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**United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States**

**(UN-OHRLLS)**

**Statement by**

**Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu**

**High Representative**

**and**

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

**at the lunch for the Group of Friends of LDCs  
5 February 2018**

**on  
Repositioning the UNDS**

**Permanent Mission of Belgium**

Distinguished Co-Chairs of the Friends of LDCs  
Distinguished Chair and the vice-Chairs of LDCs  
Excellencies  
Ladies and gentlemen,

## PARTNERS

The topic of our meeting could not be more timely!

Today's meeting provides an important platform for LDCs to share their views and priorities on the UN development system reform proposals.

The last couple years globally have shown profound and rapid shifts and even questioned and continue to question many aspects of the multi-lateral system.

Before us is a choice: we can either be by-standers or pro-active participants in these rapidly evolving changes.

I see two "musts":

1. we must move forward in adjusting governance and institutional capacities for today's and tomorrow's challenges. We can not be pro-active participants in building the future using the tools of the past made for the challenges of the past.
2. to move forward, we must build consensus.

The Secretary-General said it clearly: "ambition is not a choice - it is our only option".

The report on "repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda" gives us a solid, well thought-through roadmap forward and presents comprehensive and ambitious proposals.

The report is not a report for the sake of yet another report- this is about achieving the Sustainable Development Goals we signed off on more than two years ago to better serve the world's people and to leave no one behind in poverty.

As I have said in other meetings, the world's people will not judge us by our words but by our actions.

Action is what the report is about and action requires a United Nations institutional response and capacities of our times and not of yesterday.

Action also requires a system-wide approach to partnerships.

These key objectives led to the seven key proposals in the report to ensure better support, coordination, transparency and accountability by the UN system so that the system is fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the priorities of the host governments.

The Secretary-General has been very clear that host government priorities and ownership are in the driver's seat. The concern is to have UN system capacities that are adequate and can be fully responsive to your needs.

Again, capacities of yesterday are unlikely to meet the needs of today and tomorrow.

This is why we also need a new generation of United Nations country teams. Country teams that are able to meaningfully respond to countries' needs and meet the 2030 Agenda goals by leaving no one behind.

UN country teams need transparency and accountability, capable and responsive leadership, responsive and adequate physical presence and stronger capacities through improved resources, knowledge and skill sets.

The Secretary-General also proposes to strengthen ECOSOC.

Indeed, it is vital to strengthen the interface between the UN development system and the Council and to enable the Council to hold the UNDS accountable.

Furthermore, the proposed Funding Compact will facilitate bringing better quality, quantity and predictability of resources and ensure enhanced capacities of the system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

From a managerial perspective, it also means we must strengthen evaluation, oversight and management practices in the UN system itself.

LDCs, as the poorest, often left behind and most vulnerable countries, you rely on the UNDS support more than any other country.

The QCPR resolution of 2016 already urges the UNDS to prioritize allocations to LDCs.

So please do allow me to once more thank Belgium for your pledge to direct at least 50 percent of your official development assistance to the Least Developed Countries! This is inspiring an example and encouraging! Thank you.

The QCPR resolution reaffirmed that the least developed countries, as the most vulnerable group of countries, need enhanced support to overcome structural challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

The Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General have ensured that LDCs would continue to receive priority in the revitalized UNDS.

It is also important to note that the report rightly stresses that significant gaps remain in our collective support for water and sanitation (Sustainable Development Goal 6), energy (Goal 7), industry and infrastructure (Goal 9), sustainable consumption and production (Goal 12) and the environment (Goals 13, 14 and 15).

The report underlines that we must fill those thematic gaps in the Sustainable Development Goals and put in place effective mechanisms to respond to these needs.

This is vitally important for LDCs, and these are not new goals but all action areas already signed off on in the priorities of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

I argue that for LDC Governments, we need to integrate the provisions of the Istanbul Programme of Action into the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, as decided in the Programme of Action.

I would also underline that effective linkages are needed with the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant UN Conferences and processes, including on LDCs, SIDS and LLDCs, as decided in the 2030 Agenda.

Let me conclude by once more underlining that an urgent and successful UNDS reform will be vitally important for LDCs present and future.

Let us not be “victims” of history but let us shape today and tomorrow.

LDC voices and priorities must be reflected up-front and center not just in documents but above all in action.

My Office stands ready to extend all necessary support in this regard.

Thank you.