcome document of UNCTAD XIV and others.

7. Minister Tsend highlighted the importance of the rapid ratification and implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement which will ensure faster, cheaper and smoother trade for the LLDCs. His Excellency also recognized the special significance of the 2016 session of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development which focused on the needs of countries in special situations, including the LLDCs and urged all member states to actively participate in the HLPF follow-up processes. At the national level, he called for the LLDCs to implement the VPoA and other development frameworks in a coherent manner and to mainstream them into their national development plans. Furthermore, he laid emphasis on strengthening capacities for monitoring and reporting of the SDGs and other development frameworks, including the VPoA.
8. Minister Tsend concluded his remarks by calling upon transit neighbors and development partners, including international organizations and private sector to provide the LLDCs with necessary financial, technical and capacity-building support towards implementation of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda.
9. In his statement, **Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)**, underscored the importance of fostering coherence in the implementation of the VPoA, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda at national, regional and international levels to maximize the sustainable development outcomes for the LLDCs. He encouraged the Member States to actively participate in the Global Infrastructure Forum and to advocate for dedicated funding or special facilities to address their infrastructure gaps. He also stressed the need to build coherence in the implementation of the VPoA with the other development frameworks such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, as well as the necessity to successfully mainstream the VPoA into national and sectoral development plans and into the programmes of work of regional and international organizations.
10. Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya further provided highlights on the progress made in implementing the six priority areas of the VPoA based on the Report of the Secretary General. He also informed the meeting of the joint work undertaken by OHRLLS and other international and regional organizations to ensure the effective implementation of the VPoA and called on all the stakeholders to actively participate in the following meetings: the High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of LLDCs to be held on 13 and 14 October 2016 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia and the High-Level Seminar on Accelerating Sustainable Energy for All in LLDCs through Innovative Partnerships to be held on 24 and 25 October in Vienna, Austria.
11. Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya concluded by assuring the meeting of his office's readiness to carry out its mandate in support of the effective and timely implementation of the VPoA and to assist in harnessing coherence with the 2030 Agenda and other development frameworks.
12. In his statement, **Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic**

**and Social Affairs**, commended LLDC Governments for their energetic engagements during the negotiations on the SDGs. He underlined that the theme of the meeting was very timely and that fostering coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the VPoA was a priority for the High-level Political Forum.

13. Mr. Wu Hongbo also called for aligning the 2030 Agenda and the VPoA with other development frameworks including: Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Climate Agreement, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Outcome Document of the UNCTAD XIV, and the Geneva Declaration adopted by the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs.
14. He concluded his remarks by assuring the meeting that DESA has made and would continue to make renewed efforts in collaboration with OHRLLS to provide unrelenting support to Member States in the coherent implementation of the SDGs, to harness synergies of all aforementioned agendas, and to tailor support to each country's specific circumstances.
15. In her statement, **Ms. Helen Clark, Administrator of UNDP**, highlighted four strategic actions needed to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda at the country level: (1) supporting the mainstreaming of the VPoA into national agendas and accelerating the integration of the SDGs into national plans, strategies and budgets; (2) greater international support for LLDCs; (3) harmonizing reporting systems for the two agendas; and (4) continued strong national leadership for the implementation of SDGs and the VPoA including dedicated support from national and international partners for sufficient resources to meet the special needs of LLDCs.
16. Ms. Helen Clark stressed that supporting LLDCs on the implementation of the two agendas was a high priority for UNDP. She highlighted the achievements made by UNDP in supporting the mainstreaming of the six priority areas of VPoA into national development plans. Ms. Helen Clark further indicated that UNDP as a whole was rolling out its Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) framework to support its programme countries, many of which are also LLDCs to adapt the SDGs to national and local contexts, to speed up progress on priority areas, in order to provide strategic and joined up policy support. She also assured the meeting of UNDP's readiness to work with LLDCs to develop a monitoring framework for coherent implementation and reporting of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda.

#### **D. Interactive Debate**

17. Ministers and high-level officials representing landlocked developing countries delivered statements during the interactive debate.
18. **H.E. Mr. Munkh-Orgil Tsend, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia**, highlighted the importance of aligning the national, regional and global implementation of the VPoA with the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development. He recognized that the LLDC Group continued to face considerable challenges inherently linked to their geographical

handicap and remained largely marginalized in the global economy. In this regard, he underscored the necessity of increased international assistance for export diversification, value-addition, infrastructure development, capacity building and better market access to LLDCs. Mr. Munkh-Orgil Tsend informed the meeting that his country endorses the decision by the trade ministers to request the establishment of a specific Work Program for LLDCs in the WTO by the 11th WTO Ministerial Meeting. The Work Program should address specific needs of LLDCs in order to increase their participation in the Multilateral Trading System and should focus on the key areas that include Trade facilitation, Aid for trade, Services and Accession. He encouraged a rapid ratification and implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and noted that his country has already submitted the Agreement to Parliament for ratification at its autumn session.

19. His Excellency stated that Mongolia has managed to advance the VPoA objectives through sub-regional, regional and national cooperation. At the sub-regional and regional level, the country signed an agreement on establishing an economic corridor and a customs cooperation agreement with China and Russia and these three countries are now finalizing an Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network. Mongolia has also concluded negotiations with all 6 participating States of the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) as part of its efforts to join regional economic integration. At the national level, Mongolia was committed to implementing the relevant goals set forth in the 6 priority areas of the VPoA which were reflected in their national development strategy including the 2030 Sustainable Development Vision and the Government's Action Program for 2016-2020. Mr. Tsend finally highlighted the contribution that Mongolia has made as a host country to the initiative of the International Think Tank for LLDCs and encouraged the LLDC Group to actively work towards early entry into force of the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of the International Think Tank for LLDCs.
20. In his statement, **H.E. Mr. Damcho Dorji, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bhutan**, emphasized the utmost importance of mainstreaming the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda, as well as including the SDGs into national plans. He informed the meeting that his government was currently preparing for the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan and would work towards integrating the VPoA and the SDGs into their national development plans and programmes. He stressed that harnessing coherence and success in the implementation of the VPoA and SDGs would depend more on collaborative efforts in the spirit of renewed and strengthened global partnerships.
21. H.E. Mr. Dorji also underlined the importance of adequate and predictable financial support to LLDCs in order to achieve tangible results in the priority area of infrastructure development and maintenance. In this regard, he stressed that it was imperative for the Group to push for a global trust fund to LLDCs and to follow developments on the Global Infrastructure Forum. At the global level, H.E. Mr. Dorji highlighted that the follow-up and review process at the UN should continue to pay special attention to the cause of LLDCs. Finally, he stressed the importance of the Group to ensure that their issues find an adequate reflection and mention in the upcoming resolution on Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR).

22. In his statement, **H.E. Mr. Sirodjidin Aslov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tajikistan**, stated that Tajikistan was committed to the decisions and recommendations of the VPoA and has undertaken additional measures to develop national transport and transit infrastructure and communications. He also noted that his government was preparing the documents to join the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for LLDCs. Mr. Aslov further underlined that Tajikistan prioritized the transport and energy sectors and has been developing its energy potential based on an integrated development of renewable sources. An example was the construction of an energy bridge between Central Asia and South Asia to promote export of electricity from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan to the energy markets of Afghanistan and Pakistan.
23. H.E. Mr. Aslov noted that climate change is seriously affecting limited freshwater resources in his country. He noted that the High-Level Symposium on SDG 6 and Targets “Ensuring that no one is left behind in access to water and sanitation”, which was organized jointly by the Government of Tajikistan and the UNDESA in Dushanbe on 9 and 10 August 2016 discussed issues related to the implementation of the global water agenda. The Symposium adopted a Call for Action, which invites international community to deepen cooperation at all levels, to address emerging water issues, to improve the capacity in the implementation and monitoring of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM), and to support an International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development”. He finally called upon the LLDC Group to highly support the implementation of the recommendations made during the High-Level Symposium.
24. In his statement, **H.E. Mr. Erlan Abdyldaev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan**, stated that his government has adopted an interagency plan to ensure effective implementation of the VPoA and was integrating the provisions of the VPoA into their national and sectoral documents. He recognized that the main challenges for Kyrgyzstan was the problem of sustainable economic growth and stressed that multilateral trade has an important role to achieve this objective. He welcomed the call by the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs for establishment of a specific Work Programme for LLDCs. He informed the meeting about Kyrgyzstan’s membership in the Eurasian Economic Union stressing that this had opened up for his country a direct access to a market with a population of 180 million people. He indicated that his country is constructing a new "North-South" transit road, which will become part of the international transport route. Mr. Erlan Abdyldaev underlined, however, that notwithstanding the development achieved, transport and transit, tariff and non-tariff barriers still exist. In order to ensure the principle of mutual respect for the legitimate interests of states, he found it timely to introduce and enshrine in international law a new concept of the “Right of the state to Development”.
25. H.E. Mr. Erlan Abdyldaev further informed the meeting that Kyrgyzstan would jointly hold an event dedicated to the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bishkek Mountain Platform at the UN Headquarters in 2017 to attract the international attention to the problems of sustainable mountainous development. His Excellency also recognized the negative impact of global warming. In this regard, he mentioned that Kyrgyzstan had implemented projects aimed at conservation of glaciers, ecosystems and biodiversity. He concluded his statement by calling upon the

Group to continue close interaction and advance common interests that are included in the VPoA and SDGs, and to especially support their initiative of the Second World Nomad Games.

26. **H.E. Monsieur Stýphane Sanou, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burkina Faso**, noted that the VPoA was an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, which required a coherent and integrated implementation. He stressed the importance of financing, capacity-building and technological support needed to achieve the objectives of the two programmes. He noted that major programs in the field of transportation were underway in Burkina Faso to reduce the geographic disadvantage via the Transport Sector Program (Programme sectorial des transports), and the sub-regional and regional initiatives. The activities led to an increase of more than 50% of paved road network, rehabilitation and maintenance of the highway and road networks, construction of border checkpoints and to establish control of vehicle axle loads by the establishment of weighing stations on main roads. Nonetheless, he underlined that railways still remained very weak and the air transport is restricted to the two main cities in the country.
27. His Excellency underscored that the outlook in the domain of transport were based on the Transport Sector Strategy 2011-2015, which integrated the pillars of the National Strategy of Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (SCADD). The plan provides for the construction of a new international airport, which began in 2014 and projects for the interconnection of railways with neighboring countries. He also noted that Burkina Faso is in the ratification process of the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of the International Think Tank for the LLDCs. He finally informed the meeting that the 2030 Agenda and the VPoA constituted two important mechanisms to realize a structural and sustainable revolution of the LLDC economies. He believed that the coherent implementation of these two programmes, their integration into national development projects and policies, and an effective partnership with much support will help the LLDCs overcome obstacles that have, up until now, hindered development.
28. **H.E. Mr. Simbarashe Mumbengegwi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe**, underlined the importance of harnessing coherence in the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and the VPoA to overcome the development challenges facing LLDCs and the necessity of greater collaboration across a great range of policy areas among relevant stakeholders. He urged the LLDC Group to continue pushing for the speedy conclusion of the Doha Development round of trade negotiations, and to facilitate the ratification and implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.
29. **H.E Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People' Democratic Republic**, highlighted the importance of the VPoA to help to address the special development needs of LLDCs. He welcomed the outcome of the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of trade Ministers of the LLDCs that was held in Geneva this year as it has further underlined the importance of implementing the priorities of the VPoA and the WTO's trade facilitation agreement. Mr. Kommasith highlighted the achievements of the Lao PDR in the areas of infrastructure development, economic integration and trade facilitation including: increased investment

towards infrastructure development, particularly roads and railways linking the country with the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks; accession to the WTO in early 2013, which led to the deepening of economic integration into the regional and global economies and resulted in the substantial increase in trade and services; and participation in the ASEAN Economic Community and free trade areas. He underlined, however, that despite the progress that has been achieved; his country still faced challenges and needs more coherent and comprehensive cooperation with neighboring countries and development partners in addressing the special development needs of the country.

30. In this connection, he appreciated the support and assistance of the Lao's neighbouring countries namely Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar on the development of infrastructures that links Laos with their countries and the wider region, and the efforts of China to develop a rail-road through Laos to Thailand as part of the Singapore Kunming Rail Link Project.
31. **Hon. Francis Kasaila, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Malawi**, reiterated the need to support the ratification and implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement as a necessary solution to the transit challenges that the LLDCs face. He informed the meeting that Malawi was in its final stages of ratification and approval by the authorities. Hon. Francis Kasaila underlined the importance of the development partners and international organizations to assist LLDCs in building and strengthening their national capacities in the areas of infrastructure development for transport, water and energy among others. Furthermore, he emphasized the crucial role of cooperation on fundamental transit policies, laws and regulations between LLDCs and their transit neighbours for the effective and integrated solution of cross-border trade and transport problems.
32. **H.E. Mr. Eladio Loizaga, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Paraguay**, underlined that the APoA and VPoA address the LLDCs' common interests and special needs, and that these international instruments were reinforced by the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. He indicated that the communique adopted at the Ministerial meeting of the LLDCs held in the margins of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Meeting in December 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya, and the declaration adopted at the Fifth Meeting of Ministers of Trade of the LLDCs in June 2016 at the WTO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, call for the establishment of a specific work program for LLDCs within the WTO. His Excellency called for the quick ratification and implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and urged the Member States of the United Nations to provide technical and financial assistance for more effective implementation of the aforementioned international instruments. He also noted that Paraguay ratified the Trade Facilitation Agreement in January 2016 and was in the process of formalization of a National Committee for its implementation.
33. H.E. Mr. Eladio Loizaga also urged the Member States to take necessary actions for the internalization of the international commitments and strengthen institutions that allow the Group to carry out plans to achieve sustainable development. Furthermore, he emphasized the necessity of establishing a safe, reliable and efficient transport system for the LLDCs to reduce transportation costs and

increase export competitiveness. He also encouraged all delegations to actively participate in the sustainable transport meeting on LLDCs to be held in Bolivia and the global conference on sustainable transport to be held in Turkmenistan. H.E. Mr. Eladio Loizaga finally reiterated the importance of strategies, measures and recommendations to improve the connectivity of the LLDCs, mobilization of financial resources, development of infrastructure covering all types of transport, as well as the promotion of regional integration and cooperation.

34. **H.E. Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan**, noted that his country has continued to successfully implement its sustainable development strategy and managed to retain its growth dynamics in 2014 despite the global economic crisis. His Excellency informed the meeting that progress was made by Azerbaijan to become a pioneer in the Eurasia region in initiating and enabling strategic trans-regional transport, ICT and energy projects, and to contribute to the inter and intra-regional trade and overall sustainable development of the region. He also noted that Azerbaijan was interested in further strengthening the trans-regional connectivity in sustainable transport and that Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Georgia agreed to establish the International Trans-Caspian Transport Consortium in April 2016.
35. H.E. Mr. Mammadyarov stressed Azerbaijan's role as an important logistics, transportation and ICT transit hub of the region especially through the establishment of the National Coordinating Council on Transit Freight in October 2015, the free trade zone type special economic area in the near future, and the perspective implementation of UN General Assembly-support Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway (TASIM) project. He informed the meeting that his country has been successful in becoming one of the key players and investors in energy infrastructure projects in the South Caucasus region and beyond, and was ready to share its experience, especially on public administration, single window in customs and tax system, social-economic reforms, with other LLDCs. He also noted the importance of the interest and cooperation of LLDCs in further strengthening trans-regional connectivity.
36. In his statement, **H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom, Foreign Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**, highlighted that the LLDCs in collaboration with transit developing countries have been establishing effective transit systems on the basis of common interest. He underscored, however, that serious constraints in export earnings, private capital inflow and domestic resource mobilization still exist due to lack of territorial access to the sea, remoteness to world markets, and high transit costs and risks. He noted that Ethiopia had taken bold measures to mainstream the VPoA into their national development plan and sectoral development strategies, especially their national logistics strategies of the Maritime Affairs Authority.
37. H.E. Dr. Adhanom highlighted that achievements had been made by Ethiopia to reduce high trade costs and to increase competitiveness through expanding infrastructure and that a largest share of national budgets have been allotted by his government for infrastructure development and regional integration. He informed the meeting of some projects launched by his government in the construction of roads and railways such as the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway construction, and

the Lamu Port and Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Transport, which involves Ethiopia, Kenya and South Sudan. Dr. Adhanom finally underlined the vital role of South-South Cooperation and triangular Cooperation in the areas of infrastructure development, transit transport cooperation and sharing of best development experiences, as well as the necessity of a renewed and strengthened global partnership in harnessing benefits from international trade through structural transformation of economies and also maintaining inclusive and sustainable growth.

38. **Mr. Lilian Darii, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration of the Republic of Moldova**, noted that only promoting structural economic transformation would help LLDCs to reduce the negative impact of landlockedness and consequences of external shocks. He stated that the highest priority of the Republic of Moldova was to build a modern democratic state, based on European standards and values. He stressed that this involves efforts in implementing reforms to reduce poverty, to develop private sector, with special emphasis on SMEs, and to improve investment environment and national economic competitiveness. He highlighted the efforts made by Moldova to develop trade relations with its partners including the free trade agreements that it had signed. His country adopted the National Strategy for Investment Attraction and Export Promotion 2016-2020 to enhance structural diversification of Moldova exports. An important feature of the Strategy is the fact that it targets a small number of industrial sectors, most promising in terms of attracting FDI, creating jobs and export promotion potential for the next 4-5 years.
39. Mr. Lilian Darii informed the meeting that in terms of infrastructure rehabilitation, he noted that beginning in 2009, about 10% of the national roads were completely renovated; another 10% are currently under rehabilitation. He also noted that the country aimed to accelerate the process of infrastructure rehabilitation through enforcement of the National Transport and Logistics Strategy by 2020 and consolidation of the National Road Fund, and that consistent efforts were made to develop the International Giurgiulesti Free Port. He nevertheless underlined that his country continued their endeavors to overcome constraints in conducting trade relations due to poor infrastructure, increased costs for transportation and limited access to world markets. Finally, Mr. Darii assured the meeting that his country would fully support the implementation of the VPoA and was open for productive and business oriented partnerships in the future.
40. **Ambassador Chalwe Lombe, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Zambia**, underscored the importance of strengthened partnerships and collaboration among LLDCs, transit countries and international development partners, the necessity of financial and technical support to LLDCs, and the critical role of the private sector in mobilizing resources to complement public sector efforts. Mr. Lombe underlined that the efforts to harness coherence in implementation of Agenda 2030 should be synergized in LLDCs' national development plans through mainstreaming the key development priorities of the VPoA, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement and initiatives, among others.
41. Ambassador Chalwe Lombe informed the meeting of policy measures undertaken

by Zambia to address the six priorities of VPoA. He noted that Zambia in conjunction with other LLDCs and transit countries in the sub-region had developed supportive institutional frameworks, such as transport and trade facilitation bodies or coordination committees, road funds and border facilities. Further, Zambia had engaged neighboring Countries and has signed simplified trade agreements and Bilateral Transport Agreements with countries such as Angola, Botswana, Congo Democratic Republic, Namibia and Tanzania respectively in an effort to harmonize trade and transport policies. Zambia has prioritized infrastructure development cutting across all sectors and aims to transform itself into a hub in the areas of Information Communication Technology, Power Generation and Distribution, Tourism and transport Facilitation, among others. Zambia is undertaking joint projects such as the Kasungula Bridge with Botswana. He indicated that Zambia is focusing on value addition to mineral processing and agricultural primary products as well as promoting tourism and crop diversification as these have the greatest potential to contribute to rapid diversification of the economy. He finally called for the establishment of special windows and facilities such as a dedicated fund for LLDCs to complement implementation of the programmes and activities of member states.

42. **H.E. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Ambassador/Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations**, emphasized that the VPoA should be implemented effectively in full synergy and perfect coherence with the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai expressed appreciation to Nepal's immediate transit neighbours, India, China and Bangladesh for their understanding, goodwill and support throughout. He stressed that freedom of transit should not be constrained under any circumstances or pretext to disrupt the flow of goods and services which must be fully and unconditionally adhered to by all transit countries. He also highlighted the importance of development and maintenance of transport infrastructure linking the LLDCs with their transit countries and the necessity of an enhanced level of foreign investment for infrastructure development.
43. Mr. Bhattarai noted that Nepal has begun mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda into its national plans and programmes. He pointed out that the current development plan that started in July this year accords high priority to infrastructure development and connectivity. This is also factored in while rebuilding infrastructures following the devastating earthquakes last year. He indicated that his country will endeavor to utilize various regional forums to enhance bilateral, sub-regional and regional cooperation in facilitating transit and transport. He finally stressed the importance of full, timely and effective implementation of the VPoA in full synergy and coherence with the 2030 Agenda without any further delay.
44. **Mr. Arthur Kafeero, Ambassador, Head, Multilateral Organisations Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda read the statement of Hon. Oryem Henry Okello, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uganda.** In the statement Hon. Okello emphasized the importance of giving attention to the special needs of LLDCs, especially those relating to infrastructure development, trade facilitation, regional integration,

productive capacity-building and structural transformation. He noted that the launch of the Global Infrastructure Forum was an important follow-up to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for LLDCs.

45. Hon. Okello expressed Uganda's commitment to the implementation of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda. He highlighted that Uganda has already integrated over 76% of the SDGs into its National Development Plan and was making priority interventions in development of infrastructure, improving agricultural productivity and value addition, skills development and creation of employment opportunities. He also informed the meeting that his government was working with other countries in the region in making investments infrastructure including roads and railways to enhance connectivity within the country and with their neighbours under the umbrella of the Northern Corridor Integration Projects. These projects are aimed at facilitating increased trade and investment in the region, decreasing transit time for exports and imports and above all decrease the cost of doing business. Finally, he appealed for adequate resources from international community, LLDCs and private sectors to implement both the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda.
46. **Ambassador Vahram Kazhoyan, Director of the Department of International Organizations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia**, noted that addressing the issue of projects' bankability and ensuring public-private solutions to financing infrastructure projects is an important aspect of his country's work with international financial institutions. He underscored that infrastructure development was a high priority for the Government of Armenia, duly reflected in the Strategy for Prospective Development for the upcoming decade. Mr. Kazhoyan stated that his government has recently adopted a national strategy for the implementation and mainstreaming of the VPoA for the period 2016-2024. The strategy outlines a number of national priorities for the effective implementation, review and follow-up of the Vienna Program of Action, in line with the key strategies and programs of action that have been recently adopted to promote sustainable development in Armenia. He also emphasized the importance of proper consideration to the implementation of the international commitments to address the specific needs of the LLDCs with a comprehensive global reporting framework for the Agenda 2030.
47. **Ambassador José Crespo, Director - General Direction of Multilateral Relations of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational state of Bolivia** informed the meeting about the High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of Landlocked Developing Countries to be held in Santa Cruz - Bolivia, from 13 to 14 October 2016. He invited all the delegations to attend the meeting and indicated that the outcome of the meeting will feed into the first Global Sustainable Transport Conference that will be held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, from 26 to 27 November 2016.

## **E. Adoption of the Ministerial Communiqué**

48. At the end of the interactive debate, Minister Damcho Dorji, introduced the Communiqué. He indicated that the members of the LLDCs, under the guidance of the LLDC Group Chair, had prepared and negotiated the Ministerial

Communique. He noted that the Communique reaffirms the LLDC Group's strong commitment to the implementation and mainstreaming of the Vienna Programme of Action and calls upon their development partners, transit countries and international organizations to mainstream the Vienna Programme. It also reaffirms that the Vienna Programme of Action is integral to the 2030 Agenda and stresses that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should take into account the vulnerabilities and special needs and challenges facing LLDCs.

49. The Communique emphasizes the importance of fostering strong synergy and coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action and encourages coordination and coherence in the follow-up of their implementation. It stresses the importance of a revitalized, renewed and strengthened global partnership between landlocked developing countries and the transit countries, their development partners and other stakeholders and calls for establishment of dedicated programmes, facilities and funds for the LLDCs.
50. After presenting the Communique, he invited the members of the Group of the LLDCs to adopt it. There were no objections and the Ministerial Communique adopted.

## **F. Final Provisions**

51. Minister Damcho Dorji thanked Zambia, the Chair of the LLDCs for organizing the meeting in collaboration with UN-OHRLLS. He thanked the Ministers and all the participants for attending the meeting.
52. There being no further matters raised, Minister Damcho Dorji closed the Meeting.

## **G. Ministerial Communiqué**

**We**, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), have met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016, on the occasion of the 71<sup>st</sup> session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, and have held our deliberations under the theme “*Harnessing coherence in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Vienna Programme of Action*”,

*Recognizing* that the lack of territorial access to the sea, aggravated by remoteness from world markets and high transit costs and risks, impose serious constraints on export earnings, private capital inflow and domestic resource mobilization of LLDCs and therefore adversely affects their overall sustainable development,

*Recalling* the Almaty Declaration and the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the special needs of the landlocked developing countries within a new global framework for transit cooperation for landlocked and transit developing countries, adopted in August 2003,

*Recalling* the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the Decade 2014-2024, adopted in November 2014 (A/RES/69/137), which provides a comprehensive plan of action for the next decade to address the special challenges and needs of LLDCs,

*Recalling* the Livingstone Call for Action for the Accelerated Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action adopted at the High-Level Follow-up Ministerial Meeting to the Vienna Conference held in Livingstone, Zambia, in June 2015 that highlights key measures and initiatives required to accelerate implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action,

*Recalling* further the General Assembly resolutions 69/232 of December 2014, and 70/217 of December 2015 related to the particular needs and challenges of LLDCs to be addressed by the effective implementation the Vienna Programme of Action,

*Recalling* the United Nations outcome document of the Post-2015 Development Summit, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (A/RES/70/1),

*Recalling also* the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/69/313), that is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Recalling also* the Paris Agreement adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC),

*Recalling also* the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction,

*Recalling also* the declaration adopted by the meeting of Heads of State and Government and High Representatives of the 32 LLDCs, held in New York, on 28

September 2015, under the theme: “Linking Landlocked Developing Countries to Global Opportunities”,

*Recalling* further the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of LLDCs at the margins of the 10th Ministerial Conference of the WTO held in Nairobi, Kenya on 16 December 2015,

*Welcoming* the declaration adopted at the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs held in June 2016 in Geneva under the theme - Harnessing the trade potential of the LLDCs to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

*Recalling* the outcome documents of the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIV), held on Nairobi, Kenya, from 17 to 22 July 2016, and the Ministerial Communiqué of the Landlocked Developing Countries adopted on 16 July 2016 prior to that session,

*Recalling also* the Call for Action adopted at the High Level Symposium on SDG 6 and Targets: Ensuring that No One is Left Behind in Access to Water and Sanitation, held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, from 9 to 11 August 2016,

*Welcoming also* the Ministerial Declaration of the 2016 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council on the theme “Ensuring than no one is left behind”,

*Recalling* Resolutions 700 (XXXVI) and 711 (XXXVI) adopted at the Thirty-Sixth Session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, resolution 71/3 adopted by the seventy-first session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and resolution 934(XLVIII) adopted by the Eighth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024,

*Recalling also* agreed conclusions 524 (LXII) adopted by sixty-second session of the Trade and Development Board of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development which invites UNCTAD to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 into its work programme,

**Have adopted the following Ministerial Communiqué:**

1. *We take note* of the Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations presented to the General Assembly on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (A/71/313);
2. *We reaffirm* the ambitious and transformational vision set out in The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We stress that the 2030 Agenda is people-centred, universal and transformative and that its Goals and targets are

integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental. It is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity that also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom, to be implemented by all countries and stakeholders acting in collaborative partnership. We reaffirm all the principles recognised in the Agenda, and that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and pledge to ensure that no one is left behind;

3. *We stress* that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the revitalized Global Partnerships should take into account the vulnerabilities and special needs and challenges facing LLDCs. We believe that ending poverty in all its forms, combating inequalities and achieving sustainable, and inclusive economic growth and shared prosperity are fundamental goals for humanity;
4. *We recognize* that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, provides an enhanced and revitalized global framework for financing sustainable development and reaffirm the need to address the special challenges and needs of landlocked developing countries in structurally transforming their economies, harnessing benefits from international trade, and developing efficient transport and transit systems;
5. *We reaffirm* our collective commitment to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into regional, national and sectoral development strategies and in this regard we call upon our development partners including international and regional organizations to provide technical support to our mainstreaming efforts, including towards holding of national workshops
6. *We also reaffirm* our commitment to the full and timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and our support for mainstreaming it into our national development policies and programmes;
7. *We welcome* the fact that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognize the special needs of the LLDCs and emphasize the importance of fostering strong synergy and coherence in their implementation and the Vienna Programme of Action and encourage coordination and coherence in the follow-up of their implementation;
8. *We reaffirm* that the High-level Political Forum has a central role in providing political leadership, guidance and recommendations for the implementation of sustainable development commitments. The Forum is now called to oversee a network of follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda at the global level, working coherently with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other relevant organs and forums, in line with existing mandates. We stress that the HLPF continues to focus on addressing the challenges of the most vulnerable countries including the LLDCs;

9. *We stress* that the availability and use of accessible, timely, reliable and high-quality disaggregated data underpins our efforts to leave no one behind by, inter alia, identifying inequalities. Data should measure poverty in all its forms and dimensions as well as progress on sustainable development, to reveal inequalities, gaps, progress and recurrent challenges, identify innovative solutions and inform all necessary policies in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels. Given LLDCs' constraints and challenges in this regard, we call upon the development partners and international organizations to assist LLDCs in building and strengthening their official national capacities for data collection, disaggregation, dissemination and analysis;
10. *We underline* that the development and maintenance of transit transport and information and communications technology infrastructure are crucial for LLDCs in order to reduce high trading costs, improve their competitiveness and become fully integrated in the global market;
11. *We emphasize* that a strong energy infrastructure and improved access to clean and renewable energy in LLDCs is needed to advance the development of domestic productive capacity and to better connect to the regional and international markets. We call on the international community to enhance its support to create such infrastructure in our countries. In this context, we also reemphasize that resources should be mobilized for the production, distribution and marketing of clean energy;
12. *We stress* that the magnitude of the resources required to invest in infrastructure development and maintenance remains a major challenge and requires forging international, regional, sub-regional and bilateral cooperation on infrastructure projects, construction of quality infrastructures and maintenance of all transport and other trans-border and regional infrastructures, allocating more from national budgets, effectively deploying international development assistance and multilateral financing in the development and maintenance of infrastructure and strengthening the role of an accountable private sector, Public-Private Partnerships as well as other innovative means of finance;
13. *We call on* the LLDCs to develop and imbed infrastructure investment development plans in their national development strategies, and strengthen the domestic enabling environment and urge the international community to provide financial and technical support for LLDCs to translate these plans into concrete implementable projects;
14. *We invite* multilateral financial and development institutions and regional development banks to establish dedicated infrastructure funding for the LLDCs and provide them with a special window for allocation of resources for infrastructure development and maintenance and to undertake analytical work and provide support towards better project preparation;
15. *We welcome* the launch of the Global Infrastructure Forum, led by the multilateral development banks (MDBs), on 16 April 2016 in Washington,

DC. We stress that the Forum should address the infrastructure needs of the landlocked developing countries in a focused manner;

16. *We stress* that cooperation on fundamental transit policies, laws and regulations between landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours is crucial for the effective and integrated solution of cross-border trade and transit transport problems and in this regard encourage LLDCs and transit countries to join and implement the international conventions on transport and transit and bilateral, sub-regional and regional agreements and, where applicable, abiding by customary international norms on transport and transit to and from LLDCs;
17. *We call on* the international organizations to build the capacity of LLDCs and transit countries to understand the benefits and implications of accession to the international conventions and other legal instruments related to transit transport and trade facilitation through training, in-depth studies on the costs and benefits of joining the conventions and guidelines for the implementation of the conventions;
18. *We stress* that it is extremely important within the framework of the WTO that special attention should be given to the concerns and needs of landlocked developing countries in order to increase their participation in the Multilateral Trading System. In this regard, we support the call made by the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs for establishment of a specific Work Programme for LLDCs by the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference. This Work Programme will address the specific concerns and needs of LLDCs in order to increase their participation in the Multilateral Trading System with the key areas on Trade Facilitation, Aid for Trade, Services, and Accession;
19. *We call upon* the WTO membership to strengthen the negotiation function of WTO and to reinvigorate work towards a successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round, with meaningful, ambitious and development-centered outcomes for the LLDCs;
20. *We call upon* the WTO member States for a rapid ratification and implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement. We urge members to continue to provide and enhance technical, financial and capacity building assistance to LLDCs, on a sustainable basis, for the effective implementation of the Agreement;
21. *We call upon* international organizations to establish special facilities and dedicated programmes for the LLDCs, such as the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility, to assist LLDCs with execution and scaling-up of trade facilitation initiatives and effective implementation of the Trade Facilitation Agreement and of important international conventions and regional agreements;
22. *We call upon* the international community to assist in undertaking research and analysis on the impact of landlockedness on sustainable development and the effective participation of LLDCs in international trade, and develop policy

recommendations that can help our countries to make progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals;

23. *We are committed* to promoting structural economic transformation in order to reduce the negative impact of landlockedness and external shocks, and as a means to job creation, poverty eradication, resilience building and sustainable development. Furthermore, higher-value and low-bulk exports are particularly crucial for LLDCs. It is for this reason that we emphasize the development of manufacturing, agriculture and the services sector, including finance, information and communication technologies and sustainable tourism;
24. *We note* the importance of LLDCs integrating into regional and global value chains to expand their export markets and diversify their export baskets. However many LLDCs need guidance on what activities they should pursue and how they can join. In this regard, we call on development partners and international organizations to help the LLDCs in strengthening their capacity to participate in regional and global value chains and identifying the best opportunities for developing new products and export markets, given their comparative advantages;
25. *We express* our serious concern on the frequent falling of commodity prices which have affected our efforts towards sustainable development. We call upon the international community to enhance efforts to support LLDCs in diversifying their exports, through - *inter alia* - the transfer of relevant technologies, support to develop and strengthen their productive capacities, value-addition and capacity building in developing relevant policies;
26. *We recognize* the growing role of the services sector in modern economies, in particular, the importance of the tourism sector, finance and ICT, and that an efficient and productive services industry will contribute significantly to productivity growth and for the overall competitiveness of LLDCs' economies. In that regard, we affirm our commitment to develop the service sector and call on international organizations to support landlocked developing countries' to develop their services sectors;
27. *We recognize* in particular that e-commerce presents an unparalleled opportunity for LLDCs to explore, as this form of trade is less susceptible to the constraints of being landlocked. We call upon the international organizations and development partners to support LLDCs to successfully develop e-commerce;
28. *We note* with concern that the LLDCs are highly exposed to climate change and disproportionately affected by its adverse impacts due to their location, low income, low institutional capacity, and greater reliance on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture. This is exacerbated by desertification, land degradation, drought, floods, cyclones and other natural and man-made disasters; LLDCs must be provided with adequate levels of resources in order to enhance their resilience to climate change;

29. *We welcome* the Paris Agreement as a means to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, which is one of the Goals of the 2030 Agenda. We look forward to its prompt entry into force and ambitious action by all, as well as the mobilization of resources to assist its implementation;
30. *We request* strengthening a regional integration framework; transit countries should guarantee free and unrestricted transit through their territories for landlocked developing countries to allow the enjoyment of a free and direct access to high seas. The close cooperation with transit countries is the only way for LLDCs to face the obstacles and to enhance the regional integration processes including improved transit transport connectivity, border agency cooperation and harmonized customs procedures and common regulatory policies;
31. *We also stress* the need to promote meaningful regional integration in a broader range of areas including investment, research and development and policies aimed at accelerating regional industrial development and regional connectivity, including in energy and ICT. These processes will help towards ensuring greater intra-regional trade, deepening of regional markets and fostering structural change and economic growth in LLDCs. We call on our partners to support these initiatives;
32. *We request* for strengthening of the role of economic corridors, corridor management organizations, sub-regional arrangements and regional groupings in achieving deepened regional integration; and note with interest the recent formal establishment of an economic corridor between Mongolia, China and the Russian Federation. We stress the importance on focussing on a transport corridors framework as a first stage for cost reductions; which involves the upgrading of road, rail and port and inland waterways infrastructure to support trade along the routes and reduce congestion at entry points, hence promoting the smooth movement of goods and services. We also recognize the significance of international transport corridors for regional sustainable development;
33. *We recognize* the efforts of the LLDCs to enhance domestic resource generation including broadening of the tax base and enhancing of revenue administration through modernized, progressive tax systems, improved tax policy and more efficient tax collection and administration and call on the international community to support our national efforts. We are committed to reducing corruption and increasing transparency at all levels;
34. *We call upon* development partners to increase the amount of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to LLDCs, in a sustainable manner to help us to overcome the obstacles imposed by geography and to integrate into the multilateral trading system. ODA remains the main source of international financing for many LLDCs that it is essential as a catalyst for development, facilitating the achievement of national development objectives, including achieving sustainable development goals and the Vienna Programme of Action in a coherent manner;

35. *We appreciate* that in December 2014 at its High-Level Meeting, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) adopted a communique in which its members committed to dedicate more of total ODA to countries most in need, specifically mentioning LLDCs as one of the groups to be further supported. We encourage the DAC to move forward in fulfilling this commitment;
36. *We reiterate* our request that development assistance provided in the context of the Aid for Trade initiative should consider the special needs and requirements of LLDCs to build their trade and supply-side capacities and should also be enhanced;
37. *We emphasize* the complementary and catalytic role played by long-term international capital flows, particularly, foreign direct investment. We commit to continue promoting conducive policies to attract foreign direct investment that leads to promote trade as well as sustainable development of LLDCs. We call on development partners to provide greater financial assistance and support to the FDI-seeking efforts of LLDCs by adopting and implementing economic, financial and legal incentives to encourage FDI flows to LLDCs;
38. *We urge* international and regional organizations and development partners, to provide financial and technical assistance to support the transfer of reliable and affordable technologies and to promote capacity-building, taking into account our national priorities;
39. *We recognize* the importance of the private sector participation in the development process of our countries, including the large, medium and small-sized enterprises, in promoting economic growth and poverty reduction through the creation of decent jobs, promotion of innovation, economic diversification and competition, in accordance with national policies. We commit to develop deliberate policies to support the strengthening of the private sector, in particular, improved access to financial resources, development of appropriate human capacity and the promotion of investment in a supportive economic infrastructure. We call upon development partners to provide enhanced financial and technical support to the private sector, especially in the area of development of SMEs;
40. *We reaffirm* the importance of strengthening South-South and triangular cooperation to support the development efforts of LLDCs and enhance their participation in the global economy. We commend efforts made through South-South cooperation in the areas of transit transport cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries and request that these efforts are scaled up so as to help LLDCs address the complex and severe development challenges that they face because of their geographical disadvantages. We also reiterate the Group's position that South-South and triangular cooperation is a complement to, rather than substitute for, North-South cooperation;
41. *We call* for relevant United Nations agencies and relevant international and regional organizations to continue mainstreaming the Vienna Programme of

Action into their programme of work, to support the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action within their existing mandates;

42. *We stress* that in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should continue to ensure coordinated follow-up to and effective monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, and to undertake advocacy efforts at the national, regional and global levels. We also stress that the Office, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, should continue to work on developing relevant indicators for measuring the progress on implementing the Programme of Action in landlocked developing countries, within their existing mandates;
43. *We invite* partner countries and the international financial and development institutions to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund established by the Secretary- General to support the activities related to the follow-up to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;
44. *We call on and encourage* all LLDCs that have not yet done so to ratify the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, in order to bring it into the full operation for the benefits of all LLDCs members, which will contribute to strengthening our capacity to undertake research and analysis and to negotiating for and benefit from bilateral and multilateral trade and transit agreements;
45. *We welcome* the project entitled “The Research on Economic Diversification of LLDCs: Cases of Mongolia, Bhutan, Nepal and Paraguay” which will be implemented by the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries from 1 January 2017 that will provide important evidence-based policy recommendations to assist the LLDCs on how to build their productive capacities, diversify their economies and undergo structural transformation;
46. *We welcome* the High-Level Seminar: “Accelerating Sustainable Energy for all in LLDCs through Innovative Partnerships” that will be held in Vienna, Austria, from 24 to 25 October 2016, and further reaffirm the importance of universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services for all;
47. *We welcome* the High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of Landlocked Developing Countries that will be held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, from 13 to 14 October 2016 and the first Global Sustainable Transport Conference that will be held in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan, from 26 to 27 November 2016. The outcomes of these meetings will feed into the process of defining new strategies, cooperation initiatives and policy recommendations on trade and transport issues in line with the Agenda 2030;
48. *We reaffirm* our strong commitment to the full implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs that is an integral part of the Agenda 2030.

Furthermore, we call for a revitalized, renewed and strengthened global partnership between landlocked developing countries and the transit countries, their development partners and other stakeholders;

49. *We welcome* the establishment of the Group of Friends of the LLDCs and appreciate the efforts undertaken by the Group of Friends in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs, and encourage their continued engagement to assist in the process of addressing the special challenges and needs of the LLDCs;
50. *We appreciate* the important role played by the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in coordination and follow-up of development programmes of landlocked developing countries;
51. *We recognize* the role that Paraguay has undertaken in the coordination of trade and development issues of the Group of LLDCs in Geneva;
52. *We express* our sincere recognition to the Government of the Republic of Zambia, in its capacity as the Chair of the Group of LLDCs, for the efforts undertaken in coordinating the Group's activities, including the revision of the Rules of Procedure of the Group of the LLDCs in order to enhance the work of the Group.

New York, 22 September 2016

## H. List of Participants

### 1. Afghanistan

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### 2. Armenia.

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- Mr. G. Battungalag, Director of the Multilateral Cooperation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. E. Odbayar, Interim Director, International Think Tank for LLDCs
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## **19. Paraguay**

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