Statement by

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

at the Annual Ministerial Meeting
of the Group of the LLDCs

on

Item 3: Update on the preparations for the midterm review of the VPoA

28 September 2018

New York
Thank you Chair for according me this opportunity to update the meeting on the ongoing preparations for the High-Level Comprehensive Mid-term Review of the Vienna Programme of Action to be held in 2019 as called for by the UN-General Assembly resolution 72/232. OHRLLS has been mandated to co-ordinate the preparations of the Review.

Excellencies,

The purpose of the Mid-term is to assess progress made in implementing the Vienna Programme of Action, to identify achievements, as well as constraints and to propose recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA and the SDGs by the LLDCs. The midterm review will adopt an intergovernmentally negotiated political declaration.

It is a key concern of mine to ensure strong and inclusive participation in the entire process of the review both at political level and technical level. Hence this briefing is fundamental to ensure that we are all on the same page from the outset and moving forward.

The Ministerial Meeting Trade and Transport that was held in Astana, Kazakhstan in May 2018 marked the first event of preparatory process of the midterm review. I wish to thank the Government of Kazakhstan for hosting the meeting. The outcome of that meeting, the Astana Declaration, forms an important input into the preparatory process. It focusses on actions to improve Improving Transport Connectivity for the LLDCs, promote Structural
Transformation, Diversification and Value-Addition and increased trade and Trade Facilitation.

The inaugural meeting of the International Think Tank for the LLDCs was also held in June 2018 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. The meeting adopted an outcome document that will also feed into the preparatory process of the midterm review. The meeting discussed amongst other issues, foreign direct investment and economic diversification, ICT connectivity, infrastructure development, transit corridors and trade facilitation.

Excellencies,

The LLDCs are expected to prepare national reports on the implementation of the VPoA – UNDP Administrator and myself sent a joint letter to all the LLDCs in this regard. We thank the LLDCs that have already submitted their national reports and I appeal to those that have not yet submitted to do so.

OHRLLS is currently working with the UN regional commissions to organize the regional review meetings – for Euro-Asia we are working with UNESCAP and UNECE; Africa we are working with UNECA; and for Latin America we are working with ECLAC. I wish to thank Paraguay for offering to host the Latin America regional review meeting in their country. For other regions, the discussion on hosting the respective regional meetings are at advanced stage and the venues will be confirmed in due course. The regional review meetings will be held during the first half of 2019. We hope that the outcomes of these meetings will also be adopted by their Commission Sessions.
In terms of preconference thematic events, OHRLLS together with partners organized 2 side events focused on energy and aviation in the side-lines of the HLPF. OHRLLS in collaboration with partners is also planning to organize some preconference thematic events including promoting trade and transport corridors, ICT connectivity, and structural economic transformation.

I would like to emphasize that the preparatory process of the midterm review will foster the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including the LLDCs, transit and donor countries, private sector, UN system organizations, international and regional organizations, academia, civil society and others. Given the importance of the private sector in the implementation of the VPoA, we plan to organize private sector focused events in the margins of the regional review meetings.

OHRLLS organized the sixth inter-agency consultative group meeting on the follow-up and implementation of the VPoA, in April in Geneva. The meeting was able to bring together relevant agencies to consult and plan together on the organization of the Midterm Review. Another inter-agency consultative group is being organized to be held in November 2018 to further consult on the preparation of the Midterm review as well as coordinate the pre-conference events that we can jointly work on to inform the substantive preparations of the Midterm Review.

OHRLLS will also undertake background analytical work in preparation for the regional review meetings.

Regarding the host for the High-Level Comprehensive Midterm Review of the VPoA, while we are still in consultation with partners, New York will be the fall-back option.
Excellencies,

The General Assembly mandated that costs relating to the midterm review and its preparation be financed through voluntary contributions. In this regard, my office has been undertaking resources mobilization. So far contributions have been received from the Governments of the Peoples Republic of China, Republic of India, the Republic of Kazakhstan, and Austria.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is necessary that all the LLDCs remain fully and constructively engaged. I encourage you all to seize this critical moment to make your voices heard, to come forward with the proposals that can accelerate the implementation of the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development.

In conclusion, I wish to pledge my personal commitment and that of my office to ensure a successful midterm review process and my continued support in addressing the challenges faced by the LLDCs.

Thank you.