Mr. Chairman, thank you for giving me the floor.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

The progress achieved by the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action after almost five years since its adoption is very modest.

LLDCs continue to face significant challenges in the realization of the priorities set out by that Programme, in particular in terms of infrastructure development and maintenance, international trade and structural economic transformation.

The overview of the socioeconomic developments and the progress towards SDGs in LLDCs presented in the Secretary-General’s Reports on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action shows that these countries lag behind on almost all targets. A clear indicator in this regard is the continuing decline in the gross domestic product (GDP) which reached in 2016 the lowest level since 1998.

The fragile progress achieved so far in some areas relating to health, education, energy is under threat of being hampered by the high vulnerability of landlocked developing countries to climate change negative impacts, especially floods, drought, desertification and land degradation.

While national ownership is key in mobilizing the required resources to implement the Vienna Programme of Action and pursue the sustainable development path set out by the 2030 Agenda, already at this stage is clear that without support the LLDCs risk to be left behind.

The investments required into quality, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, transportation, water and sanitation, building productive capacities, pursue structural economic transformation, value-addition and export diversification exceed by far the capacity of the landlocked developing countries.

Increased international cooperation and enhanced partnerships is vital for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda in the landlocked developing countries.

Continued support from development partners, including multilateral development banks is critical in mobilizing both financial and nonfinancial resources to pursue the sustainable development in an integrated manner.

Furthermore, the United Nations should play an enhanced role in raising awareness on LLDCs challenges and constrains, leveraging partnerships and building capacities to assist landlocked developing countries in their development agenda.
In this context, we acknowledge the activities undertaken by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to support the implementation, follow-up and review of the Vienna Programme of Action in LLDC countries.

Mr. Chairman,

Next year, a comprehensive High-level midterm review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action will be held that will offer the opportunity to assess the progress, challenges and needs of the LLDCs in achieving the priorities set out in the mentioned above agenda.

The UN support and that of the development partners will be important in the organization of the Midterm review and its preparatory process. It is encouraging to note the contributions made by some countries to this important process. This is an indicator that LLDCs are not along on the challenging path towards sustainable development.

Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the efforts undertaken by the Republic of Paraguay in its capacity as Chair of the Group of the LLDCs to promote the concerns, challenges and needs of the landlocked developing countries at the United Nations.

In conclusion, I reiterate the Republic of Moldova’s commitment to the development priorities set by the Vienna Programme of Action as an important tool towards achieving the sustainable development goals.

Thank you.