INTERVENTION BY THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

HONOURABLE LESEGO MAKGOTHI

AT THE ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF
FOREIGN MINISTERS OF LLDCS

NEW YORK
28 SEPTEMBER, 2017
Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me at the outset, Mr. Chairman to congratulate you, on your election to preside over our Group’s work. I also wish to assure you of my country’s full support and cooperation in the work of the bureau. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Countries (UN-OHRLSS), for the excellent manner in which it coordinates and follows up on the implementation of the Vienna Program of Action including all the preparatory work for the mid-term review.

Mr. Chairman,

Lesotho remains one of the most disadvantaged of the thirty-two LLDCs due to her unique geographical situation of being completely surrounded by one Country. My country is therefore, no stranger to the adverse effects of being landlocked. The burden of transit costs and cumbersome and slow export processing procedures continue to contribute to slow trade development. As you have rightly indicated in your opening remarks Mr. Chair.

Despite these challenges, we have made notable strides towards the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action which has been integrated into our national and sectoral development frameworks, in particular the National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) II, which is designed to implement Lesotho’s medium to long-term development goals. The plan has four Key Priority Areas that would be realized through four strategic priority sectors i.e. Agriculture, Manufacturing, Tourism and
creative arts and Technology and Innovation. We realize the urgency to radically transform the economy in order to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development through the integration of the pillars of the VPoA into the NSDP II.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of the South African Development Community (SADC), we are implementing the SADC Protocol on Trade, which calls for non-discriminatory treatment of transit goods. Measures have been put in place to improve freedom of transit. We fully support the call for strengthening international transport corridors in the quest to reduce trade costs mainly thus encouraging sustainable development.

Mr. Chairman,

All infrastructure development efforts in the following sectors; Water, Transport, and Health, presented by line ministries in the form of project proposals are appraised by the Ministry of Planning to ensure that they are in line with NSDP. We are resolute as a country to source domestic resources for such projects however, we will rely immensely on external funding from our development partners and multilateral development banks on this initiative.

Mr. Chairman, we should therefore, join forces in advancing the promotion of prosperity, equitable sharing of the world’s common wealth and a sustainable future for our citizens. Lessons learned, gaps and experiences identified in the mid-term review should drive our common desire to tackle
challenges that Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) face in a more comprehensive manner.

Mr. Chairman,
Lesotho fully endorses the elements of the LLDC declaration and moves that it should be adopted as an outcome document of our meeting.

Finally, I wish to inform this august gathering that the Lesotho will too present its Voluntary National Report (VNR) at the upcoming High Level Political Forum in 2019.

I thank you.