Accelerating Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Landlocked Developing Countries through Structural Transformation: Pursuing Policy at the Nexus of Infrastructure and Industrialization
Executive Summary

The side event on Accelerating Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Landlocked Developing Countries through Structural Transformation: Pursuing Policy at the Nexus of Infrastructure and Industrialization was held on 19 July 2017 in New York, United States in the margins of the High Level Political Forum 2017. The meeting was jointly organized by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia (Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries), and the Permanent Mission of Austria, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), and the United Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The purpose of the meeting was to identify key infrastructure and policy challenges for industrial sector growth and trade competitiveness specific to LLDCs; share lessons that can be replicated from existing, successful practices – such as improved regional integration, effective participation in value chains, use of spatial industrial policy and industrial agglomeration, and public-private partnerships – to foster infrastructure development for industrialization efforts in LLDC’s; identify solutions through which LLDCs can leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships and public-private partnerships to strengthen infrastructure, industrialization and innovation; and come up with key policy recommendations to overcome challenges arising from landlockedness in order to promote achievement of the goals and objectives of the Vienna Programme of Action, and of SDG 9, and overall achievement of sustainable development by the LLDCs. The meeting underscored the following:

- To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the Vienna Programme of Action in LLDCs, the catalytic and cross cutting role of infrastructure development and industrialization is vital. Making progress on SDG 9 will have positive effects on other SDGs, such as poverty, hunger, health, education, water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, amongst others. Inclusive and sustainable industrial development allows for rapid and sustained increases in living standards for all people, and provides the solutions to environmentally sound industrialization.

- Initiatives and follow-up processes to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should take into account the special needs of the LLDCs and help them to accelerate their efforts towards achieving the SDGs.

- Structural economic transformation, centred upon industrialization of the LLDC economies in an inclusive and sustainable manner is critical for successfully integrating LLDCs into the global economy and achieving sustained, broad-based and employment-creating economic growth. It will allow LLDCs to become more competitive in international markets and be connected with regional and global value chains.

- Creation of an enabling environment is necessary for economic development and industrialization. Political commitment, stability, good governance, rule of law, fair business environment and corruption-free government can foster infrastructure development for industrialization.
• Establishment of a robust and competitive industrial sector in LLDCs requires a strong supportive infrastructure - particularly in the transport, energy, and information communication technology sectors, as identified in the Vienna Programme of Action.

• Investments in infrastructure development and industrialization are critical and mutually reinforcing. The development of human capital and investment in human capital are equally important.

• Regional cooperation plays a vital role in empowering connections with neighbour countries. LLDCs should participate in regional dialogues and take advantage of international and regional development organizations such as World Bank and African Development Bank whose funding, knowledge sharing programs and cooperation platforms offer great benefits to LLDCs.

• The LLDCs and their transit neighbours are faced with a huge infrastructure gap. Development and maintenance of transport infrastructures linking the LLDCs with the transit countries are important for them to participate in and benefit from the opportunities available at global level.

• The magnitude of the resources needed to invest in infrastructure development and maintenance is high. However, mobilizing the required investment is a major challenge for LLDCs. There was a strong call on all development partners to continue to support and scale up their financial and technical support.

• South-South cooperation should be strengthened.

• Governments’ efforts in infrastructure development and industrialization are the most effective when they are partnered with the private sectors. Innovative solutions should include private sector participation, such as public private partnerships.

• LLDCs require an enhanced level of foreign direct investment for infrastructure development and industrialisation for which clear legal instruments to attract FDI are important. The private sector and trans-national companies must be encouraged to invest in LLDCs in the areas of infrastructure and productive sectors.
Introduction

The High Level Political Forum’s 2017 theme of “eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world” is particularly relevant for the 470 million people living in 32 landlocked developing countries (LLDC), spread over four continents. These countries face multiple development challenges linked to their geographical position, resulting in high trade and transport costs. Their marginalization in the global economy is exacerbated by their geographical handicaps, including small size, remoteness and isolation from major international markets and prohibitively high trade transaction costs. These challenges are further exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure constraints and lack of structural transformation and economic diversification of their economies.

The higher trading costs lead to diminished export competitiveness, reduced attraction for FDI and decreased industrialization. Between 2005 and 2015, the value-added of the manufacturing sector as a percentage of GDP in LLDCs declined from 11.8 to 10 per cent of GDP. This implies a decline in industrialization in the LLDCs. In addition, the share of manufactured goods in total exports from LLDCs decreased from 21 per cent in 2000 to 13 per cent in 2014, while around 70 per cent of imports to these countries were manufactured products. The majority of the LLDCs are still marginalized with respect to international trade as the share of their global exports in 2015 was only 0.96 per cent. Four LLDCs in Central Asia account for 55 per cent of the group’s total merchandise exports, while 20 countries account for 2 per cent each. The LLDCs’ export structure is dominated by limited number of products – mostly low-value agricultural products and mineral resources. LLDCs are yet to fully participate in global and regional value chains – which account for a rising share of international trade.

Establishment of a robust and competitive industrial sector in LLDCs will require a strong supportive infrastructure - particularly in the transport, energy, and information communication technology sectors - that is critical to reduce the high trading costs that they face, and improve their competitiveness. Prioritizing industrialization enabled by infrastructure is not only effective but critical in increasing the export potential of the LLDCs, and in driving their sustainable and inclusive development in the near-term. For example, LLDC’s Ethiopia, Laos, and Mongolia have made considerable progress in this regard. Over a 15-year period, these countries had an average annual growth in manufacturing value added of 10.4%, 9.43%, and 5.6%, respectively. By championing development agendas effectively utilizing infrastructure and policy incentives to foster industrialization, much of this development has been inclusive – all three countries reduced their poverty headcount ratios by over 15% during this period.

How can all LLDC’s get on a similar path to transformation? The priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) provide a comprehensive framework to tackle LLDCs’ structural limitations through 6 mutually reinforcing priority areas: fundamental transit policies, infrastructure development and maintenance, international trade, regional integration and cooperation, structural economic transformation, and means of implementation. It reflects a deeper understanding of the challenges that prevent LLDCs from achieving inclusive economic growth and sustainable development.
Recent events focussed on the LLDCs have underscored the importance of addressing infrastructure and industrialization. The declaration adopted at the Fifth Meeting of Trade Ministers of LLDCs which was held in June 2016, underscores the importance of development and maintenance of transit transport, energy and information and communications technology infrastructure in order to reduce high trading costs, improve their competitiveness and become fully integrated in the global market. The recommendations adopted at the OHRLLS, the Government of Austria, UNIDO and SE4All High-Level Seminar on Accelerating Sustainable Energy for All in LLDCs through Innovative Partnerships held in October 2016, stress the need to develop the energy sector in order to strengthen the industrial capacities in the LLDCs. The recommendations of the High-Level Meeting for the Euro-Asia Region on Improving Cooperation on Transit, Trade Facilitation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development held in March 2017 emphasize that LLDCs should create a conducive environment for industrial development including through building infrastructure, building productivity capacity, and enhancing the services sector.

Proceedings

Opening Remarks by Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, High-Representative and Under-Secretary-General for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I would like to warmly welcome all of you to this Side Event on Accelerating Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Landlocked Developing Countries through Structural Transformation: Pursuing Policy at the Nexus of Infrastructure and Industrialization, co-organized by Permanent Mission of Austria, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia, UNIDO, and UN-OHRLLS.

The aim of this meeting is to share experiences, increase awareness and identify key policy recommendations on infrastructure development and industrialization for achieving sustainable development in LLDCs. The session will examine how LLDC’s – through a synergistic consideration of the nexus – can develop policies and implement programmes that will fast-track the industrialization process and ensure the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

I would like to briefly highlight a few issues to set the stage for our discussion today.

The 32 landlocked developing countries represent more than 470 million people, spread over four continents. They are marginalized from the global economy due to geographical handicaps that result in high trade and transport costs. Their challenges are exacerbated by inadequate infrastructure, lack of structural transformation and economic diversification and there are signs of de-industrialization. As a result, high levels of poverty, low levels of human capital, and increased vulnerability to economic, environmental and other external shocks continue to hinder their efforts to achieve sustainable development. About 30% of their population continue to live below the international poverty line of US$1.90 per day.
To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the Vienna Programme of Action in LLDCs, the catalytic and cross cutting role of infrastructure development and industrialization is vital. Making progress on SDG 9 will have positive effects on other SDGs, such as poverty, hunger, health, education, water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, amongst others.

Structural economic transformation, centered upon industrialization of the LLDC economies in an inclusive and sustainable manner, is critical for successfully integrating into the global economy and achieving sustained, broad-based and employment-creating economic growth. Industrialization would also support the move from traditional economic activities into higher value-added and more diversified economic activities. It will allow LLDCs to become more competitive in the international markets and be connected with regional and global value chains.

Establishment of a robust and competitive industrial sector in LLDCs requires a strong supportive infrastructure - particularly in the transport, energy, and information communication technology sectors, as identified in the Vienna Programme of Action.

Additionally, inclusive and sustainable industrial development allows for rapid and sustained increases in living standards for all people, and provides the technological solutions to environmentally sound industrialization.

In this context, OHRLLS has partnered with stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of the VPoA and the SDGs. For example OHRLLS organised a High-Level Meeting on Sustainable Transport of LLDCs in collaboration with Bolivia and UN-DESA held in October last year; a High-Level Seminar on Accelerating Sustainable Energy for All in LLDCs through Innovative Partnerships in collaboration with the Austria, UNIDO, and Sustainable Energy for All held also in October last year; a High-Level Meeting for the Euro-Asia Region on Improving Cooperation on Transit, Trade Facilitation and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in collaboration with Viet Nam, WCO and IRU held in March 2017; and an event on enhancing the role of the private sector in the implementation of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda, held in May 2017. OHRLLS has also facilitated joint consultations of the LLDCs with the World Bank aimed at facilitating a continuous dialogue on the special needs of the LLDCs and its support from the World Bank.

I hope that our discussions today will highlight some best practices, challenges and key policy recommendations on infrastructure development and industrialization for achieving the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda in LLDCs.
Remarks by Honourable Mr. Brian Mushimba, Minister of Transport & Communications, Republic of Zambia and Chair of the Group of LLDC

Thank you Madame Undersecretary, fellow speakers here, ladies and gentleman, good evening.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Vienna Programme of Action collectively recognize that eradication of poverty requires infrastructure and sustainable industrialization.

Successful implementation of the sustainable development goals, in particular SDG 9 on building resilient infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialization and innovation and the six priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) will contribute directly to accelerating inclusive and sustainable development in landlocked developing countries that we all come from.

It is in this context that we accord of the highest priority, to the importance of infrastructure-industrialization nexus. For any economic activity to occur and especially in labour intensive and export arranged industries; the existence of reliable water, transport and logistics such as road, railway and energy and ICT networks, is absolutely essential. If any one of these three such as infrastructure is not available, economic development would not take off at all.

An efficient infrastructure base helps reduce production and trade costs and enables our firms to integrate in the global market and compete on equal footing.

Despite the progress that LLDCs have made in transport, ICT and energy infrastructure, we LLDCs face more challenges associated with infrastructure development and industrialization. Infrastructure remains inadequate and the quality is still poor. Air transport has great potential to stimulate structural transformation, however, demand and growth is limited by high cost while airports need upgrading and expansion of existing infrastructures.

While there has been improvements in transit transport infrastructure and development in all regions, particularly road and rail transportation, a lot more needs to be done. Missing links need to be completed; transport infrastructure networks need to be upgraded, and maintained and also be made more resilient.

While access to electricity in LLDCs has increased, still 2/3 of our population continue to rely on traditional use of biomass for cooking. This underscores the urgent need for improved access to modern and clean cooking energy.

In many LLDCs we experience strong growth in mobile cellular subscriptions and an increased internet usage, however, the group still lies behind other groups of countries both in access, quality and the number of ICT facilities.

Given the scale of the challenges and in view of the catalytic and cross cutting role of infrastructure and industrialization, the achievement of SDG 9 and the implementation of the
VPoA needs to be prioritized for accelerating inclusive and sustainable development through structural economic transformation.

We also recognize that investments in infrastructure, development and industrialization are critical and mutually reinforcing and the magnitude of the resources needed to invest in infrastructure development and maintenance is quite high.

Mobilizing the required investment is a challenge for the LLDCs, mobilization of increased financial and technical support to infrastructure development and maintenance through national budgets, official development assistance, aid for trade, foreign and direct investment, and south to south cooperation is crucial.

Financial and technical assistance from multilateral and regional financial and development institutions are important. Another important aspect is to explore innovative sources of funding, such as regional infrastructure funds, PPPs, and debt markets.

Zambia recognizes UNIDO’s work in closing gaps in this regard, especially in its programs which assist countries in developing sound industrial policies and in establishing linkages to the necessary partners for infrastructure development.

Zambia launched a country programme framework with UNIDO in November 2016. The UNIDO-Zambia country programme was designed to support government’s implementation of these priorities as defined in our revised “Sixth National Development Plan (SNDP)”. The programme focuses on the overarching-objective of supporting pro-poor economic growth and through promotion of the competitive private sector with particular attention to small scale enterprises with an agroindustry orientation. Moreover, the country programme aims at building the capacity of relevant national institutions on both the public and the private sector.

Lastly, I wish to call on partners and on all the development partners of the LLDCs to enhance the financial and technical support. I also wish to stress that the initiatives and follow up processes to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should take into account our special needs some of them, tabulated by Madame Undersecretary General to make sure that we get help in accelerating our efforts towards achieving the SDG’s.

I thank you for your kind attention.
Remarks by H.E. Mr. Jan Kickert, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN

Thank you very much, Madam High Representative. Thank you also Honourable Minister from Zambia. It’s a great honour and pleasure for Austria to partner with two of you to host this event.

Some of you might ask why Austria is here. We are co-chairing the group of friends of LLDCs. Being a landlocked country, we understand the special needs and challenges of LLDCs. At the same time, we hope that our example and others in Europe can be of help. If you look at the richest countries in Europe, they are landlocked, including us, Switzerland, Luxembourg. So it’s not a question of size or being landlocked. These countries should be an inspiration and an encouragement that being landlocked and undeveloped is not an inescapable fate. There is something one can change despite the special challenges which are undeniable.

Austria is glad to co-chair group of friends because we are the proud host of 2014 conference of landlocked developing countries. We are also proud that the Programme of Action has the name Vienna in it. So we feel the co-ownership. To implement it, there are many areas. One is that most of our developing partners are landlocked. It may be a coincidence of history but it so happens. Secondly, we try to participate in relevant activities and seminars.

We understand that energy is an enabler of sustainable development and industrialization. Energy is also reflected in our corporations who build up renewable energy plants all over the world. There is no industrialization without energy.

We will continue our role as the co-chair of group of friends of the LLDC group to keep up the positive momentum generated in the Vienna conference and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda to push ahead the cause of LLDCs.

I am curious to listen to the panellists. I have a few comments from my side first, the discussion I had with the Permanent Representative of Zambia brought out that the old model of industrialization and infrastructure development will not work anymore. We are facing a different kind of industrialization.

Today, it is necessary to be inclusive and sustainable and to generate good, decent jobs. We are witnessing the forth industrial revolution, a technological revolution which will change the nature of work for all of us, in developed countries and developing countries. So we cannot just copy/paste what we’ve done from the past.

Secondly, we have understood that industrialization has to be done in an environmental friendly framework. It cannot come at the expense of Mother Nature. We need to avoid the mistakes human kind have made beforehand.

Thirdly, I would like to stress the need of enabling the environment necessary for economic development and industrialization. That means good government and rule of law. It is simply indispensable. Many times I feel that we landlocked communities are concentrating too much on the hardware, on the connection of transport, rather than look at other aspects of development.
Take for example trade facilitation, or the management of customs, we need to avoid also the high degree of corruption that still exists in cross-border transportation.

Fourth is also from our own experience. It is in dispensable to have a good relationship with your neighbours and participate in regional cooperation. The case of Austria is a special one of course. But without the regional integration into European structures, we would not have been where we are now. I think this is true for every other region.

Fifth and lastly, we would also like to stress the need of the private sector. Without it, industrialization will not work. We need new form of partnership with private sector such as like partnership with sustainable energy companies. To achieve the Agenda, we need to leave no one behind.

Thank you very much, Madam High Representative.

Remarks by Ms. Fatou Haidara, Managing Director, Policy and Programme Support, UNIDO

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I want to start by thanking the panelists and discussants for their attendance and participation. We look forward to hearing your interventions as member states, which always helps to improve our understanding and work at UNIDO.

As this year’s High-Level Political Forum comes to an end, it is meaningful to close by convening on a topic so imperative to the theme of this year’s HLPF, “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world,” especially considering the review of SDG-9 at this year’s Forum. Achieving success at the infrastructure-industrialization nexus is so critical to the poverty eradication in LDC’s and LLDC’s in particular.

In the past decades, we have seen that countries and regions that have successfully developed their manufacturing sector have made spectacular progress in poverty reduction. For example, between 1990 and 2013, East-Asia and the Pacific have decreased the number of poor people from almost 1 billion to 71 million.

However, this success has not been replicated across regions and groups. In LLDC’s, despite moderate growth over the same period, extreme poverty remains worrying high. Commodity-export driven growth has led to consumption-led growth and an increased dependency on commodities and imports, among other issues.

The global financing gap for infrastructure in developing countries is a central part of this problem, estimated to be between $1 trillion and $1.5 trillion annually. This is especially true in LLDCs, which are in great need of infrastructure development to foster sustainable and inclusive industrialization.
The industrialization gap between LLDCs and other developing countries has occurred because of their structural weaknesses, such as poor infrastructure in transport, logistics, energy, information and communications technologies as well as other factors such as slow regional integration and lack of access to quality infrastructure. These structural factors have contributed to the low levels of trade between LLDCs and the rest of the world and to the relative isolation of LLDCs.

Transport infrastructure is the most important, and includes also the transit infrastructure. Because of their unique challenges, LLDCs are completely dependent on their neighbors’ infrastructure and administrative procedures to transport their goods to markets. In many cases transit neighbours of LLDCs are themselves developing countries, often of broadly similar economic structure and beset by similar scarcities of resources. Their weak infrastructure and subpar customs and administrative systems result in higher costs on trade passing through a transit country and thus limiting the ability of LLDCs to compete in global markets.

Another key requirement for enhanced productive capacities is access to affordable and reliable energy. High energy costs or the lack of energy access impede industry’s competitiveness in LLDCs. The majority of LLDCs are energy importers. There is therefore a need to invest in clean and affordable energy, while at the same time enhancing energy efficiency to reap environmental, social and economic dividends.

With Goal 9, the global community addressed that industrialization is key to development and highlighted close linkages with virtually all other SDGs as regards job creation, sustainable livelihoods, SME development, better health, technology and skills development, food security, green technologies, environmental protection, building resilient cities and climate change mitigation.

Improved infrastructure development is critical to promote industrialization in LLDCs and to “eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world.” Linking up infrastructure with transit collaboration and customs modernization and coordination and investing heavily in energy infrastructure, will help in linking local to regional and boosting the economic potential of LLDCs and reducing poverty greatly.

In order to ensure the remaining 800 million people in extreme poverty today, especially those in LLDCs, to have pathway to prosperity, we must not only continue to support, but scale our commitments to significantly raise industry’s share of employment and gross domestic product through investments in infrastructure that enable this to happen.

Thank you very much for your time and I look forward to your contributions to this discussion.
Panellist - Honourable Dr. Min Bahadur Shrestha, Vice Chairman, National Planning Commission, Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal

I first wish to thank UN-OHRLLS, UNIDO, Zambia and Austria for organizing this important side event today. I also take this opportunity to commend the contributions made for the cause of LLDCs by Zambia as Chair of LLDCs, UN-OHRLLS as the leading UN entity for countries in special situations, UNIDO as a specialized agency for promoting industrial development and Austria as a developed landlocked country.

As highlighted by the distinguished speakers in the opening, the LLDCs are a special category of countries that are in need of global attention and support. The development cost in these countries is 20 per cent higher than in the coastal countries. This is one reason why over half of all LLDCs are also LDCs. These countries need special support and arrangements.

The challenges facing the LLDCs have been duly recognized by the international community. The only way forward for the LLDCs is the full, timely and effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in synergy and coherence with 2030 Agenda with a focus on industrialization as well as on quality, resilient and sustainable infrastructure so as to ensure structural transformation of LLDCs. It is also important to mention that the implementation plan for LLDCs should be VPoA plus the 2030 Agenda, not just the 2030 Agenda.

Having said that let me focus on industry and infrastructure issues: There exists a huge infrastructure gap between the LLDCs and their transit neighbours. Development and maintenance of transport infrastructures linking the LLDCs with the transit countries are always important for them to participate in and benefit from the opportunities available at global level. It is also important that LLDCs require an enhanced level of foreign direct investment for infrastructure development. We should continue to encourage trans-national companies to invest in LLDCs in the areas of infrastructure and productive sectors. Cooperation of the transit countries, support of development partners and partnership of proactive private sector can critically enhance the much needed capacity of the LLDCs.

For a meaningful participation of LLDCs in global trade, existing infrastructures and investment constraints need to be urgently addressed. There is also a need for clear yet strong legal instruments to attract and govern foreign investment. The industrial as well as trade friendly infrastructure need to be constructed keeping in mind inter-countries and regional connectivity perspectives.

There are already good practices and lessons learnt in this regard. One area for replication of lessons learnt is further fostering PPPs. Equally important is partnership amongst the countries and amongst the private sectors of the neighbouring countries. By encouraging entrepreneurs to be part of the value chain will help benefit both richer countries and LLDCs.

LLDCs can leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships by improving doing business environment and by guaranteeing profit and other related repatriation. Public Private Partnerships(PPP) and Public Private Community Partnerships (PCP) are good examples. Government's provisions of key infrastructures and other utilities like water, energy, education, health, etc., are essential
especially to encourage and attract foreign investments. For this purpose, LLDC governments should also make investment in research, innovation and development.

When we talk about policy recommendations, creating conducive environment is a must. Equally important is political commitment and stability. We should improve doing business environment. Governments must be proactive to provide enabling and logistical support. Rich countries should share their technology and other innovations with LLDCs in affordable prices. South- South Cooperation needs to be further promoted. And of course, connectivity is at the heart and it should be encouraged by all.

I have more to share from Nepal’s perspective but in the interest of time I wish to conclude by highlighting the fact that current level of national and global efforts and partnerships in this crucial sector remains inadequate, requiring forging a stronger partnership among public, private and cooperative sectors at home as well as understanding and support by both transit neighbours and development partners when it comes to resources and technology.

I thank you.

Panellist - Mrs. Hirut Zemen, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

At the outset, let me congratulate Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa Utoikamanu, High Representative of UN-OHRLLS upon her appointment and let me assure you the commitment and readiness of Ethiopia to closely work with you. Ethiopia attaches a great importance for the work your Office continues to do to promote the implementation of the Vienna Program of Action.

I thank Honourable Mr. Brian Mushimba, Minister of Transport & Communications, Republic of Zambia and Chair of the Group of LLDC, for effectively promoting the collective interest of LLDCs. I also thank the Permanent Representative of Austria and the Managing Director of UNIDO for their statement and support for LLDCs.

Inclusive and sustainable industrialization is crucial for poverty reduction, economic growth, job creation and structural transformation. Building a resilient infrastructure could also contribute to accelerate an industrialization process as well as for enhancing productive capacity. While we fully recognize that SDGs are interlinked and indivisible, I could state that SDG 9 is among the goals that we have given priority in Ethiopia. Both as an LDC and LLDC, implementing SDG 9 is critical to address our specific economic vulnerabilities, such as geographical remoteness and low level of participation in the global value chains. Hence, given the short time we have, let me share the experience of Ethiopia in promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization.

Ethiopia has been pursuing an integrated industrial development strategy with a clear vision of becoming an African manufacturing hub by 2025. We have fully integrated SDG 9 in our current national development plan- the Growth and Transformation Plan (2015-2020). Based on our comparative advantage; we have given special attention for labour intensive and light manufacturing sectors-agro-processing, leather and textile. We believe this would enable us not
only to enhance our global competitiveness by adding value to our primary products, but also to create jobs and earn foreign currency by increasing our exports and facilitate transfer of appropriate technology and knowledge.

We have also continued our efforts to create an enabling business environment for attracting foreign and local investment in the manufacturing sector. One policy instrument that we are intensively employing is building eco-friendly industrial parks. We are building integrated parks that simplify access to land, eliminate the challenges in trade logistics and custom service, and create linkages between middle and large-scale industries that could promote the development of SMEs.

Just last weekend, we inaugurated two industrial parks. We have world –class industrial parks, located in different parts of the country to ensure equitable regional development. In September, we will be launching two additional eco-friendly parks.

The Ethiopian government is fully committed to redouble its efforts to accelerate its industrial development agenda in close cooperation with our partners with a clear target of increasing the annual average growth rate of manufacturing sector to 20%.

Let me take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the continued support of our bilateral and multilateral development partners. In this regard, UNIDO has continued to be one of our reliable partners. UNIDO’s technical assistance in agro-processing, leather and textile sectors has been very useful. UNIDO is also helping us to promote Ethiopia as an investment destination.

Indeed, Ethiopia has been one of the pilot countries for the Inclusive and Sustainable Development Program of UNIDO. And I am grateful for the continued support of UNIDO through the Country Partnership Program that is aligned with our Industrial Development Strategy.

Before, I conclude, let me say that without resilient infrastructure, industrial development cannot be realized. Hence, the Ethiopian government has been making massive public investment in building our infrastructure, with the objective of enhancing our productive capacity and to promote regional integration. Encouraging progress has been registered in expanding road, railway and air transport services. In line with our Green Economy Climate Resilient Strategy, we have made tangible progress in the renewable energy sector. In this regard, we are doubling our efforts to increase national electric power generation capacity from 4,270 to 17,000 MW by the 2020.

Both in industrialization and infrastructure, lack of funding and capacity remain among our challenges. To address them, we are advocating public and private partnerships and FDI in line with our priorities.

To conclude, we know we have set ambitious targets but we all know that the SDGs are also ambitious. And governments need to have an equally ambitious and transformative, inclusive and sustainable agenda. We are convinced that with revitalized global partnership that gives due
consideration for the specific challenges of vulnerable countries, we could achieve SDGs by 2030.

I thank you.

Panellist - Mr. Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice-President for the 2030 Development Agenda, United Nations Relations and Partnerships, World Bank

Thank you very much Under Secretary General to invite me here for this very important event. The World Bank is happy to be here and to work towards the achievement of SDGs and 2030 Agenda.

I have a few remarks to share on the recent development and a few remarks to share about what we should be expecting in the future. I hope to be brief.

For landlocked and land linked countries, I fully agree with previous statements, especially remarks by Ambassador from Austria that being landlocked is a choice. We have seen that landlocked countries manage good investments and relationships with their neighbourhood and good agreements as well. But we’ve also seen countries locked themselves behind borders. And I’d like to share World Development Report that was published back in 2009 about development and geography and we have seen in many cases that countries actually deprive development from being landlocked by choice.

Many other countries, including many members of this group have made efforts to link themselves to opportunities. We know it is required to have investment to build better and competitive infrastructures and to attract foreign investment. I want to give some recent examples. The economy of Mali is dependent on trade and recent trade amounts to 10-20 billion dollars and the estimate provided by the Mali government shows that there is very good investments in roads and railways and telecommunications as well. The opportunities for growth are there. I am very pleased to speak after the representative from Ethiopia because the journey of development in Ethiopia is offering countries very good lessons in how to deal with challenges when you are landlocked. We have been seeing significant increase in public investment of Ethiopia over the last 10-15 years. Many of these investments are improving infrastructure but also crowding out the private sector that can help building the roads and networks. However, having said that, in the past few years, Ethiopia has undertaken aggressive development approach, not just in infrastructure to link their cities and remote areas. We have seen the figure of FDI in Ethiopia is number one based on 2015 figures.

In World Bank, we have many programs for landlocked countries, totalling 26.5 billion dollars. We have in the areas of transport alone, 47 projects in landlocked countries, totalling 10 billion dollars. Everyone is talking about the importance of ODA (142 billion dollars). Of that we are happy to see the funding increasing.

Of course, we want to build more roads but we should also include other investments for inclusive development. We are keen to have seen good investment numbers not just in physical capital but also human capital.
Finally, private sector is also very important. We need to include them in the process. For the question whether projects can be done by the private sector, government answers might be no because they may not be profitable. But private sector answers are regulatory barriers, high transactions cost or other areas that can be done by the government. So we need innovative solutions to include private sector and not crowd out their efforts. We need to give the partnership opportunity to the private sector. We are optimistic in the future. We have good examples in Africa, and in Asia.

Thank you very much.

Panellist - Dr. Judith Kateera, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Macro-Economic Planning and Investment Promotion, Republic of Zimbabwe

May I begin by saying that all protocols observed for the sake of time. I’m going to make a statement on behalf of my Minister who could not be here, Honourable Dr. Obert Mpofu. The thrust of the presentation is to look at the progress that has been made by Zimbabwe and highlight some of the challenges that we have been facing and also to make some recommendations with regards to SDG number 9.

I’m delighted to share with you Zimbabwe’s progress towards sustainable development goal number 9, which looks at building resilient infrastructure, promoting inclusive and sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation. Three key ways there: infrastructure, industrialization and innovation are the ways that we are focusing on. Implementation of this SDG is important to help address the high trade costs that our country is facing as a landlocked developing country, which affects our competitiveness as we trade with other nations or the international markets. SDG number 9 is also key to enhancing value addition to our products in the diversification of the economy.

This SDG, is actually at the centre of the government’s development strategy, it is very, very important. After the adoption of this SDG in 2017, Zimbabwe undertook a process of prioritizing and domesticating the SDG’s in relation to Zimbabwe’s vision which is espoused in Zimbabwe’s Agenda for Sustainable Socioeconomic Transformation, Zim-ASSET, which is our economic blueprint. And in this blueprint, SDG number 9 has already been mainstreamed and integrated into this policy document through two clusters. There’s a cluster on validation and beneficiation and infrastructure and utilities.

Coming onto the issue to do with infrastructure development, we note that major infrastructure projects have been launched in Zimbabwe. In the areas of utilities, transportation and connectivity and also recently, we are looking at special economic zones. I will highlight some of the key initiatives which include: One, rehabilitation of water and sewage infrastructure in several urban centres; expansion of the Kariba South hydropower station; rehabilitation of Hwange Thermal power station; upgrading of Victoria Falls airport, which was done in order to expand the runway, this was completed last year; the completion of Tokwe-Mukosi Dam, which
is now the country’s largest inland dam – this is expected to promote agriculture and tourism and this dam also has capacity to generate hydroelectricity.

Zimbabwe continues with efforts to improve road and rail infrastructure at the national level through the rehabilitation and construction of new ones. So government has commissioned the dualisation project of the Beitbridge-Harare-Chirundu route. This is a project that is estimated to cost plus 1 billion dollars and is expected to boost trade in the southern African region because it is going to link South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Zambia going to the north. This project is being implemented by Geiger International of Austria, and this company has been contracted by the government through a 25-year build, operate, and transfer model.

I want to highlight that for all of the infrastructure projects that Zimbabwe is implementing, this is largely being financed by domestic resources. The resources, most of them, are taking the form of debt. Recently, we floated ZINARA – ZINARA is the Zimbabwe National Road Authority – ZINARA road infrastructure bond for 400 million dollars, which was meant to rehabilitate the roads that were destroyed by El Niño. We are also doing PPP’s like this arrangement with Geiger International, and we are also working closely with bilaterals and multilaterals. Bilaterals like China on the Kariba power station. Multilateral organizations like AfDB on some of the projects to do with water and sewer in the various urban areas.

Zimbabwe has also experience coming to ICT. A swift uptake of the internet, with a percentage of individuals using internet increased markedly from 4% in 2009, to 16.4% in 2015. So, Zimbabwe is actually embracing ICT in a big way, especially in the areas to do with usage of internet. But this is an area that we still need to develop when it comes to issues to do with e-government, e-commerce, e-procurement, e-health, e-learning and so forth – the biggest constraint being the availability of resources, particularly concession or financing.

Zimbabwe has sought to simplify also the import and export clearance in turnaround time through the trade facilitating concept of one-stop border posts with Zambia and Churundu. Similar arrangements have been proposed between Zimbabwe and South Africa, we also intent to build a one stop border post, in order to facilitate trade between Zimbabwe and South Africa, and enhance the rest of the southern region. And right now, government is in the process to mobilizing the resources preferably concessional financing, because this is medium and long-term investment.

The above progress notwithstanding, infrastructure development remains inadequate in the country. According to the 2016-2017 Global Competitiveness Report, a reference is made to inadequate supply and infrastructure and this being the fifth most problematic factor for doing business with Zimbabwe. Our country was ranked on 123 out of 138 countries, with a score of 2.5 in terms of infrastructure. Also in the 2016 Ibrahim index of African governance, Zimbabwe was ranked 34 out of 54 countries for 2015, in the infrastructure section a score of 34.1 in 2014. Effectively what we are saying here is that we are not doing good enough, we could do better.

The African Development Bank estimated that 14.2 billion dollars will be required to close Zimbabwe’s infrastructure gap. This high rate of recurrent expenditure culls out capital expenditure necessary for infrastructure, rehabilitation, and development. The greatest challenge
that the country is facing is limited fiscal space, which is exacerbated by the fact that the bulk of fiscal revenues in our country are going towards financing recurrent expenditure. So currently government is putting efforts to restructure the budget so that we direct more resources towards capital expenditure rather than recurrent expenditure. Of this current expenditure the biggest challenge is the wage bill, and this is the elephant in the house that is actually bringing the economy down. The political support, the commitment, the will is there to address that challenge; otherwise this infrastructure development becomes a pie in the sky.

We have been funding some of the infrastructure development from resources based domestically, for example, the road fund, which I have just talked about, and also government is promoting joint ventures. Last year, we promulgated a piece of legislation on the Joint Venture Act, which is being hosted by the Minister of Finance, and we are saying rather than depend on debt finance we want to promote equity finance or a blend of equity and loan finance. At least that would ensure that debt sustainability of the country is not compromised.

I want to talk about industrialization. The country is promoting sustainable industrialization through the implementation of our industrial development policy. This will run from 2017-2021. The objective is to increase the country’s manufacturing sector, the contribution to GDP, currently at about 30% we intend to have it go up to about 50%.

On Special Economic Zones. Last year, about October, we also promulgated the new legislation that will allow us to have Special Economic Zones. The bill was signed into law by the President in October. And then last month, the board was announced and now they were requested to hit the ground running. So far 3 sites have been designated: in Harare, in Bulawayo, and in Victoria Falls. We will be doing our pilots on a phase basis. We are highlighting the importance of developing infrastructure in the Special Economic Zones before investors can actually come in.

The other thing in the Special Economic Zones, we are also promoting and encouraging value chains. For example, the cotton to clothing value chain, the beef and leather value chain, so that we are moving from primary production through manufacturing value addition and marketing in regional and international markets.

The country is in the process of forming its policies. We actually have a 4-5 page policy document, which highlights a matrix of policy reforms that the country is implementing. We realize we have quite a lot of challenges administratively, on the legislation, and the manner in which people can do business in the country. So these reforms, on the ease of doing business, are being championed by the Office of the President, and we take a whole government approach in terms of implementing these reforms. The reforms are focusing on the global indices of doing business, which I’m sure all colleagues are already aware of, such as starting business, protecting minority investors, and etc.

We are also having a National Competitiveness Commission, which is going to be introduced so that we promote the competitiveness of our products in the region. It is through trade that we believe that our country can be able to raise resources which can be used to finance infrastructure.
However, when we look at these reforms, one of the biggest challenges we are facing besides administrative challenges, are legislative reforms that we are undertaking. The Office of the Attorney General is actually constrained capacity wise. Currently we have 30 pieces of legislation that have to go through Parliament, and once they go through, we should be able to relax and liberalize the economy, and facilitate people to undertake business, especially in the areas of infrastructure.

I want to mention briefly that, as a demonstration of our commitment to promote cooperation and acceleration of Goal 9, Zimbabwe hosted the ECOSOC meeting on agriculture, agribusiness, and agro-industries in April this year, whose outcome fed into the ECOSOC Special Meeting on “Innovation for Infrastructure Development in Sustainable Industrialization.” This meeting, among other issues, highlighted two important initiatives: African agribusiness and agroindustry development initiative. All this was aimed at improving agriculture productivity and also we have the UNIDO flagship Programme for Country Partnership Programme, which seeks to develop industrial parks. These initiatives, colleagues, are intended to promote transformation to develop economies.

I would also want colleagues to note that in Zimbabwe, it has now been close to 20 years that Zimbabwe has been under economic and financial sanctions, this has also compromised production and exports. If you can’t produce, you can’t export in foreign currency. It is a vicious cycle. It is one of the challenges we are facing, but we sincerely hope we will go over the hump very soon.

Coming to some of the recommendations we would want to make given our experiences. Zimbabwe really wants to promote regional projects. For instance, Zimbabwe is an alternate member of the African Development Bank, Africa Group II constituency, where we represent Angola, Namibia, Mozambique, and ourselves. If countries can actually take an approach where we promote regional projects, like a road project from South Africa through Zimbabwe to Mozambique, this would bring net benefits to the region.

Energy projects, supply of power, through Southern African power pool, we are actually promoting and encouraging innovative financing, for example triangular financing, where we look at three countries pooling resources, leveraging resources from minerals and from land. We are actually in the process of leveraging some resources from our minerals, so the resources will be used to finance infrastructure.

The issue to do with innovations, we noticed that Zimbabwe has undertaken on quite a lot of innovations, but the innovations are undertaken in their part, and the country does not have the capacity to commercialize. We are saying if we can embrace the region, embrace other countries – let’s find a way of leveraging resources after we’ve commercialized the various innovations. For instance, Zimbabwe discovered a livestock vaccine, but after the discovery, the country could not commercialize this vaccine which could be useful, especially in the whole of Africa, and can be in the position to address issues with food security. We also recommend that if the region or the global economic and financial market can support the establishment of innovation hubs.
I would like to conclude, by mentioning that capacity building in the production of quality products, we emphasize quality products, by supporting our entrepreneurs, is something that the country is emphasizing. You will find that when we are trading within the African region, some of the quality of the products is not really up to speed. In Zimbabwe, we appreciate one of the programs that we have been running with Sweden, where they are actually taking some of the entrepreneurs by hand, introducing them to new technology, training them, and encouraging them to produce quality products so that at the end of the day, production is a link to trade and trade with foreign currency resources will also be able to finance infrastructure development.

Zimbabwe is indebted to a number of countries. We are running in arrears. My section would not be complete if I do not talk about it. I really want colleagues to take note that the heart of Zimbabwe is to repay. If we do not repay, we will not be able to unlock resources for infrastructure and other developments that will promote the economy to grow. But one of the things that we really feel, not just in Zimbabwe but in a number of African countries, we really feel there is a need for technical assistance in restructuring debt. The process has taken too long. If you owe someone some money, you need to sit down with them and discuss and say let’s find a way of restructuring, and then we can unlock resources which can be of concessional nature, which resources are required for infrastructure development.

I thank you Madame Chair and colleagues for your attention.

Intervention by H. E. Mr. Charles Thembani Ntwaagae, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Botswana to the United Nations

Let me just thank the event organizers and the contributions made by all the ministers. I want to put my fingers on Botswana’s experience. One of them is the importance of investing in infrastructure, supporting infrastructure in terms of transport, water, energy and ICT. It’s very important to support infrastructure. The second issue is to invest in human capital. Countries tend to invest in buildings, infrastructure, water and energy, forgetting that human beings are supposed to operate the infrastructure. It’s very important to invest in human capital, make sure that your border staff is trained and that they have appropriate work ethics and that they avoid corrupt practices. There is no point of having good border infrastructure when your staffs are corrupt and inefficient. So it’s very important to ensure that the staffs are trained and they are able to efficiently operate the border trade facilitation infrastructure. And these staffs include immigration, customs and ensure that this is an anti-corruption culture. The third is about equipment. Make sure that you have the necessary equipment. We have discovered that there is a shortage of scanners in our border posts. We discovered that very late and it slows down the trade and services.

Thank you very much Madam Chair for the opportunity you gave me.
Intervention by H. E. Mr. Bakhtiyor Ilragimov, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations

First of all, let me thank the organizers for this very important event. This topic is very important to Uzbekistan. We depend on our neighbouring countries for their seaports. We are addressing this issue by many means. On the one hand, we are building a network of infrastructure, such as highways, railroads and bridges and also improving existing ones. On the other hand, we are cooperating with other countries. It is said today that regional integration is very important. For example, this year Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are opening a new railroad bridge. This bridge now creates favourable trade condition. Another example, during meeting between Uzbekistan President and Kazakhstan President this year, one of the agendas was to advance cooperation on transportation and trade. The same kind of discussion is on the way with China to build railroad from China to Central Asia.

In conclusion, I want to point out one important element. In our region, we believe in measures that benefit the whole Central Asia region, not just a few countries.

Thank you.

Intervention by Representative from Kazakhstan

First of all I would like also to thank our distinguished organizers, the missions of Austria, Zambia, UNIDO and your office Madame for organizing this event. As a landlocked developing country, Kazakhstan attached great importance to the six priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPA).

Consistent with the VPoA, my country is focused on addressing the inefficiencies in its transport networks and as limited access to international trade. We have been implementing transcontinental projects to streamline and upgrade our road, rail, airport, and pipeline infrastructures. Currently there are six international transport corridors. One of these examples is the western China-Western Europe highway project, which enabled the transportation of goods from China to Europe to make it in ten days instead of forty-five days by the sea.

Looking into the future, Kazakhstan strives to have an economy that is gradually oriented towards global value chains, manufacturing and industrial activity, so industrialization together with the development of a more robust private sector will be the primary drivers of our economy. We hope that these infrastructure products would not be just products itself but it will have spill over effects and turn into the development corridors. I thank you.

Closing Remarks by Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, High-Representative and Under-Secretary-General for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,
We have come to the closing segment of today’s event. I would like to once again thank our panellists.
We had excellent discussions. We have heard the importance of:

- Political commitment and stability;
- Accelerating Inclusive and Sustainable Development through structural transformation by building on the catalytic and cross-cutting role of resilient infrastructure development and industrialization to achieve the SDGs and the VPoA;
- South/South cooperation to be encouraged;
- Clear legal instruments to attract FDI in LLDCs;
- Establishment of a robust and competitive industrial sector in LLDCs requires a strong supportive infrastructure - particularly in the transport, energy, water, and information communication technology sectors;
- There is recognition that investments in infrastructure development and industrialization are critical and mutually reinforcing;
- The magnitude of the resources needed to invest in infrastructure development and maintenance is high. However, mobilizing the required investment is a major challenge for LLDCs. There was a strong call on all the development partners to enhance their financial and technical support;
- Initiatives and follow-up processes to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda should take into account the special needs of the LLDCs and help them to accelerate our efforts towards achieving the SDGs;
- Importance of looking at the enabling environment for economic development (Good governance and the rule of law; effective and efficient administrative systems human capital;
- Importance of good relations with neighbours and in participation in regional integration; and the
- Importance of public, private partnerships and other partnership arrangements (private sector support) and multisector partnership.

I would like to thank The Permanent Mission of Austria, Permanent Mission of Zambia, and UNIDO for organizing this side event. And once again, I thank the panellists for their invaluable interventions that have deepened the level of understanding on this important topic and have provoked further thoughts in the minds of many here today. I also thank the distinguished audience members for their active participation that has made our dialogue truly interactive. With this, our meeting has now come to an end.

Thank you very much for your attention.
Annex 1: List of Participants

Member States

Austria

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Zambia

22. H.E Mr. Brian Mushimba, Minister of Transport & Communications, Republic of Zambia and Chair of the Group of LLDC
23. HE Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Zambia to the UN, New York zambia@un.int
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Zimbabwe

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58. Yue Dong, Economic Affairs Intern
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Annex 2: Programme

Accelerating Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Landlocked Developing Countries Through Structural Transformation: Pursuing Policy at the Nexus of Infrastructure and Industrialization

Side Event: High Level Political Forum 2017

19 July 2017, 18:15-19:30

Conference Room 11, UN Headquarters New York

Programme (as of 17 July 2017)

Moderator/ Opening Remarks: Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa Utoikamanu, Under Secretary General and High Representative, UN-OHRLLS

Remarks
1. Honourable Mr. Brian Mushimba, Minister of Transport & Communications, Republic of Zambia and Chair of the Group of LLDC
2. HE Mr. Jan Kickert, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN
3. Ms. Fatou Haidara, Managing Director, Policy and Programme Support, UNIDO

Panelists
1. Honourable Dr. Min Bahadur Shrestha, Vice Chairman, National Planning Commission, Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal
2. H.E Mrs. Hirut Zemen, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
3. Mr. Mahmoud Mohieldin, Senior Vice-President for the 2030 Development Agenda, United Nations Relations and Partnerships World Bank
4. Dr. Judith Kateera, Permanent Secretary, Ministry Economic Planning and Investment Promotion, Republic of Zimbabwe

Experience sharing by Member States and Interactive discussion
1. Botswana
2. Uzbekistan
3. Zambia
4. Kazakhstan

Wrap up and Closing