



**Statement
by**

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**High Representative
And
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for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States**

**High-level Joint Event of Regional Economic Commissions at COP23:
“Opportunities for scaling up climate change action to implement the NDCs
in the five UN regions: National perspectives and how Regional Commissions
are responding”**

**Thursday 16 November, 15:00-16:30
Room 10, Bonn zone**

Executive Secretary, UNESCAP,
Hon Ministers,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to be with you for this very important subject and my thanks go to the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions for having me and by extension OHRLLS with you.

The LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are among the most vulnerable countries in the world. These nations have contributed very little to the causes of climate change but stand to suffer the greatest impacts of its effects.

I wish to share with you four key points for thought and above all action. As I have said in many other meetings of this week: we are running against time, time is now to ACT.

First, we must increase the **ambition level of our collective greenhouse gas mitigation** commitments.

The *UN Environment Emissions Gap Report 2017* finds that current NCDs only cover one third of the emissions reductions that are needed for the goal of staying well below 2°C.

Current pledge levels imply at least 3 degrees Celsius of warming with the attendant severe damage.

Take the Small Islands Developing States - this means that potentially entire communities if not nations could disappear.

Second, we must **scale up our efforts to support adaptation**. Finance does not flow at levels nor at speed required to effectively support the most vulnerable countries in their efforts to bring about concrete adaptation actions.

Adaptation is key - as they say: think global - act local and we know that local adaptation is key to triggering increased resilience on the ground.

Third, **climate finance**.

The *2017 State of the LDCs Report* OHRLLS issued this year recommends that a greater share of the total amounts of climate finance flowing from developed to developing countries needs to be attributed to LDCs.

Why do we recommend this ?

The fact is: LDCs only received an estimated 12 per cent of the total GEF climate change finance, taking all its funds together since the Pilot Phase.

We also must keep better track on the flow of climate finance to LDCs, LLDCs and the SIDS.

We urge multilateral entities and governments to consider tracking climate change finance also by LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, setting targets, and keeping progress under review.

Fourth - **capacity support**

Several of the LDCs and notably SIDS deserve our congratulations for having set ambitious renewable energy targets. Tuvalu, for example, set a target to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2020 and similarly, Aruba has announced its 100% sustainable energy target for 2020.

To realise national ambitions, countries in turn need our systematic efforts to help strengthen absorption capacity.

This has several dimensions:

we need to look into simplifying and streamlining complex, cumbersome disbursement procedures evidently without compromising accountability and transparency. Climate change will now wait for less cumbersome procedures- time is of the essence.

We indeed need much greater assistance to facilitate the preparation and submission of bankable proposals - and that assistance should also reach out to local communities. And the project approval and disbursement processes should be streamlined and simplified with urgency.

I must repeat if again - LDCs, LLDCS and SIDS have contributed little to global greenhouse gas emissions, and they remain mindful to limit the climate impact of their own growth.

This however will demand access to sustainable energy sources. My Office has given priority to assisting countries with determining how to develop their sustainable energy potential and overcome barriers to sustainable energy finance.

On all of these key issues, a regional approach as well as exchange between regions is critical.

Many of the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS remain disadvantaged by size, remoteness , weak infrastructure and difficulty in leveraging finance.

A regional approach well embedded in global and national efforts will help to overcome many of these challenges by pooling of financial and technical resources, economies of scale, South-South and triangular cooperation and sharing of best practices.

OHRLLS traditionally has worked closely with Regional Commissions and I look forward to further strengthening this partnership.

So in closing, I thank the Regional Commissions for the critical role they all play in addressing climate change, supporting the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the LDCs, the Vienna Programme of Action for the LLDCs and the S.A.M.O.A. Pathway for the SIDS.

Indeed, we must be like in an orchestra that plays harmoniously together. It is by the global, regional, national and local playing together that we can deliver on the promise we made to billions when we signed off on the Paris Climate Agreement and Agenda 2030.

Thank you.
