



**Statement
by**

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**Under-Secretary-General
High Representative
for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries
and Small Island Developing States**

**MEETING OF THE GROUP OF LDCS AT THE AMBASSADORIAL
LEVEL
ON THE TECHNOLOGY BANK FOR LDCS**

Venue: Conference Room 9

UNHQ, New York
17 August 2017
3:00 p.m

Honourable Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for organising this meeting and inviting me to present the commitment of the Government of Turkey on the operationalisation of the Technology Bank for LDC.

Excellencies,

Science, Technology and Innovation play a critical role in stimulating economic growth. It is a key driver for structural economic transformation and sustainable development. Recognizing this, the Istanbul Programme of Action in 2011 called for the establishment of a technology bank dedicated to LDCs. This long-standing priority was confirmed in the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG target 17.8.

On the 23 of December 2016, the UNGA adopted resolution 71/251 on Establishment of Technology Bank for LDCs, a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, to be funded through voluntary contributions.

The full operationalization of the Technology Bank by 2017 will be the first SDG target to be achieved and contribute directly to the 2030 Agenda's principle of leaving no one behind, and implementation of Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs.

Excellencies,

During my visit to Turkey, from 31 July to 4 August 2017, I called on the political leadership of the Government of Turkey and the Presidents of Turkish Scientific and Technological Research Council and Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency. At the highest political levels, I highlighted the importance of the Technology Bank and STI for LDCs, the urgency to fully operationalize the Technology Bank by 2017, and requested for a strong financial commitment that would catalyse additional resources from other Member States and establish the Technology Bank on a sound financial basis.

We also visited the proposed site of Technology Bank in Gebze. The facility is located within the complex of Marmara Research Centre Technopolis, Turkey's first techno-park. At the premises, we visited numerous research and development, and incubation facilities, which are currently partnering with UN agencies and collaborating with LDCs on research activities. At the new facility, an office area of approximately 500 m² will be made available to the Technology Bank.

Excellencies,

During the visit, we concluded consultations on the draft Host Country Agreement and the Financial and In-kind contributions of the Government of Turkey to the Technology Bank. On this note, I wish to inform that the Host Country has pledged to provide:

An annual contribution of US\$ 2 million for 5 years starting 2017. The Government may review its annual contribution for an increase;
Premises free of charge for 5 years and the establishment costs;

Experts on non-reimbursable loan agreement basis for the TB;
Additional project-based funding starting 2018, including through the Turkish International Cooperation Development Agency.

The package, when finalised, will provide more than 12 million dollars to the Technology Bank for the first 5 years. In addition, Turkey has committed to providing project money from the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency that will support the programme activities of the Bank in LDCs, starting in 2018. We hope that this will allow the setting up of the Technology Bank in a manner that is conducive for other Member States and stakeholders to provide additional support to the Bank.

In view of the vast needs of the LDCs in STI, to fully implement the Three Year Strategic Plan: Supporting the Operationalization of the Technology Bank, with programmes in all LDCs, the TB would require an annual budget of USD 35-40 million. However, the current package offered by the Host Country, constitutes an important initial capital to operationalize the TB. It will enable the Bank to catalyze significant contributions from Member States, and other development partners and stakeholders for the implementing the Three Year Strategic Plan.

Excellencies,

On the way forward towards the full operationalization of the Technology Bank by 2017, the next most important step is the recruitment of the Managing Director of the Technology Bank. As soon as we finalise the two agreements, the host country will transfer the US\$ 2 million pledge for the Technology Bank's start up-year 2017. This will be followed by the recruitment of the Managing Director, an important requirement for the full operationalization of the Bank by 2017. Once we have an agreement between the UN and the Host Country, we propose to sign the two draft agreements on the 22 of August 2017 at the Annual LDC Ministerial meeting. Additionally, we have proposed to the Host Country to convene the first Council of the Technology Bank in mid-November 2017. The Council will consider and approve its first annual work plan and the budget of the Technology Bank, and prepare the Council's report to the Secretary General for submission to the UNGA.

Meanwhile, we will continue to mobilise additional resources for the Technology Bank, and remain committed to the full operationalization of the Technology Bank within the timeframe, as set out in the 2030 Agenda.

Excellencies,

On this note, as the immediate beneficiaries of the Technology Bank, I wish to seek your views and concurrence on the commitments made by the Government of Turkey which I have outlined, before finalizing the two agreements with the host country.

I thank you for your attention.
