SUMMARY REPORT

Consultative Meeting of LDCs and Friends of LDCs on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in LDCs

27 - 28 June, 2017

Glen Cove, New York
INTRODUCTION

The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) convened a Consultative Meeting of LDCs and Friends of LDCs on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for the Least Developed Countries.

The Consultative Meeting took place one year after the Midterm Review of the IPoA (in May 2016 in Antalya) and at a critical juncture of various key processes taking place at the UN, including the upcoming High-Level Political Forum as well as the on-going UN reform. Increasingly urgent and complex challenges that are driving the development needs and vulnerabilities of LDCs call for accelerated action by all stakeholders to ensure that the global community puts the LDCs at the heart of our common development agenda.

The main objective of the Consultative Meeting was to encourage informal exchange of views on key accomplishments and critical constraints in implementing the Agenda 2030 and the IPoA and how the main challenges can be addressed at national, regional and global levels. In line with the upcoming High-Level Political Forum, the Consultative Meeting gave special focus to Sustainable Development Goal 1 on ending poverty and also discussed how the UN system can best support the efforts of the LDCs in the spirit of leaving no one behind.

The event comprised a working dinner on Tuesday, 27 June, and a full day of thematic working sessions on Wednesday, 28 June, including presentations on specific topics followed by interactive debates. The meeting convened Permanent Representatives of LDCs and Friends of LDCs, as well as selected experts, and representatives from various UN agencies.

The presentations made during the Consultative Meeting can be accessed at:

http://unohrlls.org/event/consultative-meeting/

OPENING SESSION

The opening session featured remarks from the following speakers: Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, and H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh and Chair, LDC group.

Ms. ‘Utoikamanu reflected that in the development challenges in LDCs intersect the most with those that relate to conflict, humanitarian crisis and climate change. Promoting sustainable development and poverty eradication in these countries will go a long way towards preventing conflicts and humanitarian crises and addressing challenges of vulnerability and extremism— all of which are the centre of the Secretary General’s agenda. She noted that without intensified focus and support for LDCs in the implementation of the SDGs, the international community risks failing the agenda in these countries already at the early days of its implementation. Ms. ‘Utoikamanu then underlined that ensuring that the vulnerable countries will not be left behind in the implementation of the sustainable development goals will be among her key priorities in her new role as the High Representative.

In his remarks, H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momen, reflected that nearly two years have passed since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement and that these historic agreements are now influencing the process of global policy making. He then underlined that business as usual approach with current growth projections would leave nearly 35 per cent of the population in LDCs in extreme poverty by 2030. Yet, they are still to reach the pre-crises level of economic growth. The
projected growth rate of 4.5 per cent in 2016 puts these countries well below the 7 per cent growth target of the IPoA. In addition, LDCs are highly vulnerable to various shocks and crises which together with the rapid population growth makes it much harder for LDC Governments to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, combat hunger and malnutrition and to improve the provision of basic services.

In going forward, H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momen, highlighted the importance of technology and investment as key drivers of structural transformation in LDCs. In this regard, operationalization of the Technology Bank and investment promotion regimes for LDCs is critical. He then recalled the last QCPR, which reassured that LDCs would continue to receive priorities and tailor made support from the United Nations to realize the IPoA and the 2030 Agenda and this should be the cornerstone and guiding principle of the United Nations reform exercise.

**SESSION 1: IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

The first panel session was chaired by **Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, OHRLLS**. She pointed out that LDCs face particular difficulties in achieving the sustainable development goals, and that SDGs need to be achieved in LDCs in order to reach them globally. She stressed that in recent years, the international community has adopted the blueprints for building a prosperous, equitable, and sustainable world. Further, she encouraged participants to discuss what has to be done to achieve the goals set in the Istanbul Programme. She noted that in going forward, national ownership and adaptation of SDGs to the national context, including national plans and budgeting processes, will play a crucial role in accelerating progress.

**Mr. Tegegnework Gettu, Associate Administrator of UNDP** highlighted that an integrated approach is much needed to boost and sustain progress in LDCs, and it is also critical for ensuring steady progress towards graduation from the LDC category and beyond. He noted that proactive policies and investments are required to tackle entrenched inequalities and eradicate poverty in LDCs. He stressed that the commitment of the international community to address shared challenges in attaining the 2030 Agenda is important for stability and sustained development of LDCs. Mr. Gettu informed the meeting that UNDP applies the UN development system’s common “MAPS” (mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support) approach and conducts “MAPS Missions” in LDCs to support SDG implementation particularly in areas of integration of SDGs into national plans, financing strategies, and improvement in statistical database. Mr. Gettu emphasized that the special needs of LDCs require continued strong national leadership, dedicated support from national and international partners and mobilizing sufficient resources.

In his presentation, H.E. Mr. Gebeyehu Ganga, Deputy Permanent Representative of Ethiopia noted that reducing poverty and achieving sustainable and inclusive development are the development objectives of Ethiopia. He highlighted the achievements of Ethiopia in implementing comprehensive national development strategies and integration of SDGs and IPoA into national development plans. Mr. Ganga noted the importance of contextualizing 2030 Agenda into local development condition and national ownership to ensure effective implementation, monitoring and following-up. He shared the successful experience of Ethiopia in inclusive consultation with all stakeholders particularly the civil society and the private sector for the voluntary national review. He also outlined the negative impact of volatile global commodity prices and climate change on Ethiopia’s development. He called for continued support from friends of LDCs in providing aid for trade, ODA and technology transfer so as to provide an enabling environment for the development of LDCs.

**Mr. Mamadou Dia, LDC National Focal Point from the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning of Senegal** outlined three pillars in integrating the IPoA into national development strategies of Senegal, namely, 1) structural transformation, 2) human capital and social protection, and 3) good governance, decentralization,
peace and security. He shared the best practices of Senegal in mainstreaming the SDGs and IPoA into national development strategies, such as producing annual reports, conducting mid-term and final evaluations, regularly updating an action matrix with clear delineation of responsibilities, objectives and actions. Also the implementation phase in Senegal was introduced, which includes planning, programming, execution, evaluation and follow-up. He concluded the presentation by sharing the latest macroeconomic indicators, noting that Senegal has entered a new level of growth with estimated economic growth of 6.9% in 2016 and remarkable development of the agricultural sector. Meanwhile, progress towards achieving the three graduation criteria is mixed, with GNI per capita criteria furthest behind.

Mr. Gauri Pradhan, International Coordinator of LDC Watch, reflected that the development progress of LDCs is uneven and unstable. He stressed that LDC governments face resource and institutional constraints and expressed concern about the inadequate delivery of the commitments made by development partners. He acknowledged that inclusive participation of all stakeholders, including the civil society, is important for localization of the SDGs, and the National Focal Points of LDCs play a crucial role in integrating the SDGs and IPoA into national development plans. He appealed for “solidarity in action” and a better development paradigm that is active, productive and supportive for all. He urged all stakeholders to join hands in fulfilling the commitment to help LDCs achieve sustainable development.

Interactive discussion

Delegates emphasized the social, economic and environmental challenges facing LDCs and the need for poverty eradication, structural transformation, economic diversification and climate change action. Concerns were expressed over lack of stability and peace in some LDCs, which are a prerequisite for sustainable development and will release precious resources for development.

On localization of the SDGs and IPoA, an integrated - not a piecemeal or sectoral - approach is required in order to achieve the SDGs as they cut across all sectors. It was pointed out that national ownership and adaption of the SDGs to the national context, including adjusting to specific country demands, resource endowment, skills mix and national development plans, is essential. It was suggested that fine-tuning of development indicators may be required to adapt to the national context and to increase relevance, clarity as well ensure effective monitoring and follow-up. It was also emphasized that sustainable development plans should not lose sight of the nexus between humanitarian crisis and development. Also integration of rehabilitation, reconstruction and resilience building into national development plans was underlined.

It was mentioned that capturing the demographic dividend is crucial for sustainable development in LDCs, particularly in Africa. Efforts to integrate and empower youth and women in economic activities need to be strengthened, as they represent a large, vibrant and productive labour force. Many delegates also shared the view that access to affordable and sustainable energy and more efficient use of energy is crucial to sustainable development of LDCs.

It was stressed that mainstreaming the IPoA and SDGs into national development plans requires policy support from the international community as well as South-South cooperation. The UN development system should work together to provide targeted support and expertise to LDCs through integrated approach and avoid overlapping. Delegates underscored that partnership building at all levels is central to achieving the SDGs, particularly building effective public-private partnerships and engaging with civil society.

SESSION 2: UN SYSTEM SUPPORT TO LDCS

The second session of the Consultative Meeting therefore focused on the UN system support to LDCs. How the UN needs to adapt to best respond has been the topic of much debate over the past 3 years, and the session discussed what are the specific needs of the LDCs, and how is the current UN architecture positioned to
H.E. Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve, Permanent Representative of Belgium and Co-chair of the Friends of LDCs, chaired the session. He recognized that LDCs face particular challenges due to their unique situation. He pointed out that all entities of the UN system are responsible for supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the UN system as a whole should scale up its support for implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the LDCs.

H.E. Mr. Khiane Phunsourivong, Permanent Representative of Lao People’s Democratic Republic, shared his country’s experiences in the implementation of the MDGs and SDGs. He highlighted the importance of national ownership of the agenda and its mainstreaming in the national developments plans, and the need for engagement of all stakeholders, including the international community, UN System, Civil Society Organizations, at all levels within the country in the adoption of national development plans. Reaffirming Lao PDR’s commitment to implementation of the SDGs, the Ambassador stated that UN Systems’ support is critical for its successful implementation. In this context, the Ambassador informed that Lao PDR with the UN has convened numerous Round Table Meetings since 2008, to discuss and evaluate progress in the implementation of national development plans, and to mobilize resources from development partners, with representation of all stakeholders. Lao PDR has also signed the UN-Lao partnership framework (2017-2021). At the country level, the Ambassador emphasised that the UN system should focus on integrated normative support for implementation, monitoring, and supporting LDCs in implementation of the SDG. It should move towards a model of harmonization and better coordination of UN activities, reflecting priorities of LDC governments and respond to needs of LDCs. The UN Country Teams should work together to avoid duplication of activities at the national level.

Mr. Namsuk Kim, Economic Affairs Officer, CDP-Secretariat, DESA, briefed the meeting on the Survey of Organizations of the UNDS on the Application of the LDC category, which was carried out by CDP, mandated by GA resolution 70/294. He informed that 29 entities of the UN System recognized the LDC category and reflected it as a priority in their strategic plan documents, except for the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. On the application of the LDC category, some entities apply caps on how much LDC member’s contribute to their budgets; others have targets for budget allocations for LDCs, namely UNDP and UNICEF; and some organizations provide technical assistance, travel support, and scholarships. He shared that as consequences of non-application of the LDC criteria, some LDCs are left out as beneficiaries. It is often unclear how the stated LDC priority of UNDS entities translates into budget allocation because most entities do not have operational guidelines with clear budget targets, nor rules for budget allocations to the LDCs. Mr. Kim concluded by highlighting that there is much to be done to translate the recognition of the category into programmes and budget allocation. He recommended adoption of guidelines for the application of LDC category for UNDS; international financial institutions to recognize and apply the category; and proposed that ECOSOC could request the CDP to monitor the application of LDC category on a regular basis.

Interactive Discussion

During the interactive session, LDC delegations shared that the UN System at the country level should ensure policy decisions are evidence based and interventions support and contribute to achieving the SDGs. The Resident Coordination System should respond to needs of LDCs and support them in the implementation of the SDGs. Some delegations echoed the call for the Resident Coordinator System to lead the country team, ensure effective coordination and build synergies, and avoid duplication of activities at the national level.

Many delegations shared that SDGs have been integrated into the national development plans. However, the biggest challenge remains mobilization of resources for implementation of SDGs. Thus, UN System support on Means of Implementation as reflected in SDG 17 and Addis Ababa Action Agenda is fundamental for
implementation of SDGs. Additionally, support for implementation of SDGs that have a multiplier effect need to be prioritized, such as SDG 7 on Affordable and Clean Energy, SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure.

Concerns were expressed on the challenges of data availability for monitoring and evaluation in LDCs. Delegations stressed the need to strengthen LDC’s statistical management systems, including reconciliation of local and national data, and strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices. They also highlighted the need to improve and establish methodologies for indicators on SDG 13 on Climate Change and SDG 14 on Oceans, and updating of official data on SDG indicators and baseline, where data is unavailable.

LDCs on the path to graduation expressed difficulty in meeting the economic vulnerability criteria, and stated that building resilient economies and reducing external vulnerability is a key priority for LDCs to achieve the SDGs. The delegations also highlighted the need for coordinated support for expedited and sustainable graduation, as well as smooth transition.

Development partner delegations highlighted that LDCs as a group were under performing on all SDGs, and reiterated their commitment and support for LDCs. They cited initiatives, such as ODA targets, DFQF market access, support for smooth transition, and graduation, including prioritization of support for LDCs in the QCPR 2016 resolution.

**SESSION 3 – FINANCING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN THE LDCS**

The third session of the Consultative Meeting discussed financing options for LDCs to achieve the SDGs and IPoA goals taking into account the change in the development financing landscape and exploring which options LDCs could tap into, taking into account their specific constraints for example with respect to capacity. Mr. Adnan Altay Altinörs, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations, chaired the session. He expressed concern on the declining trends of ODA to LDCs and flagged that the international community should find ways to redress this trend and increase their support to the LDCs. In reference to the Technology Bank, he indicated that the Government of Turkey has committed to the operationalization of the Technology Bank. The resolution establishing the Technology Bank was recently passed in the GA and 2017 should be the start-up year for the activities. All partners, international organizations and relevant stakeholders are asked to provide financial resources and capacity to the bank to ensure that it will be operationalized in 2017.

Mr. Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice President, World Bank Group, indicated that the implementation of the SDGs will required improved domestic resource mobilization, better and smarter aid, unlocking private investment for development, attracting FDI, remittance and philanthropic finance. ODA will remain very relevant, particularly for the LDCs. However, ODA alone will not be enough to implement the 2030 Agenda in the LDCs. Increasing domestic resources can facilitate the ability of Governments to implement their national development plans. Private sector finance presents a great potential for additional funding. However, this will require improving the business climate, developing local capital markets and mitigating investment risks.

The International Development Association (IDA) has the overarching theme of “Investing in growth, resilience and opportunity”. The hybrid financial model of the IDA allowed it to scale financing USD 75 billion in IDA18, in a context in which donor contributions stayed flat in national currency terms. One of the priorities of the IDA, is the focus on fragility and risk mitigation. The policy of the IDA focuses on taking advantage of “turn around” situations where there is a critical window to build stability and resilience. In addition, it addresses the unique challenges faced by small states.

Ms. Judith Karl, Executive Secretary, UNCDF, highlighted the role that ODA can play to leverage all sources of finance – public and private, domestic and international – so that higher quantity and quality of finance can be directed towards the implementation of the SDGs in the LDCs, especially at the local level. Public finance can
be used by donors to adopt changes in the capital reserve requirement framework for those banking and non-
banking institutions that invest in LDCs. It can also create a range of credit enhancement mechanisms through
development partners such as guarantees, insurances and subordinate debt. Donors can also promote more
lenient collateral requirements for loans to the private sector from LDCs. This could be coupled with the
 provision of technical assistance to domestic institutional investors in LDCs geared to invest in domestic
productive assets.

Ms. Karl noted that one of the difficulties lies in the imbalance in the territorial distribution of investment
within countries, where rural areas and secondary cities tend to be neglected. A legal framework that supports
equity and debt investments at sovereign and sub-sovereign levels would facilitate investment outside capitals.
Tapping into domestic pension funds in investing in local transformative infrastructures could contribute to a
more resilient economy while protecting the investment of current and future pensioners. In the case of the
LDCs, measures to mitigate risks related to “first movers” need to be put in pace to facilitate investors that are
first in a new market.

Mr. Oliver Schwank, FfD Office, DESA, shared some of the findings of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing
for Development. He said that developing economies faced a challenging macroeconomic environment in 2016.
The impact of lower commodity revenues and, as a result, foreign currency shortages, volatile capital flows,
decelerating trade growth is compounded by the effects of natural disasters and humanitarian and security
crises. Against this backdrop, it is unlikely that the LDCs achieve growth rates that are consistent with the goals
set in the IPoA or the SDGs. If this trend persists, it is implausible that the LDCs will be able to substantially
reduce extreme poverty by 2030, thus SDG1 of the Agenda 2030 will remain unattainable.

Increasing investment in LDCs, particularly long-term projects that can address its large infrastructure gap and
contribute to promote the development of productive capacities, is not only crucial for achieving the SDGs in
the LDCs, but can stimulate economic growth at the regional and global levels. Many LDCs are taking action on
policy commitments integrating global agreements into national policy. These efforts must be supported by
the solid commitment of the international community, given the global implications of the challenges faced by
the LDCs.

Ms. Susanna Wolf, Deputy Chief, OHRLLS, indicated that despite the fundamental role of ODA in the financial
landscape of resources available to LDCs, the resources needed to implement the 2030 Agenda and IPoA in the
LDCs largely surpass the domestic resources and official international public finance available to the LDCs.
Despite capacity shortfalls many LDCs have been able to increase their tax revenue as a percentage of GDP,
albeit from a low base. Domestic revenues are still very low as a result of structural factors, particularly high
poverty rates, economic structures with high degree of informality and weak capabilities in the public tax
administration. ODA finances large parts of the Government budget of most LDCs. Total ODA to LDCs declined
by 4% in real terms in 2016. Also, less members of the DAC reached the GNI target. Given the resource
constraints faced by the LDCs, fulfilling the commitments on ODA contained in the IPoA and the 2030 Agenda
is of crucial importance. An important factor that place challenges in the ability for long-term planning in LDCs
is the low predictability of ODA.

Another potential source of finance for the LDCs could be climate financing. Although there are clear
methodological challenges associated at measuring it, it is clear that given the disproportionate impact of
climate change in the LDCs, partly due their limited capacity to cope with the effects of natural disasters and
other external shocks, climate finance presents great potential. It is important that priority is given to LDCs,
not only in terms of total allocation of climate finance, but also in relation to enhance their absorption
capacities and in what regards adaptation.
**Interactive Discussion**

During the interactive part of the session, several representatives highlighted the importance of enhancing the capacities of the LDCs to manage complex financial instruments, such as blended finance. Various LDCs stressed the need of scaling up climate finance to the LDCs. One LDC representative shared their experience in organizing a conference of investors and preparing a national policy to enhance resource mobilization.

In relation to the Total Official Support for Sustainable Development (TOSSD), a measurement framework proposed by the OECD that seek to complement ODA by including other sources of finance, one representative indicated that this measure could contribute to providing adequate incentives to development partners and increasing resources channelled to LDCs.

Foreign direct investment is an important vehicle to channel knowledge and technical capacities, increase government revenue, create decent employment and support increase in productivity. In the case of the LDCs, investment promotion agencies can play a pivotal role in increasing both domestic and foreign investment. They can also help attract investment that has positive spillovers to the local economy.

**SESSION 4: RESILIENCE BUILDING**

The session discussed how effective are the existing risk-management mechanisms and what are the major gaps in the existing mechanisms. Also the type of measures needed for comprehensive and effective crises mitigation and resilience building for LDCs were deliberated. The session was chaired by H.E. Mr. Necton Mhura, the Permanent Representative of Malawi. In his remarks, he highlighted that LDCs are facing a wide range of environmental, economic and financial shocks, with disproportionate impacts. As such, the issue of resilience building is a pressing development priority for LDCs. He noted that systemic shocks mostly occur in LDCs and that they can wipe away gains made towards achieving development goals. He expressed that addressing these challenges is one of the contemporary developments for LDCs. He emphasised that LDCs must build the necessary capacity to withstand these shocks. He noted that the IPoA, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai framework and the Paris Agreement all outline various specific measures aiming at building resilience of LDCs and other vulnerable countries.

In his presentation, H.E. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Permanent Representative of Nepal informed that after the earthquake in Nepal, a comprehensive report ‘Towards Resilient Nepal’ was published in 2016, to understand the issue of resilience within the context of the Nepal. He underlined that due to its’ geography, Nepal is vulnerable to various shocks, including weather related disasters and earthquakes. Roughly, about 500 disaster incidents occur annually in Nepal, causing about 500 deaths per year, on average. He emphasised that while the government and other stakeholders have invested in preparedness and building resilience, the needs remain significant. There is still need to come up with a systematic and scientific mechanism of identifying safe places to build houses and settlements to avoid landslides. He underscored that the disaster risks are aggravated by the impact of climate change, which negatively affects lives and livelihoods of millions of people. As a result of these shocks, development is more difficult and more expensive. He highlighted the importance of science, technology and innovation in minimizing the loss during such disasters. He also emphasised that technology and ICT-enabled early warning systems, real-time information dissemination and post-disaster rescue and recovery campaigns should be promoted as much as possible.

H.E. Mr. Robert Sisilo, the Permanent Representative of Solomon Islands shared that the Medium Term Fiscal Strategy (MTFS) framework is the basis for government’s preparedness for unforeseen economic challenges and external shocks to the economy. The MTFS is a five-year strategy, which is updated annually to ensure that it accommodates any unforeseen changes in the economic environment. Like other SIDS, Solomon Islands is very vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters and climate change. Shocks such as earthquakes and the
related tsunamis, cyclones and severe flash flooding lead to loss of lives and significantly damage property. He stressed that the recovery and rebuilding efforts are not only costly, but also usually results in diverting limited resources from service delivery and also exacerbating slow progress in the socioeconomic development of the country. He informed that the establishment of the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECCDM) in 2011 was a strategic decision by the government to address and coordinate holistically national efforts to strengthen national capacity for mainstreaming and developing national risk mitigation and management strategies to ensure community preparedness and resilience to the impact of such adverse shocks.

Mr. Dan Osgood, Columbia University, emphasised that both long term development and management of immediate disasters in LDCs requires proactive management of climate shocks. Risk management solutions must be much more carefully engineered to directly meet the needs of the communities they serve, requiring an unprecedented integration between tools, scales, crowdsourcing, climate services while guaranteeing formal, quantitative ownership of each partner involved, in a science based approach. As the global community builds insurance, disaster preparedness, humanitarian response, information and decision systems, various tools might be effectively integrated and applied in the most productive manner, according to the vision and voices of those they are intended to serve.

In his remarks, Mr. Alim Abdul, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, OHRLLS, emphasised that LDCs do not only face extreme shocks but are also highly exposed to those covariate shocks due to their limited capacity to cope. Hence, systemic shocks have a higher cumulative impact on vulnerable economies such as LDCs than other countries. He highlighted that crises and shocks can broadly be structured into four categories: economic and financial crises; natural disasters, health disasters and political shocks. These external shocks, along with the initial condition of underdevelopment can constrain LDCs trajectory of growth, which is often very low to begin with. He highlighted the existing resilience building arrangements and instruments at the national and regional levels, as well as, the multilateral arrangements. He outlined some of the constraints and shortcomings of these arrangements, including that national policies are often fragmented and under-funded; and, eligibility constraints to get access to the multilateral risk financing windows (LDC category is not recognized by the IFIs and many agencies). As a way forward, he noted that it was important to among others; leverage the existing mechanisms, tools and sources of support, replicate successful and effective tools to LDCs on a sub-regional basis and, hedge the risks through market-based disaster risk financing such as different types of derivatives.

Interactive Discussion

During the interactive discussion, it was stressed that the use of insurance schemes was a new element. However, it was noted that given the low income of LDCs, premiums should be low, otherwise, they would be unaffordable.

It was also flagged that Haiti could be a perfect case study to illustrate the strong correlation between the level of resilience and achieving sustainable development, as within a span of 10 years, the country has experienced an earthquake; multiple devastating hurricanes, economic shocks; and, internal political and social instability. It was highlighted that with the support of regional and international partners, there have been some improvements in terms of resilience, based on a reinforced risk and emergency prevention and management plan, increased nationwide availability of stronger population shelters, education and awareness campaigns, and social safety nets.

On preparedness and insurance, it was emphasised that without adequate investment in institutions and capacity, mechanisms such as early-warning systems will not benefit any one. There is an important link between building the insurance sector and, building readiness of country or the sector in question. It was discussed that while insurance premiums may be high, the risks can be pooled, which would reduce risks and
cost. The World Bank can contribute to reduce the premium and design of the insurance scheme. The Bank already is implementing such projects in areas such as agriculture.

It was emphasised that the rise in sea-level is a slow but devastating disaster, especially for low-lying coastal areas. It was discussed that in some instances, affected countries have to buy land in neighbouring countries as a way of building preparedness and resilience. However, the challenges of building the required infrastructure, ensuring adequate delivery of services, and, the potential loss of culture, remain a challenge.

**BRIEFING ON THE INVESTMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR THE LDCS IN THE AREAS OF INVESTMENT-RELATED NEGOTIATIONS AND DISPUTE SETTLEMENT**

The chair of the session, Mr. Americo Zampetti, Senior Programme Officer, OHRLLS, stressed the importance of FDI for the implementation of the IPoA and the 2030 Agenda, and the United Nations' mandates to promote and support FDI to the LDCs. In this connection, the investment support programme, currently being designed by OHRLLS in collaboration with the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), supported by a grant from Italy, will provide much needed legal and professional assistance to LDC governments and under-resourced LDC enterprises in the areas of investment-related negotiations and dispute settlement.

Mr. Kabir Duggal, Baker & McKenzie LLP briefed the meeting on the proposed Investment Support Programme for Investment Related Negotiations and Dispute Settlement. He shared that the programme will provide assistance by multidisciplinary experts to LDCs with investment-related activities and investment-related disputes. LDC Governments and eligible private sector entities will be able to request assistance from the programme. The programme will be implemented by the International Development Law Organization in collaboration with OHRLLS, funded through voluntary contributions to a general multi-donor IDLO trust fund. The yearly budget is estimated at around USD 2 million. Mr. Duggal invited development partners and interested organizations to support the programme.

**Interactive Discussion**

Several LDC delegations recalled SDG 17's target on investment promotion regimes for LDC, highlighted the importance of FDI, and invited development partners to support the Investment Support Programme. Acknowledging the importance of building capacity of LDCs in the areas of FDI legislation, some delegations called for the Investment Support programme to undertake capacity development activities on FDI legislation in LDCs.

**SESSION 5: CLOSING AND KEY MESSAGES**

Ms. ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, thanked all the participants for attending and actively engaging in the discussion. She also thanked all the presenters for their insightful remarks. She underscored that with respect to the implementation of the SDGs, it is encouraging to note that many LDCs have integrated them in their national plans. In all the LDCs that mainstreamed and localized SDGs political will and participation of stakeholders was crucial.

She then highlighted some of the key messages from the fruitful and productive discussions:

- Business as usual approach with current growth projections would leave nearly 35 per cent of the population in LDCs in extreme poverty by 2030.
- The importance of support by the UN system to LDCs was flagged, and room for improvement was discussed. The UN system should ensure that policy decisions are evidence based and interventions
support and contribute to achieving the SDGs. Furthermore, the Resident Coordinators need to ensure effective coordination and build synergies, and avoid duplication of activities at the national level.

- The need for coordinated support to expedited and sustainable graduation and smooth transition was highlighted.
- Application of the LDC category by the UNDS - there is much to be done to translate the recognition of the category into programmes and budget allocation.
- Mobilization of resources for implementation of SDGs in LDCs remains the biggest challenge. Support for the implementation of the SDGs that have a multiplier effect, such as SDG 7 on Affordable and Clean Energy, SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth, and SDG 9 on Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, need to be prioritized.
- Increasing investment in LDCs, particularly long-term projects that can address its large infrastructure gap and contribute to promote the development of productive capacities, is not only crucial for achieving the SDGs in the LDCs, but can stimulate economic growth at the regional and global levels.
- Total ODA to LDCs declined by 4% in real terms in 2016. Also, less members of the DAC reached the GNI target. Furthermore, the quality of development cooperation needs to be improved, especially with respect to using country systems and aligning support with country priorities.
- On resilience building - systemic shocks mostly occur in LDCs and they can wipe away gains made towards achieving development goals. Addressing these challenges is crucial for LDCs and they must build the necessary capacity to withstand these shocks.
- Technology and ICT-enabled early warning systems, real-time information dissemination and post-disaster rescue and recovery campaigns should be promoted as much as possible.
- Risk management solutions must be much more carefully engineered to directly meet the needs of the communities they serve, requiring an unprecedented integration between tools, scales, crowdsourcing, climate services while guaranteeing formal, quantitative ownership of each partner involved, in a science based approach.
ANNEX I

Consultative Meeting of LDCs and Friends of LDCs on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in LDCs

27 - 28 June 2017

Glen Cove, New York

Programme

Tuesday, 27 June

17.30  Departure from UNHQ / New York City

20.00  Dinner with remarks by:

Welcoming remarks:  Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS
                  H.E. Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh and Chair, LDC Group

Wednesday, 28 June

9.00 – 10.45  Session 1: Implementation of Sustainable Development Goals in the Least Developed Countries

Chair:  Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, OHRLLS
Speakers:  Mr. Tegegnework Gettu, Associate Administrator, UNDP
          H.E. Mr. Gebeyehu Ganga, Deputy Permanent Representative, Ethiopia
          Mr. Mamadou Dia, LDC National Focal Point, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning, Senegal
          Mr. Gauri Pradhan, International Coordinator, LDC Watch

Interactive discussion

10.45 – 11.00 Coffee break

11:00 – 12.00  Session 2: UN system support to LDCs
Chair: H.E. Mr. Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve, Permanent Representative of Belgium

Speakers: H.E. Mr. Khiane Phunsourivong, Permanent Representative of Lao People’s Democratic Republic
Mr. Namsuk Kim, Economic Affairs Officer, CDP-Secretariat, DESA

Interactive discussion

12.00 – 12.30  Briefing on the Investment Support programme for the LDCs in the areas of investment-related negotiations and dispute settlement

Chair: Mr. Americo Zampetti, Senior Programme Officer, OHRLLS
Speaker: Mr. Kabir Duggal, Baker & McKenzie LLP

Interactive discussion

12.30 – 14.00  Lunch

14.00 – 15.30  Session 3: Financing SDGs in LDCs

Chair: Mr. Adnan Altay Altinors, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations

Speakers: Mr. Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice President, World Bank Group
Ms. Judith Karl, Executive Secretary, UNCDF
Mr. Oliver Schwank, FfD Office, DESA
Ms. Susanna Wolf, Deputy Chief, OHRLLS

Interactive discussion

15.30 – 15.45  Coffee break

15.45 – 16:45  Session 4: Resilience Building

Chair: H.E. Mr. Necton D. Mhura, Permanent Representative of Malawi

Speakers: H.E. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai, Permanent Representative, Nepal
H.E. Mr. Robert Sisilo, Permanent Representative, Solomon Islands
Dr. Daniel Edward Osgood, Lead Scientist, Financial Instruments Sector Team, the Earth Institute at Columbia University
Mr. Abdul Alim, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, OHRLLS

Interactive discussion

16:45 – 17.00  Session 5: Way forward and closing remarks

Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS

17.30  Departure to New York City