



Equatorial Guinea marks a major milestone as it graduates from the category of Least Developed Countries

Press Release

New York, 6 June 2017 - Thirty four years after its inclusion in the category of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Equatorial Guinea graduated on 4 June 2017, marking a major milestone for the country and the group of LDCs. Equatorial Guinea is the fifth country graduating since the creation of the category in 1971. Previously, Botswana (1994), Cabo Verde (2007), Maldives (2011) and Samoa (2014) also graduated. Vanuatu and Angola are scheduled to graduate in 2020 and 2021 respectively.

“I wholeheartedly extend my congratulations to the Government and people of Equatorial Guinea,” said Ms. Fekitameloela ‘Utoikamanu, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. “Equatorial Guinea’s graduation from the LDC category marks an important moment for all LDCs but also for the United Nations which has been supporting this vulnerable group of countries since the early 1970s. While 47 LDCs remain, in the meantime, Equatorial Guinea’s story provides hope for others. ”

LDCs graduate from the category through meeting two of the three graduation thresholds: 1. gross national income per capita, 2. human assets index and 3. the economic vulnerability index. Alternatively, graduation can be achieved through meeting twice the graduation threshold of gross national income per capita. Equatorial Guinea has graduated based on fulfilling the income-only criterion. With the graduation of Equatorial Guinea, there remain 33 LDCs in Africa, 13 in Asia and the Pacific and 1 in Latin America and the Caribbean, totalling 47 LDCs. Nine additional LDCs reached the graduation thresholds in 2015 and several more have expressed their intention to graduate around 2020.

Support for the graduation of LDCs has increased in recent years. The United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) has been supporting LDCs with respect to graduation since the Office was established in 2001. The Office continues to lend support including coordinating the UN system through providing analytical and capacity building initiatives in support of LDCs. UN-OHRLLS has also been actively supporting efforts to integrate the Istanbul

Programme of Action for the LDCs into the Sustainable Development Goals including those related to doubling the LDCs share of global trade and raising productive capacity.

For more information on LDCs, visit: www.unohrlls.org

Media contact:

Mr. Damien Sass - sass@un.org

UN-OHRLLS
United Nations Headquarters / 405 E. 42nd Street / New York 10017 / USA
www.ohrlls.org

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