

United Nations General Assembly

THE HIGH-LEVEL EURO-ASIA REGIONAL MEETING ON IMPROVING COOPERATION

ON TRANSIT, TRADE FACILITATION

AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Ha Noi, 7 March 2017

*H.E. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of Vietnam,
Excellencies,*

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honor to deliver the following statement on behalf of the President of the United Nations General Assembly, Peter Thomson, who unfortunately cannot be here today due to other multilateral commitments.

When world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, they agreed to a universal masterplan which, if implemented urgently, effectively, and at scale, will transform our world by eradicating extreme poverty, building peaceful and inclusive societies, advancing gender equality, combating climate change, and protecting our natural environment.

In order for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to be realized for the more than 489 million people living Landlocked Developing Countries, focused attention needs to be given to the unique economic challenges these nations face due to their geographic circumstances.

And targeted initiatives need to be developed to help overcome the economic disadvantages they face due to their lack of direct access to sea routes, increased logistical costs for trade, more restricted investment opportunities, reliance on commodities, and relative isolation from world markets.

Excellencies,

Meetings such as this are therefore vital, in bringing together representatives from Euro - Asia LLDCs, transit developing countries, the United Nations, and other key partners, to discuss mutually beneficial ways to strengthen transit cooperation, and improve regional and international trade opportunities for LLDCs.

A number of further key steps should be pursued.

This includes, firstly, ensuring the full implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Nairobi Package of the 10th Ministerial Conference of the WTO, the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, the outcome of last year's UN Conference on Sustainable Transportation and other relevant international agreements.

Secondly, we must all give favorable consideration to options aimed at strengthening regional and bilateral cooperation, in order to boost sustainable economic development, trade, and tourism, and improve transport infrastructure.

Thirdly, we must examine ways to simplify, harmonize and standardize transport and transit procedures to enable smoother access to regional transit and transport infrastructure.

Fourthly, encouragement should be given to the pursuit of policy reforms at national levels to drive long-term economic growth, including by investing in educational and training opportunities for local populations, particularly women and girls.

And finally, let us strengthen collaboration and coordination amongst all key stakeholders, including across Government, the UN, civil society, the private sector and other relevant partners.

Excellencies,

As part of my effort to drive a universal push to implement the Sustainable Development Goals around our world, I will be convening a series of High-Level SDG Action Events, over the coming months, which will address critical cross-cutting issues of concerns for LLDCs.

These SDG Action Events, all to be held at UN Headquarters in New York, will address climate change on 23 March; sustainable financing on 18 April; technology and innovation on 17 May; and education for all on 28 June.

I encourage all of you to participate at the highest possible levels at these events – as well as in the UN's Ocean Conference to be held from 5-9 June. Your high level participation will ensure that the particular needs of LLDCs are addressed in these discussions.

Excellencies

The discussions that you will have over the coming days will be vital to our global efforts to implement the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and ensuring that no nations and no people are left behind.

I wish you well in your deliberations.

I thank you.