



UN-OHRLLS

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

Press Conference

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and

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

**At the Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries
(LLDCs) on Trade and Transport**

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Marriott Astana Hotel

Dear Members and friends of the Press,
First, thank you for your time and having me here with you.
Why am I here –

I want to bring to your attention this very important Ministerial Meeting of the Landlocked Developing Countries. The meeting looks at the Trade and Transport issues they have and takes place today and tomorrow.

UN-OHRLLS is a voice for some 91 countries and over one billion people and the LLDCs are part of this group, a group of countries most at risk of being left behind.

So, OHRLLS is happy to organize with the Government support this meeting here at the margins of the Astana Economic Forum. Kazakhstan continues to demonstrate an unwavering leadership and support to the LLDCs' development agenda.

This support goes back to 2003. The Government of Kazakhstan then already hosted the first ever United Nations Conference to address the special needs and challenges faced by the landlocked developing countries.

The outcome of the meeting was the so-called Almaty Programme of Action. This remains work in progress and since, in 2014, a subsequent programme, the Vienna Programme of Action, was adopted.

This program also identifies priority areas for action.

They concern transit issues, infrastructure development both HARD and SOFT infrastructure, trade and trade facilitation, and regional integration.

This package of action should facilitate structural transformations and the action program contains specific recommendations for support to governments. We call that implementation support measures.

This Ministerial meeting of LLDCs will focus on some of these areas for action.

Over the course of today and tomorrow, the meeting will identify what has to be done in the areas of trade, economic transformation and the development of transport infrastructure to support LLDCs in achieving connectivity and integration into the global trade and economic system.

The goal is to look at what works, what does not work, share and ideally replicate successful practices and engage in and keep the dialogue and partnerships going.

We really need to look at what it will take to achieve the Vienna Programme of Action and of course the goals of Agenda 2030 the global community signed off on in 2015. That is a MUST if we want to live up to the promise of leaving no one behind.

There is of course no such thing as a one size fits all solution.

But, we have experiences, best practices that have worked in some landlocked developing countries and we need to look at that. We need to see which ones can be replicated or adapted to the specific national situations.

What brings us though ALL TOGETHER IS the shared desire and hope to transform from landlocked to land-linked countries.

We will identify recommendations and opportunities for the scaling up of international support to LLDCs on transport and trade facilitation.

This meeting also is a kick-off to the high-level mid-term review process of the Vienna Programme of Action which will take place in 2019.

This meeting here can and I hope will make an important contribution to the review process.

The goal of the midterm review as such is to take stock of progress made in implementing the Vienna Programme of Action. We need to take a hard look at what we achieved, what we did not achieve and why, and identify actions and initiatives needed to accelerate the implementation of the Programme.

This will require engagement by all stakeholders and actors. That means more than only landlocked developing countries. This calls on the transit neighbours, development partners, the UN system at large, the multi-lateral system at large and public as well as private sectors.

My Office, UN-OHRLLS, is tasked with coordinating the preparatory process.

We stand ready to mobilize the full UN system support and capacities for the LLDCs.

We will certainly continue to advocate for their special needs and even enhance that advocacy. Thank you again for your time! Yours is a very important role of spreading the facts and bringing attention to the importance of LLDCs and the support we ought to extend for their full inclusion in achieving the goals set out in 2015 when the world community adopted Agenda 2030.