SUMMARY REPORT

Ambassadorial Level Consultative Meeting of LDCs and Friends of LDCs

“Accelerating progress towards graduation from the LDC category”

28 - 29 June, 2018

Glen Cove, New York
INTRODUCTION

The Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS) convened a Consultative Meeting of LDCs and Friends of LDCs on Accelerating progress towards graduation from the LDC category.

The bold vision and strategy for sustainable development charted out by the international community in the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) provides a framework for building the productive capacities of the Least Developed Countries. Progress has been made in the implementation of the IPoA in several key priority areas. Access to ICT and sustainable energy has increased significantly, which, together with the operationalization of the Technology Bank for LDCs, will increase progress towards sustainable development. The IPoA also set the ambitious goal of enabling half of the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020. The 2018 triennial review by the Committee for Development Policy was an historic occasion for the LDC category with a total of 12 LDCs meeting the criteria.

The key objective of the meeting was to discuss the progress towards graduation from the LDC category and the importance of graduation support. The meeting also elaborated the key accelerators for structural transformation and how countries who have not met the criteria for graduation can fast-track their progress. In line with the upcoming High-Level Political Forum, the Consultative Meeting gave special focus to Sustainable Development Goal 7 on sustainable energy.

The event comprised a working dinner on Thursday, 28 June, and a full day of thematic working sessions on Friday, 29 June, including presentations on specific topics followed by interactive debates. The meeting convened Permanent Representatives of LDCs and Friends of LDCs, as well as selected experts, and representatives from various UN agencies. The programme of the meeting is in Annex I.

The presentations made during the Consultative Meeting can be accessed at: http://unohrlls.org/event/ambassadorial-level-consultative-meeting-ldc-friends-ldc/

OPENING SESSION

At the opening dinner of the Consultative Meeting of LDCs and Friends of LDCs on Accelerating Progress Towards Graduation from the LDC Category, Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, highlighted the critical importance of the meeting for countries that are eligible for graduation and those that are farther behind on the journey towards graduation.

The USG shared that 12 LDCs currently meet the graduation criteria from the LDC category. This great progress towards graduation is encouraging and demonstrates that concerted efforts will be needed to maintain the momentum. She urged the meeting to look at the importance of providing support that will make graduation sustainable, including key accelerators for structural transformation, and how to fast track countries to meet the graduation criteria. The USG underscored the need to re-evaluate partnerships to translate the pledges of the IPoA and the Agenda 2030 to become a reality on the ground, and urged the meeting to redouble efforts towards achieving the goals of the IPoA and the SDGs. The USG also stated that the UN Development System must be fit for purpose to support Member States and sought views on how the UN could support graduation efforts.

HE Mr. Tareq Md Ariful Islam, Deputy Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, attributed the progress in graduation to successful global partnerships for development. He cautioned that graduating countries continue to face high vulnerability to various shocks and crises apart from their inherent structural fragility. He
underscored the need to give more emphasis on comprehensive smooth transition strategies, including flexibility and extension of LDC-specific support in sectors that are highly sensitive to the erosion of trade preferences.

Mr. Islam shared that LDCs have a long way to realize the IPoA objective of enabling half of the LDCs meet the graduation criteria. LDCs must strengthen their national efforts and need accelerated support from their development partners in this respect. This must include enhanced domestic resources, additional ODA, scaled up private sector investment and access to modern technologies. The recent inauguration of the Technology Bank for LDCs can harness technologies to achieve the SDGs. The most challenging task ahead is to ensure its effective operations on the ground. He urged LDCs and their development partners, including the UN development system to remain consistently engaged and extend necessary support to the Technology Bank. He also underlined that accessible, affordable and reliable electricity supply of sustainable energy is a fundamental pre-requisite for rapid economic growth and structural transformation of LDCs, and more needs to be done in this regard to achieve SDG target 7.1 in LDCs by 2030.

H.E. Mr. Ib Petersen, Permanent Representative of Denmark, recognized the challenges associated with graduation. He highlighted the importance of setting the right priorities for LDCs, and noted that the SDGs provide the right platform and compliments the IPoA. He touched on the need to focus on sustainable graduation, including strengthening national institutions to support graduation.

Mr. Peterson highlighted that graduation celebration also calls for mobilizing more partnerships, including the role of the UN system to assist graduation. He assured that Denmark will continue supporting graduated LDCs and highlighted the importance of leveraging other sources of finance for development and shared Denmark’s work on preventive assistance and leveraging finance from private investors. He also informed on the launch of the SDGs investment fund, which offers options to facilitate graduation and economic development for LDCs. He also recognized that the Technology Bank provides catalytic options and tools to speed up the implementation of graduation.

H.E. Mr. Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu, Permanent Representative of Turkey, recognized the challenges of LDCs and highlighted that it is the role of the friends of LDCs is to continue support for graduating countries and ensure their smooth transition. He reaffirmed Turkey’s commitment to continue supporting LDC. Mr. Sinirlioğlu announced the inauguration of the Technology Bank for the LDCs on 4 June 2018 in Gebze. He highlighted that this marks the fulfillment of the first SDG target (17.8) of the 2030 Agenda. He informed that the Bank also signed its first partnership tripartite MoU with the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey and the Global Good Fund.

Mr. Sinirlioğlu stated that the Bank will require around 40 million USD per year to finance its activities. However, the current resources fall short for the proper functioning of the Bank. He highlighted that the Technology Bank is a UN institution, member states have a collective and imminent responsibility to make it an effective tool, and called on all partners to support the Bank’s activities, not only through financial means but also by forging partnerships.

Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Acting Managing Director of the Technology Bank and Director, UN-OHRLLS highlighted that the achievement of the first SDG Target (17.8) and establishment of a new UN institution is an accomplishment by the LDCs to be celebrated. She thanked the LDCs for their leadership, the generous support from the host country, and the Member States that supported the Technology Bank from the very beginning. The Director invited all LDCs to proactively engage with the Technology Bank. She informed that the headquarters of the Technology Bank were inaugurated by the Minister of Science, Industry and Technology of Turkey and the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations in the presence of more than 150 participants,
including LDC Ministers and Norway’s Secretary of State for Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and representatives of Friends of LDCs, Council Members of the Technology Bank, academia, private sector, and foundations.

Ms. Schroderus-Fox stated that the Bank is starting its work, including STI and technology needs assessments and the promotion of digital access to research, in collaboration with other UN agencies, in several LDCs. She invited all stakeholders to work together so that the bank can deliver its full mandate and promise, to put STI to the service of poverty eradication in the LDCs and help them implement the SDGs in the true spirit of leaving no one behind.

Mr. Craig Nakagawa, Director of Commercialization, Global Good - Intellectual Ventures, informed that Global Good is funded by Bill Gates and focused on a shared vision with Nathan Myhrvold to invent technology to solve some of humanity’s most daunting problems. With a laboratory in Bellevue, WA, Global Good focuses on global health and development technologies that can impact the lives of those living in low-resource countries. He emphasized the Technology Bank’s potential to uniquely create a two-way and equal transfer of knowledge required to catalyze technical and business innovation that can address the needs of LDCs as well as the world through reverse innovation. In this regard, the LDCs are the frontline of innovation globally.

**SESSION 1: PROGRESS TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE GRADUATION OF LDCS: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

The first panel session was chaired by H.E. Ms. Maria Helena Lopes De Jesus Pires, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste. She pointed out Graduation of a country conveys a long-term socio-economic progress that is reflected by the strong, solid and stable economic foundation. This implies that the country has sufficiently overcome the vicious cycles of poverty, commodity and low equilibrium trap. She mentioned that existing challenges and unexplored opportunities are still issues that LDCs must address, with the support of development partners.

Mr. Roland Mollerus, Secretary of the Committee for Development Policy, DESA, noted that at the last CDP review in March 2018 12 LDCs meet the graduation criteria, more countries than ever but far below IPoA target. Angola and Vanuatu are scheduled to graduate in 2021 and 2020 respectively. He stressed that LDCs are concerned about losing access to ISMs as once graduated they may receive reduced support or no longer have access to certain support measures in trade, official development assistance and other areas. This fear is due to uncertainty and some lack of knowledge with respect to ISMs, as well as the reality that graduated LDCs still face development constraints and challenges, which still requires international support. So far, measures put in place by the international community are at best smooth transition measures, including a delay in the loss of LDC-specific support. This provides an opportunity to identify an assistance package for graduating and recently graduated LDCs, including analytical inputs, advisory services and new forms of concrete development cooperation aimed at smoothing the impact of graduation.

Mr. Robin Ogilvy, OECD Special Representative to the UN, stressed that the OECD is very active on monitoring ODA trends to the LDCs, including in the period after graduation. Existing evidence points to a gradual decline of ODA after graduation and an increase in “other official flows”, such as remittances. Increasing tax revenues is also a key issue for countries facing a decrease in ODA. He underscored that it is important to continue analysing the trends, also at the sectoral level where changes seem to happen at different speeds. He also mentioned that blended finance works in general, but not in all countries, especially the most vulnerable. These countries also need more support towards enhancing government revenue, including through the Tax Inspectors Without Borders initiative. He further informed that the OECD is carrying out country studies in Uganda, Zambia and Cape Verde and will be releasing a Global Outlook on Financing for Development in the next few months.
Mr. Motsomi Maletjane, Team Leader, LDC Unit, Adaptation Programme, UNFCCC Secretariat, noted that discussions on smooth transition for graduated LDCs within the UNFCCC started in November 2017. The Secretariat prepared a background paper, which analyses a number of interim measures that can be considered in this context, including for technical support and the LDC Fund under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). He emphasised that climate change considerations need to be a crucial part of the smooth transition strategies, with financing going beyond ODA.

During the interactive discussions several donor countries stressed that there are no LDC-related eligibility requirements for ODA which means that graduation does not automatically decrease ODA. Several participants noted that the increase in tax revenues is an important albeit complex matter, both because of the small tax base of many LDCs and the sophisticated tax avoidance and evasion strategies available to corporate entities. Some LDC representatives noted that in many cases LDCs authorities remain concerned about the risk of losing ground after graduation especially because of the structural vulnerabilities they exhibit. One notable proposal to alleviate such concern would be for donor countries to provide pledges that specific assistance would be made available to graduated LDCs in case of a deterioration of their situation after graduation.

Session 2: Graduation support: smooth transition and beyond

Mr. Bharat Raj Paudyal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, chaired the session. He recognized the current momentum of graduation of LDCs, and stressed the importance of realizing international support measures for LDC graduation. He mentioned that access to a wide range of financing sources ranging from multilateral to public and the private sector is crucial for LDCs to optimize their comparative advantages in achieving structural transformation and sustainable development. He pointed out that smooth transition strategies should help LDCs mitigate risks, and expressed the hope that effective strategies for LDC should map out potential losses and benefits, and the need for relevant institutional and legal frameworks. He stated that support of development partners is crucial, and they should continue to provide tailored support to assist smooth transition of LDCs.

H.E. Mr. Ali Naseer Mohamed, Permanent Representative of the Maldives, reviewed Maldives’ graduation process, and shared his country’s experience in preparing the smooth transition strategy. The successful transition of the Maldives from an LDC to a middle-income country is ascribed to three factors: First, early preparation of a resilience building strategy before graduation to reduce vulnerability. Vertical diversification of the leading industry tourism from low- to high-end markets contributes to steady growth of per capita income. Second, public sector’s investment in health, education and tourism infrastructure, as well as private sector’s participation in providing skill-based education. Third, reaching out to non-traditional donors, such as countries from the South to increase access to concessional finance to support development. He mentioned that the Maldives has forged mutually beneficial partnerships with developing countries to promote growth of the tourism industry and accelerate development after graduation. He pointed out that limited ability to negotiate with international actors is the biggest challenge after graduation. The UN system should step up support to newly graduated countries, particularly through building their capacity to negotiate.

Ms. Susanna Wolf, Deputy Chief for Subprogramme 1, OHRLLS, acknowledged that most graduated LDCs remain vulnerable to external economic and environmental shocks. While LDCs share the primary responsibility for their sustainable development, the use of the consultative mechanism, development of a smooth transition strategy and cooperation of global partners are crucial. She stated that there is a need for strengthening support to graduating and graduated LDCs to ensure sustainable graduation, and shared OHRLLS recent work on preparing the Secretary-General’s report on smooth transition measures and graduation, as well as the establishment of an Interagency Taskforce on Graduation support. While LDCs need to raise their voices for
useful smooth transition measures, development partners should extend more concrete support measures. She pointed out that there is a need for more in-depth analysis on the impact of graduation and new support measures that go beyond smooth transition to help the graduating LDCs to adjust to the new situation. She particularly called for specific measures to address post-graduation challenges, including increased access to development finance including strengthening private sector finance and the role of South-South cooperation, capacity building for bankable projects, and increased market access. She stated that at the country level, support for the smooth transition measures should be featured in UNDAFs, and at the global level, the UN Development System should provide coordinated and strong support to the graduating countries.

Mr. Ayodele Odusola, Chief Economist and Head of the Strategy and Analysis Team, UNDP, pointed out that graduation is a process not an end, and should be an integral part of the long-term strategic development of the country. He highlighted that LDCs should avoid three traps i.e. poverty, productivity and aid and commodity dependence. He enumerated structural and emerging risks for graduation, and reviewed international support measures. He analyzed structural opportunities of LDCs such as natural resource endowment, domestic resource mobilization, agricultural productivity, youth population, and non-structural opportunities, including remittances, ICT, regional integration and emerging donors. He stressed that LDCs should adopt a long-term development approach with a focus on structural transformation. LDCs must invest in maximizing opportunities and in minimizing risks for smooth transition. Building LDCs capacity to access global funds is crucial, and LDCs should leverage international support measures including ODA, trade, technology and technical assistance for smooth transition. He shared UNDP’s approach towards smooth transition, particularly in the areas of productive capacity building, human and social development, and resilience building.

Ms. Riefqah Jappie, ITC Representative to the UN, International Trade Center, emphasized the role of trade in smooth transition and graduation of LDCs. Accounting for 90 per cent of enterprises in the world, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises provide opportunities for vulnerable groups in LDCs including women and youth, and contribute to sustainable development of LDCs. She illustrated connections between the work of ITC and the IPoA priority areas: building productive capacity of enterprises through value chain development for job creation and structural transformation of LDCs; and promoting trade-led growth for economic diversification. She illustrated examples of ITC’s work in LDCs and at sub-regional level to develop national export strategies, facilitate graduation through capacity building for WTO accession, build trading capacity of women entrepreneurs, improve competitiveness of targeted sector of local economy and human capacity and skills. She highlighted the importance of partnership building and an integrated approach with value-addition at the heart.

Mr. Erich Cripton, Advisor, Permanent Mission of Canada, mentioned although Canada does not have dedicated policies for LDC graduation and smooth transition, it provides country-to-country tailored support. He stated that LDCs as a group are heterogeneous, and therefore it is difficult to extend one-size-fits-all support. He provided an example of Canadian bilateral cooperation with Bangladesh to support its smooth transition and graduation in 2024. He acknowledged that in the multilateral context, there is fear among LDCs about losing LDC-specific support measures after graduation, yet he observed that it is difficult to quantify the loss of benefits. It might be more pertinent to focus on increasing support for countries still trapped in LDC status instead of dwelling on insufficient support for graduating and graduated LDCs. When alluding to economic and social vulnerabilities of LDCs, he pointed out that environmental vulnerability was not taken into consideration when the LDC category was created in 1971, and measures should be taken to address the extreme environmental vulnerability of LDCs. He pointed to the CDP’s recommendation on the creation of a new category of countries facing extreme vulnerability to climate change and other environmental shocks, and suggested to instead create a watch list of countries in such situation. By doing so, the international community should come up with a more robust warning mechanism that gives LDCs more confidence. On LDC criteria, he observed that instead of measuring the current capacity of countries, focus should be laid on ranking potentiality of the country to achieve social and economic development and also withstand environmental shocks.
During the interactive discussion LDC delegates shared that early preparation for graduation is imperative, and stressed that policy innovation, private sector participation, and market access play a vital role in successful smooth transition and promoting economic growth. They emphasized that the current international support measures should be strengthened so that graduating and graduated LDCs can easily access and benefit. They called for the UN system and development partners to scale up support for LDCs. It was also stressed that there is a need to enhance the role of the UN resident coordinator and UN country team in mobilizing international support for smooth transition and graduation in the context of repositioning of the UN development system, and the capacity of RC should be strengthened to better monitor the challenges of LDCs and provide support.

Furthermore the vulnerability of LDCs caused by climate change was underlined and the need to integrate climate change with the existing support measures, including enhanced access to climate finance. The role of South-South cooperation was also highlighted, including Aid for Trade and other trade facilitation measures, as well as trade preferences. To support smooth transition of Equatorial Guinea, China extended the preferential treatment for additional 3 years to 2020.

**SESSION 3 – ACCELERATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ISTANBUL PROGRAMME OF ACTION: FOCUS ON ICT AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY**

H.E. Mr. Samuelu Laloniu, Permanent Representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations, chaired the session. He stated that accelerating progress in information and communication technology as well as sustainable energy can spark growth and structural transformation across different sectors. He stressed that energy transition and access to broadband needs to be fast-tracked in LDCs if the implementation of the IPoA is to be accelerated and the SDGs are to be achieved.

Mr. Rolf Traeger, Chief of the LDC Section, UNCTAD, emphasized the far-reaching impact of energy and ICT as key enabler for the development of LDCs. He mentioned the LDC Report of 2016, prepared by UNCTAD, in which graduation was addressed as a long-term basis for continuous development. Mr. Traeger emphasized the importance of integrating the challenges of LDCs in the long-term planning and indicated that structural transformation, in the form of economic diversification and higher value-added, should be central to the LDCs. SDG 7 illustrates the importance that energy has in the development discourse. The consumption of energy of LDCs is substantially lower in comparison with the average for other developing countries and reflects their under-development of productive capacities, industry, transport, or low-mechanization in agriculture. Unreliable access to energy constitutes a major hindrance for private sector development. Forty-two percent of companies in LDCs single out problems in access to energy as a major constraint and 75% of companies suffer one outage every three days. Although often associated to economic development, energy is also essential to strengthen and further develop the social pillar of the 2030 Agenda. For example, the degree of success in schools is closely related to the availability of energy supply. For the environmental pillar, energy can provide an enormous contribution to environmental sustainability.

The majority of the population in LDCs live in rural areas, which calls for a mixed grid model combining centralized traditional electricity delivery systems with off-grid and mini-grid solutions. The important technical developments in the area of energy, particularly in energy generation and transmission, in recent years allow for more flexible models that can incorporate new solutions that were not available a few years ago. The transfer of technology and know-how becomes critical in this connection.

Ms. Jennye Greene, Senior Partner, Sustainable Energy Solutions, emphasized the crucial role that reliable and affordable access to energy has for economic development. Besides its strategic importance for the LDCs, energy
represents an extraordinary investment opportunity. She brought the audience's attention to a publication commissioned by OHRLLS on *Promoting Investment for Energy Access in Least Developed Countries* (available [here](#)), pointing to the need of substantially scaling up investment in energy in LDCs in order to close the gap in energy access by 2030. Of the USD 312 billion in sustainable energy project investments in the world in 2015, USD 1.6 billion, a mere 0.5%, was directed towards LDCs, equivalent to an estimated annual sustainable energy investment of less than USD 1 per person. Among the key challenges to achieve SDG7 in the LDCs are underdeveloped financial markets, policy and legislative hurdles and limited financing.

There are successful energy access initiatives in the LDCs, from which important lessons can be extracted. Bangladesh, for example, has managed to attract and absorb significant amount of investment for sustainable energy access. The Bangladesh Infrastructure Development Corporation, privately managed but government owned, has financed four million solar systems, thus reaching eighteen million people. Their work showcases what is possible to move the needle in sustainable energy. Ms. Greene suggested some actions that could assist the LDCs in attracting energy investment. Among these, bringing women into the energy sector and breaking large projects into smaller, stand-alone phases were highlighted. More generally, she recommended adopting a pragmatic approach, by for example exploring synergies with other development sectors, such as agriculture, health or education; pooling resources at the regional level; embracing south-south cooperation; and leveraging commodity-linked industries as a stepping stone for sustainable energy development.

**Mr. Michael Minges, ICT Consultant, ICT Data**, shared the highlights of four case studies commissioned by OHRLLS on *Broadband for national development* (A synthesis report is available at: [http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2018/07/Broadband-for-national-development-in-four-LDCs.pdf](http://unohrlls.org/custom-content/uploads/2018/07/Broadband-for-national-development-in-four-LDCs.pdf)). The studies were conducted in Rwanda, Senegal, Cambodia and Vanuatu. During his presentation, Mr. Minges emphasized the crucial role that ICT, along with energy, has as general-purpose technology. These are crucial technologies that play a fundamental role in transforming the economies of the LDCs. The priority given to ICT as part of the development strategies of each country vary substantially. Rwanda, for example, considers ICT to be a main component of their national development vision.

As in the rest of the world, the ICT landscape has evolved substantially in LDCs over recent years. There are now more households with mobile phones than with electricity in rural areas in the LDCs. 2G coverage of the countries studied is very high. The application of ICT to specific development solutions is promising, as illustrated by initiatives already taking place in some of the LDCs. In Senegal, 40% of those diagnosed with diabetes are users of the *M-diabète* service, a text service for improving the management of diabetes. The *Manobi* platform has shown to increase farmers income by 15% in just four months after they start using the system. These examples show how applications built on top of the ICT infrastructure adapted to the needs of the LDCs can bring important results.

Mr. Mingues shared some of the findings in infrastructure development and affordability, showcasing the important progress made by the countries where the studies were conducted. The price of mobile internet had been reduced by 95% in Vanuatu, 68% in Senegal, 91% in Rwanda and 60% in Cambodia between 2011 and 2017. The impact of broadband in development had taken place mainly in the administration of health and school management systems, e-government, education and health, with limited economy wide impact. Moreover, big platforms had no physical presence in the LDCs, with implications for taxation and infrastructure investment. The studies concluded that narrowband services, such as text-based message services, had achieved traction in the agricultural and mobile banking sectors in the studied countries. Beyond these sectors, however, the impact that broadband had on the economy of the LDCs has been limited so far. This illustrates the importance of taking into consideration other factors beyond infrastructure availability to maximize the impact that broadband may have for sustainable development in the LDCs. The studies indicated that absorptive capacity will play a crucial role in the way forward.
During the interactive segment of the session, representatives from the LDCs and their development partners highlighted the substantial gap in energy financing. Beyond financial resources, whose importance can be hardly overemphasized in the case of LDCs, transfer of technology, know-how and technical capacity plays a fundamental role, as was also emphasized by various participants and presenters.

CLOSING SESSION

Ms. ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, thanked all the participants for attending and actively engaging in the discussion. She also thanked all the presenters for their insightful remarks. She further thanked Bangladesh for its able chairmanship of the LDC group and Denmark for sponsoring the meeting. She underscored that there needs to be enhanced discussion on how to address persistent high EVI values of countries recommended for graduation.

She then highlighted some of the key messages from the fruitful and productive discussions:

- It is essential that graduating and graduated countries continue to receive support from their development partners, and to access new sources of financing. Development partners need to extend some LDC specific support after graduation and to provide timely information on the anticipated phasing out of LDC specific support.

- The agreed reform of the UN development system, especially the new reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system, must now play its part by providing the necessary support for smooth transitions, so that graduation can serve as a launching pad for continued, sustained and inclusive sustainable growth.

- New measures that were proposed during the discussion on graduation included: capacity building to enhance access to new sources of financing, raising awareness among credit rating and other relevant agencies on LDC graduation, capacity building for exporters and government officials to take full advantage of new potential markets, setting up an intergovernmental follow-up mechanism to strengthen the implementation of the smooth transition strategy.

- ICT – and new technologies in general – have an essential role to play in addressing structural impediments. There is a need to build on gains achieved, so that these technologies can be harnessed to enable LDCs to leap forward. An excellent example of this in practice is mobile money, and its impacts on health, agriculture and a host of other sectors.

- Sustainable energy is clearly a central pillar, a foundation, for achieving structural transformation, all of the IPoA’s priorities as well as most of the SDGs, but current financing is not sufficient to achieve the 2030 energy targets. Thus, energy policy and development policy must be coordinated, paying adequate attention to rural areas which lag behind. Decentralization and diversification of energy supply are also essential elements of overall energy policy.
Thursday, 28 June

17.30  Departure from UNHQ / New York City

19.30  Dinner with remarks

Welcome Remarks:  Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS

Remarks by:  Mr. Tareq Md Ariful Islam, Deputy Permanent Representative of Bangladesh

H.E. Mr. Ib Petersen, Permanent Representative of Denmark

Presentations by:  H.E. Mr. Feridun H. Sinirlioğlu, Permanent Representative of Turkey

Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Acting Managing Director of the Technology Bank for LDCs and Director, UN-OHRLLS
-Inauguration video-

Mr. Craig Nakagawa, Director of Commercialization, Global Good - Intellectual Ventures
Friday, 29 June

9.00 – 10.45  **Session 1: Progress towards sustainable graduation of LDCs: Opportunities and challenges**

*Chair:*  H.E. Ms. Maria Helena Lopes De Jesus Pires, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste

*Speakers:*  Mr. Roland Mollerus, Secretary of the Committee for Development Policy, DESA
Mr. Robin Ogilvy, OECD Special Representative to the UN
Mr. Motsomi Maletjane, Team Leader, LDC Unit, Adaptation Programme, UNFCCC Secretariat

*Interactive discussion*

10.45 – 11.00  **Coffee break**

11:00 – 12.30  **Session 2: Graduation support: smooth transition and beyond**

*Chair:*  Mr. Bharat Raj Paudyal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nepal

*Speakers:*  H.E. Mr. Ali Naseer Mohamed, Permanent Representative of Maldives
Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, OHRLLS
Dr. Ayodele Odusola, Chief Economist and Head of the Strategy and Analysis Team, UNDP
Ms. Riefqah Jappie, ITC Representative to the UN, International Trade Center
Mr. Erich Cripton, Advisor, Permanent Mission of Canada

*Interactive discussion*

12.30 – 14.00  **Lunch**

14.00 – 16.00  **Session 3: Accelerating the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action: focus on ICT and sustainable energy**
Chair: H.E. Mr. Samuelu Laloniu, Permanent Representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations

Speakers:
- Mr. Rolf Traeger, Chief, LDC Section, UNCTAD
- Ms. Jennye Greene, Senior Partner, Sustainable Energy Solutions
- Mr. Michael Minges, ICT Consultant, ICT Data

Interactive discussion

**16.00 – 16.15** Coffee

**16.15 – 16.30** Closing Session

Remarks by: Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS

**17.00** Departure to New York City