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Remarks

by

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High Representative

and

Under-Secretary-General

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

**at India-UN Development Partnership Fund
Commemoration of First Anniversary**

Friday, 8 June 2018, 13:15-14:15

CR#7, United Nations, New York

Your Excellency, Mr. António Guterres

Your Excellency Ambassador Akbaruddin

dear colleague and friend , Mr. Jorge Chediek

Excellencies

friends and colleagues,

I am very honored to be among you to take pride and encouragement in and of the important achievements of the India-UN Development Partnership Fund.

I thank you Ambassador Akbaruddin and the people of your country for the long-standing partnership between India and OHRLLS.

We have a strong bond. It is our shared concern to advance a sustainable development of the most vulnerable groups of countries. This is not an option - it is what we MUST do if we want to live up to our promise to leave no one behind.

Allow me to quote Mahatma Gandhi - I quote

“the difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world’s problems; “- end of quote

Indeed, if we are capable of exploring outerspace, if we are capable of creating artificial intelligence, we must show, like you do show with the Fund, that we can extend our hands, hearts and minds to improve the lives of millions of people in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

These are the more than one billion people most affected by poverty, instability, hunger, and the often dramatic adverse impacts of climate change.

Allow me to join our Secretary General and others in once more thanking you for India’s leadership and dedication to improving lives for all.

OHRLLS, on behalf of the Secretary General, is a voice for the over one billion people living in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

The Fund’s emphasis on unlocking the potential of the vulnerable countries so that they also can realize the ambitions of the sustainable development goals for the full benefit of their peoples could not be more critical or timely.

But there is more to it. It is your dedication to a modality of partnering we call South-South cooperation and to multilateralism which stand out.

Yours is a demand-driven approach, an approach driven by solidarity with no conditionality and always respectful of the sovereignty of partner countries.

On behalf of the SIDS and as an islander of the Pacific myself, I am naturally heartened to see your engagement for the SIDS!

The Fund's already very strong project pipeline that contributes to strengthening climate resilience truly is a lifeline. Climate resilience is key to so many of the interlinked sustainable development challenges of the SIDS.

Just last week, OHRLLS in partnership with our colleagues from IOM, held a briefing on the interlinkages between migration and climate change.

As I said in my opening remarks, unless we act now we will be in the "perfect storm" - well, I do hope we are not yet already in it.

Throughout the briefing, SIDS stressed the critical role of South-South cooperation to build resilience through sharing, adapting and scaling-up successful cost-effective practices and leveraging South-South cooperation for urgent energy and technology advances that must happen now.

The India-UN Partnership Fund takes a strong lead in this regard.

Excellencies,

Leaving no-one behind is the central promise of Agenda 2030.

When the global community signed off on Agenda 2030 we promised people, real people if I may say, that we will address poverty, build a future of shared opportunity and prosperity and protect the only one planet we have as our common and shared house.

We now are already three years into the operational path of Agenda 2030 and we have no time to waste.

South-South cooperation, since its early days in 1974 when the UNGA endorsed the establishment of a special unit within UNDP, has acted as a crucial conduit for the vulnerable groups of countries.

South-South cooperation has demonstrated unique strengths and I am confident that the already growing momentum will only strengthen and accelerate.

South-South cooperation is about solidarity. Its greatest strength may well be its diversity of forms and flows.

Together with Agenda 2030, the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA), the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), the SAMOA Pathway and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda all highlight South-South cooperation as critical to their implementation.

Over the years, South-South cooperation has been as we say here fully mainstreamed into the way in which OHRLLS meets the mandate entrusted to it by member states.

OHRLLS has been and remains more than ever committed to building multi-stakeholder partnerships to accelerate the implementation of all of the programmes of action entered into for the benefit of the peoples of the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

OHRLLS, in close partnership with the office of our colleague Jorge Chediek, wishes to strongly contribute to enhanced South-South cooperation.

In this regard, I wish to apprise you of two recent developments.

Just a week ago, the Technology Bank for the LDCs was officially inaugurated in Gebze Turkey by the Government of Turkey in the presence of our Deputy Secretary-General.

This is a milestone for many reasons. Last but certainly not least this marks the first SDG target now officially reached!

The Technology Bank itself is about South-South cooperation and its contribution to multilateralism and sustainable development.

Excellency Ambassador Akbaruddin, India is known for its great advances with the Digital India program or your Smart Cities programs. You know how science, technology and innovation are key drivers for sustainable structural transformation.

This also is the heartbeat of the Technology Centre. Innovative technologies developed in the South respond to the contextual needs of the developing countries. They are easily adaptable.

This however does require access to modern, clean energy and modern communications technologies.

My second news is that, in partnership with the United Nations' Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development, OHRLLS will shortly launch a report on the key importance of broadband for national development at the HLPF.

Innovative solutions for ICT from the global South will have much to contribute to overcome the existing challenges in that area.

Excellencies,

India has been a long-standing partner of OHRLLS. You always have focused and continue to focus on transformative approaches, approaches that ensure robust and inclusive growth, creation of infrastructure and jobs and ensuring access to modern energy.

With your initiatives you seek transformation across the entire development landscape.

South-South cooperation championed by India has been expressed through many ways ranging from providing scholarships to promoting technology transfer, to capacity building, dispatching experts, just to name a few.

OHRLLS is grateful for India's and India's peoples continued support to the work we do on behalf of 91 countries.

Just yesterday, we received your generous grant of \$250,000 for the critical midterm review of the Vienna Program of Action to be held next year.

Thank you for an unwavering commitment to promoting inclusive, equitable and sustainable development for all - women, men, boys and girls.

Excellencies,

Our Secretary General has made it clear over and over again: we do not have the luxury to waste time.

People want our collective action, words alone will not do.

I hope all of us, every day in our respective functions will show what we are capable of doing.

Let the partnership fund and its work be an inspiration to all of us.

Thank you.