Statement by H.E. Mr. Mukhtar Tileuberdi, 
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan 
at the Annual Ministerial Meeting 
of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries 
(New York, 25 September 2015)

Mr. Chair, 
Madam Under-Secretary-General, 
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

From the outset, on behalf of my Government let me express Kazakhstan’s gratitude for LLDCs Member States’ unilateral support to our candidature to the Bureau and the position of its Chair for 2020-2021. I would like also congratulate our future Bureau colleagues: Bolivia, Nepal and Zimbabwe on the occasion of their election.

Today’s meeting, with focus on revitalizing partnerships for the Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA) to be held on 5-6 December in New York, is important for our countries. I would like to thank Paraguay chairmanship as well as the High Representative and the OHRLLS Secretariat for the leadership and vision during the preparatory process.

As the world’s largest LLDC, Kazakhstan has been at the forefront to address the issues of geographical disadvantages facing by our countries. In continuation of convening in 2003 the first Ministerial Conference of LLDCs in Almaty we also hosted in May 2018 the Ministerial Meeting on Trade and Transport in our
capital, Nur-Sultan city. Meeting initiated the preparatory process for the Midterm Review of the VPoA.

We all recognize that the landlocked developing countries are rather a heterogenous group. But we are united by recognition of the common challenges and obstacles on the way to the sustainable development of our countries.

Landlocked countries remain marginalized in international trade, isolated from major centers of economic and trade activity and rely on our neighbours for transit. In addition to the geographical impediments, challenges that LLDCs face are linked to the high trade and transport costs, limited or low quality infrastructure, delays at borders and bottlenecks related to customs procedures and border crossing regulations and productivity constraints.

As a firm supporter of the multilateral trading system, Kazakhstan proposed to host the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference on 8-11 June 2020 in Nur-Sultan. Taking this opportunity, I would like to thank LLDCs for the unanimous support extended to our bid.

The Ministerial Conference in Nur-Sultan will provide a great opportunity for LLDCs to speak with one voice to address the challenges arising from landlockedness, remoteness and geographical constraints and to build on LLDCs’ interests in the global trade policy.
Yesterday during our discussion Madam Utoikamanu proposed to host in the framework of the MC-12 a separate Ministerial Meeting of LDCs and LLDCs. We support this initiative and will start a preparation to this event.

**Kazakhstan faces the same obstacles** as any other LLDC in the world. Diversification of international transport corridors and trade facilitation plays an important role in the development of our transport and logistics system. We are ready to share with our successful experience in these spheres.

Today, the transit of goods through the territory of Kazakhstan takes 13-15 days, that is 2 times faster than by maritime routes. As part of Trade Facilitation Agreement implementation (*to which 24 LLDCs are parties*), Kazakhstan jointly with UNCTAD have developed an automated customs administration program ASTANA-1. It has greatly improved import, export and transit operations.

**Dear colleagues,**

As it is increasingly clear, the 91 countries of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS are most negatively impacted by climate change, adverse effects of a global economic crisis, low transport infrastructure, small scales of economy with high trade costs and many others. The forward path is also considerably retarded by the low level of regional cooperation, that will have to be transformed into a more robust one by the pledge we make to reverse the situation.
While it is acknowledged that the methods for implementing these important tasks for the three categories of countries differ in their approaches, level of activities and means of realization, a determined partnership of action among the 91 countries, would be an added value.

Kazakhstan will be spearheading the process of strengthening the joint efforts of LLDCs in close cooperation with the groups of LDCs and SIDS to implement the 2030 Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action, as well as to promote the interests and make the voice of our countries sounding at the international fora.

The **Midterm Review** this December will undertake a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and identify measures to accelerate its path in the remaining 5 years. We look forward to adopting an ambitious outcome that can meaningfully assist landlocked developing countries to build their productive capacities, expand their trade potential, generate decent work, eradicate poverty and address the inequalities.

To conclude, I would like to reiterate Kazakhstan’s commitment to deepen fruitful cooperation between the countries of our Group. **In coming two years**, we will count on the support of our Group Member States as well as the new Members of the Bureau to work with the other vulnerable countries, on the basis of fair and equal partnerships, following the ethical dictum that “no one is left behind”. **Thank you.**