



ACCELERATING THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE ISTANBUL
PROGRAMME OF
ACTION FOR AFRICAN
LEAST DEVELOPED
COUNTRIES
A FOCUS ON BROADBAND

MEDIA ADVISORY

WHAT: The meeting on “Accelerating the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the African Least Developed Countries” will bring together key stakeholders to share country experiences on how the world’s least developed countries (LDCs) are integrating the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals into national strategic planning. The meeting will also focus on broadband technology and how least developed countries in Africa can leverage investments in broadband to achieve sustainable development. Case studies on broadband initiatives in African least developed countries will also inform discussions.

Outcomes of the meeting are planned to contribute to broader discussions on implementing the Sustainable Development Goals during the High Level Political Forum in New York.

WHERE: Radisson Blu Hotel, Dakar, Senegal

WHEN: 28 February - 1 March 2017

WHY: In May 2011, the global community adopted the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for least developed countries, to be implemented by 2020. The main objective of the IPoA is to overcome the structural challenges faced by least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category.

Half way through the implementation of the IPoA, the majority of LDCs are growing at less than 7 per cent per annum, the target set in the IPoA (and also incorporated in SDG 8). The number of LDCs that grew at 7 per cent or more has been showing a declining trend. In 2014, only eight grew at 7 per cent or more, down from 14 and 16 in 2011 and 2012, respectively. The percentage of LDC exports in total world exports accounted for roughly 1.1 per cent of world’s exports in 2014, which is well below the targets of the IPoA and SDGs of 2 per cent.

No other group stands to gain more from ICT than the world’s LDCs, many of which have worked hard to harness the benefits offered by increased usage of technology. Given the importance of broadband connectivity for this group of countries, many LDCs have made progress in improving access to internet and mobile telephony although average access levels still remain low. Broadband

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penetration in LDCs is much lower, relative to developing countries and extremely low when compared with developed countries. In 2016, the percentage of fixed and mobile broadband subscriptions in LDCs represented only 0.8 per cent and 19.4 per cent, respectively. On the other hand, in developed countries, fixed and mobile broadband subscriptions were about 30.1 and 90.3 per cent, respectively.

Investing in broadband can lead to employment creation in sectors that are likely to be using ICT in transformative ways, such as finance, education and healthcare; increased innovation and productivity; and, better governance. Therefore, investing in broadband would contribute towards meeting some of the IPoA priorities (e.g. IPoA, paragraph 47.1.c) and SDG 9.c. that calls for significantly increasing access to information and communications technology and providing universal and affordable access to the Internet in LDCs by 2020.

WHO: The Meeting is co-organised by the United Nations Office of the High-Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the Government of Senegal with support from the United Nations Development Programme.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESS:

Tuesday 28 March 2017

09:00 – 10:00: OFFICIAL OPENING, RADISSON BLU HOTEL

Speakers include:

- △ Government representatives, Senegal
- △ Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Under-Secretary-General, UN-OHRLLS
- △ H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations and Chair of the Global Coordination Bureau of the LDCs
- △ Ms. Bintou Djibo, United Nations Resident Representative and UN Designated Official, Senegal Representative of development partners
- △ Mr. Adou Xianjun, Deputy General Manager of Huawei, Senegal

10:30 – 11:00 PRESS CONFERENCE WITH Q&A OPPORTUNITY, RADISSON BLU HOTEL

MEETING WEBPAGE AND FURTHER INFORMATION

- △ <http://unohrlls.org/event/ldcs-regional-meeting-senegal/>
- △ Twitter: @UNOHRLLS, Facebook: /UNOHRLLS

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