



**UN-OHRLLS**

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES,  
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

## **TALKING POINTS FOR PRESS BRIEFING**

### **Entry into Force of the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries**

**Press Briefing Room, Level 2, UNHQ, New York  
6 October, 2017**

Your Excellency, Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations and Chair of Landlocked Developing Countries

Your Excellency, Mr. Odbayar Erdenetsogt, Ambassador at-Large and Interim Director of the ITT for LLDCs

Members and friends of the Press.

First, I would like to thank you for being here today –

Today, we wish to brief you on a very important initiative that we hope will support the LLDCs in their strives to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action -

the International Think Tank for LLDCs which is hosted by the Government of Mongolia.

While the initiative was taken some time back, it is today that we - dare I say finally - see its fruition.

The Think Tank inscribes itself in resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and ensuing decisions.

This truly is a very significant achievement for the LLDCs. OHRLLS and myself wish to congratulate the LLDCs on their unwavering pursuit over the years to get this important tool for all LLDCs from idea to action.

Let me share some pertinent background with you

Why such a think tank ?

You are aware of the specific challenges LLDCs face for example due to geographic features making them remote from seaports, requiring major investments into road infrastructures, issues of financing of infrastructure investments , access to IT, trade issues and I could go on.

Thus, equipping the LLDCs with analytical capacity, with a platform for experience and knowledge sharing and a tool to enhance the visibility of shared issues is a truly strategic effort.

Indeed, the Think Tank will provide a centre of excellence for high quality research and policy advice and will contribute to further strengthening of the analytical capacities of landlocked developing countries.

It will :

undertake research on the priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action, identify best practices on issues concerning LLDCs and widely disseminate them amongst all;

strengthen analytical capacities of LLDCs in key areas of sustainable development to help them overcome their geographical disadvantages;

assist in the formulation of joint platforms or common positions for concerted actions of the LLDCs at international fora;

foster enhanced cooperation between LLDCs through exchange of information and experiences.

So, this important Think Tank is the first intergovernmental body of the LLDCs.

By ratifying the agreement, LLDCs have shown their highest level of political commitment to tackle the development challenges that they face.

And by bringing the Agreement into force, we can now begin the work of formalizing the Think Tank and turning the vision for a strategic tool into reality.

My colleague Ambassador Odbayar who is the interim Director of the Think Tank is with us and can brief you on further detail and work undertaken already but also the work now ahead to fully operationalise the Think Tank.

For background on how we got to today, I just wish to share that

OHRLLS and OLA supported the group of LLDCs to elaborate the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank that was endorsed at the group's 9th Ministerial Meeting in September 2010 in New York.

The Agreement on the establishment of the International Think Tank for LLDCs was opened for signature and ratification in October 2010.

In the interim we recognise partnership of the International Think Tank with other UN Agencies including UNDP, WTO and UNCTAD ; as well as other institutions.

Once more, I take the opportunity to thank all the LLDCs that have ratified the Agreement so far for helping us reach this milestone.

I also urge those members who haven't yet ratified to do so as soon as possible, so that they can benefit as well from this new capacity.

Moving forward, the United Nations and in particular my Office would like to assure you of our commitment to the full formalization of the Think Tank.

We stand ready to support this process including by participating as an observer in the inaugural meeting of the Board of governors.

OHRLLS will continue to work closely with the Think Tank to undertake joint work to address the special needs of the LLDCs.

OHRLLS will mobilize all our UN system partners and their capacities to support the Think Tank.

I close by calling for strong support of the Think Tank – financially and in kind.

Thank you.