Statement

by

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High Representative
and
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Book Launch: Out of the trap, supporting the LDCs

Thursday, 14 November 2019, 12:30 – 14:30
Room CR 11
Your Excellency, Ambassador Ligoya, Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations, and our Chair of the LDCs Group
Esteemed Prof. Guillaumont, President of the Foundation for Studies and Research on International Development (FERDI)
Excellencies,
Distinguished Moderator and Panellists,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you all for being here - today is the launch of what I consider a thought provoking book! It is my honour to open the book launch.

Professor Guillaumont is known to many of you. He has given a significant amount of his career but I would rather say life looking into what can work or what does not work to lift people, to lift countries out of poverty.

He is rightfully considered an authority. Professor Guillaumont, your experiences, your research are so rich that I cannot refer to all of them.

Let me just say that Professor Guillaumont not only was a member of the United Nations Committee for Development Policy but that he was instrumental in including economic vulnerability as one of the LDC criteria. You also continued to participate in several events on LDCs.

Professor Guillaumont, a mere thank you can not quite capture our gratitude, but thank you for your dedication, commitment and work!

The book we launch today bears the title “Out of the Trap”. This follows on your earlier work "Caught in a trap" - personally, I think I like the idea of getting out of a trap!

This newest work and its many thought provoking contributions by Professor Guillaumont and his team draw much needed attention on both challenges but also innovative solutions to issues that impact LDCs and their peoples.

The entire team for this book cannot be with us. I wish to recognise all the authors that contributed to this book, some of you are present today. Thank you all!

You have produced a wide-ranging work. You give us more than just a lot of food for thought. You laid out a perspective, a very comprehensive assessment of the impact LDC membership has had and has on the development of the member countries. You very rightly make us focus on issues of efficiency and effectiveness of international support measures for LDCs.

You also examine the process of graduation from the LDC category. You highlight critical issues ranging from factors that may lead to graduation delay, to how graduation can be accelerated and rendered consistent.

As I said earlier, this work follows up on your first book, caught in the trap written some 10 years ago.
At that time, you shared an analysis and assessment of the origin, evolution and rationale of the LDC category as such. You showed how it is important to assess the rationale of the category for the credibility and the effectiveness of the category.

Since we lived through a global financial crises and just so many more changes that only seem to accelerate.

So, in short, if you have not already done so, I urge you all to read both books!

Out of the trap is a book that indeed could not be more timely.

We are in the lead up to the United Nations fifth LDCs Conference to be held in 2021 in Qatar.

This conference will set the new agenda for LDCs and it also covers the last decade of the 2030 Agenda!

This is all about a new Programme of Action for LDCs. A programme capable of addressing new and emerging challenges, seizing opportunities and most importantly accelerate implementation of the SDGs in and by the LDCs. They are the countries, the peoples most at risk of being left behind.

The process leading up to the Conference should tap into the experience and knowledge of all partners.

Research has its very own and important place in this process.

I take this opportunity to announce once again that OHRLLS in collaboration with UNU WIDER and the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, organizes an academic workshop in Helsinki, Finland in October 2020. You can find the call for papers on our website.

I look forward to your contributions and hope that most, if not all of you, will take part in this conference.

The book we launch today, the papers and discussions we expect to have at the conference in Helsinki are a vital input to the outcome of the 2021 LDC conference.

We need evidence-based policy recommendations. We need your work. We, in turn, will ensure that it feeds in the deliberations on the new programme of action.

Again, my sincere congratulations to you Professor Guillaumont and to your team and all the authors who contributed to this important book.

I am sure we will have an interesting discussion.

I now hand the discussion over to FERDI and our moderator for this afternoon’s conversation.

Thank you.