

TALKING POINTS FOR MR. AMB KAMAU
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**The High-Level Euro-Asia Regional Meeting on Improving Cooperation
on Transit, Trade Facilitation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
Development**

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Session 1: Enhancing implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

[Introduction 2030 Agenda]

- We are living in times of multiple complexities and incredible uncertainty – from climate change to geopolitical instability; from social unrest to the changing face of employment.
- Faced with these circumstances, in 2015 all 193 UN Member States adopted a masterplan to transform our world for the better: 17 Sustainable Development Goals which by 2030 seek to:
 - end poverty and ensure access to opportunity and basic services for all
 - tackle climate change and catalyse the transition to a green economy for shared prosperity and a flourishing environment
 - take major leaps forward for equality, peace and justice worldwide.

[Landlocked Developing Countries]

- LLDCs face development challenges owing to their geographical disadvantage of lacking territorial access to the sea and their remoteness and isolation from world markets.
- Due to the long distances from the sea and necessary transit through neighbouring countries, coupled with cumbersome border-crossing procedures and inadequate transit transport infrastructure, the LLDCs face disproportionately high transport and trade transaction costs which are almost double that of the coastal countries. This erodes their competitiveness, affect economic growth and their overall sustainable development.
- The Agenda 2030, the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda recognize that the LLDCs face specific challenges and deserve special attention -stressing the importance of trade as a key means of implementation yet, the LLDCs are not able to fully harness their trade potential because of the special challenges.
- There is need for effective co-operation of the landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and transit developing countries in order to help reduce the high transport and trade costs that the LLDCs face.
- Some of the key areas where the LLDCs and transit countries can enhance their cooperation include: infrastructure development and maintenance in particular transport, energy, and ICT; implementation of the legal

framework that make clearance of goods faster; improvement and harmonization of customs procedures and standards; harmonization of policies between the LLDCs and transit countries.

- The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement entered into force on the 22nd of February 2017. The Agreement has big potential to reduce trade costs and delays including passage of goods and streamlining of border procedures. There is need for rapid implementation of the Agreement by all the WTO Members States in order to realise its benefits. [17 LLDCs and 20 transit countries have ratified the Agreement as of 2 March 2017] It is also important that those Members who have not yet ratified the Agreement do so.

[SDGs and HLPF]

As I mentioned, The High-Level Political Forum in July will constitute an opportunity for LLDCs to report and evaluate actions up to date and to seek scale up commitments, especially to enhance regional integration and cooperation.

SD1

Although poverty in LLDCs countries has gradually reduced, the proportion continues being higher compared with the average of developing countries.

Goal 1 calls for an end to poverty in all its manifestations by 2030. It also aims to ensure social protection for the poor and vulnerable, increase access to basic services and support people harmed by climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters.

Among priority actions LLDCs need to improve access to sustainable livelihoods, entrepreneurial opportunities and productive resources; providing universal access to basic social services; progressively developing social protection systems to support those who cannot support themselves; empowering people living in poverty and their organizations; addressing the disproportionate impact of poverty on women; working with interested donors and recipients to allocate increased shares of ODA to poverty eradication; and intensifying international and regional cooperation for poverty eradication.

SDG2

The fight against hunger has progressed over the past 15 years. Globally, the prevalence of hunger has declined, from 15 per cent according to figures for 2000 to 2002, to 11 per cent according to figures for 2014 to

2016. However, more than 790 million people worldwide still lack regular access to adequate amounts of dietary energy. If current trends continue, the zero hunger target will be largely missed by 2030.

Ending hunger and malnutrition relies heavily on sustainable food production systems and resilient agricultural practices. To increase the productive capacity of agriculture, more investment is needed, both public and private, from domestic and foreign sources.

SDG 3 and 5

Two of the sustainable development goals to be reviewed in the HLPF Goal 3 on healthy lives and Goal 5 on gender equality are more than individual goals and are cross-cutting for successfully achieving sustainable development.

Trade facilitation and cooperation can only be successfully utilized with a healthy workforce and where women are able to fully participate in the economy of a country. With regards to SDG 3 on health, LLDCs have made some progress towards reducing under-five mortality rates. However, the current rate is higher than the average for the developing world. On SDG 5, over the period 2000 to 2015 women's representation in national parliaments and local governments has grown from 7.8% in 2000 to 26% in 2016. Proportion of women aged 20-24 years who were married by age 18 estimated to be 35.4% in 2015 is high in LLDCs compared to the world average of 25.9% or average for all the developing countries of 27.4% indicating the need to address this challenge.

While progress has been made, it is evident that LLDC's need to invest heavily in the health and ensuring gender equality in their respective countries.

SDG 9

Infrastructure provides the basic physical systems and structures essential to the operation of a society or enterprise. Industrialization drives economic growth, creates job opportunities and thereby reduces income poverty. Innovation advances the technological capabilities of industrial sectors and prompts the development of new skills.

However industrialization remains a vital factor to boost LLDCs' transformation and sustainable development.

The nature of LLDCs' economic growth till date has been mostly based on the primary sector of the economy (extractive industries and agriculture). The expected next step of substantive development will be a progressive shift towards more productive sectors of the economy, mainly industrial manufacturing (secondary sector) and services (tertiary sector).

However, in the global context no country can meet these challenges alone. LLDCs efforts to maximize domestic resource mobilization should be supported from a revitalized global partnership for development in line with the Vienna Programme of Action, the International Development Framework and the world that traverse the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development.

Official development assistance (ODA) and other commitments pertaining to finance, technology transfer, capacity building and market access must be fulfilled in a timely manner.

An important component of physical infrastructure is air shipping and air travel. Infrastructure and economic development also rely on information and communications technology.

LLDCs to implement comprehensive policies for infrastructure development

and maintenance; Promote sustainable transit systems through upgrading and maintenance of networks; development of corridors along transit routes; cross-border mechanisms, including one-stop border crossing; and economies of scale for transport systems through intermodal transport, inland container depots, dry ports etc; Harmonize gauges to facilitate regional connectivity; Promote multilateral and regional permit systems for road transport and expand multilateral quota systems among LLDCs and transit countries.

SDG 14

SDG14 is one of 17 Sustainable Development Goals that were universally adopted by all 193 Member States of the United Nations in September 2015. The Ocean Conference that has since been mandated by the United Nations to support the implementation of SDG14, is the first giant step down the road to Ocean's recovery.

Success of the Ocean Conference will be crucial to the universal push for implementing all the SDGs given the vital role that the Ocean plays in our world.

We have got momentum. We have raised the global consciousness on the need for action on Ocean's parlous condition. Now we must press on relentlessly to realise in full the vision of SDG 14.

The conference welcomes all existing successful initiatives that can harness quickly and effectively the necessary knowledge, strategies, energy, economic resources, and political will to drive implementation of SDG14 forward.

SDG 17

Investment

With current estimates suggesting that implementing the SDGs will require annual investments of between US\$5-7 trillion, it is clear that sustainable financing will be critical to our efforts to drive implementation of the SDGs on the scale necessary for them to be reached in the next 14 years.

Achieving this will require that all sources of finance be tapped into, and that all partners work together coherently and collaboratively.

It is clearly in all of our interests that there is close collaboration with International Development Banks and the United Nations to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the global sustainable development agenda.

STI

We cannot solve today's problems with yesterday's tools. It will require a transformation of society through rapid, continuous, and disruptive innovation on a massive scale.

- First, accelerating universal internet access is key. The faster we get full internet access for the world population the sooner we can accelerate implementation of the Goals.
- Second, help us to overcome major challenge through innovation – challenges like access to nutritious food; sustainable energy; digital financial services; online education or sanitation services etc. I would like you to consider which major challenge to implementation of the Goals you could take on and solve over the coming years.
- Third, let us also build dynamic partnerships between innovators, political leaders, and policy makers in response to the Goals. The UN has a number of existing initiatives that might interest you and I would be happy to connect you with those initiatives.

Means of Implementation

- Official Development Assistance (ODA)

Development partners and multilateral organizations have a crucial role to play in supporting the efforts of LLDCs to achieve sustainable development and eradication of poverty.

Existing commitments need to be fulfilled, while ODA should fully take into account the specific situation of each country.

- Aid for Trade

Aid for trade plays a key role in assisting capacity-building for LLDCs on the formulation of trade policies, implementation of trade facilitation measures, development of trade-related infrastructure, and linking them to global and regional value chains.

- South-South and Triangular Cooperation

South-South and triangular cooperation has a role to play in increasing the growth and development of LLDCs, as well as transit developing countries, through contribution to sharing of best practices, human and productive capacity-building, financial and technical assistance and technology transfer.

- The United Nations system

Organizations and bodies of the United Nation system, relevant international

organizations, regional development banks, regional economic integration organizations and other relevant regional and sub-regional organizations are requested to provide technical assistance and capacity-building for the implementation of the VPoA.

- The Private Sector

The private sector can contribute to build and strengthen LLDCs' productive capacity, export growth, technology transfer, diffusion of productive know-how

and skills, employment generation, infrastructure development and opening up

of new markets for high-value added products and services.

[PGA initiatives]

- As mentioned in the mornig to assist all countries in achieving the 2030 Agenda, the President of the General Assembly is undertaking a series of events to leave no country behind and address issues of importance to LLDCs such us: Climate Change; Financing; Innovation and Connectivity and, Education.
- These signature events are related to the push that PGA is making to strengthen the momentum across all the 17 SDGs.
- We have taken different initiatives and we are encouraged with the momentum. This is very important so that we tackle different issues in

particular for countries in special situations like LLDCs. We need to tackle the challenges; and for this, we are placing emphasis on ending poverty which is within our reach, find solutions for employment of the young people, find ways to overcome the increasing inequalities and create prosperity.

- The PGA have called upon all Heads of States and Governments so that SDG education is part of the school curricula. It is important for the young students in the schools, students in the universities and women and men at the community level to be aware of the SDGs. The village, town or city mayors need to be knowledgeable about the SDGs too. This will help in strengthening their engagement in planning and delivering the SDGs. This will help overcome the difficulties whereby 90% of the people may not be aware of the SDGs. We need to get the implementation of the SDGs correct.
- Inquire how the government is doing in implementing the SDGs, for example integration into their national plans, in addition to the strong need for LLDCs and transit countries to work together.
- Mention that a meaningful push for the implementation of all the 17 SDGs is a priority of the 71st Session of the UNGA. SDG implementation provides humanity with a unique opportunities to build partnerships and alliances across all sections of the national and local communities for peace, harmony, development and prosperity. In this regard, inform that:
 - We advocate for regional, national and local strategies and plans for delivery of the SDGs. Actions in the villages, towns and cities to achieve the SDGs supported by partnerships or alliances of local authorities, businesses, civil society, academia and government will accelerate the pace of achieving the SDGs for the goodness of all people.
 - Achievement of the SDGs will require active engagement of the young and old – women and men at the community levels – together with their local and national government support institutions. For this, they need to be knowledgeable about the SDGs. It will be of great benefit for the government when the SDGs are achieve as prosperity is better than deprivation.