Closing remarks

by

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and

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Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries

and Small Island Developing States

Eighth Ministerial Conference of the Least Developed Countries:

“Accelerating industrialization in LDCs: Lessons learned and innovative approaches”

Closing Session

2 November 2019, Abu Dhabi

16:45-17:00
H.E. Fetlework Egziabher Abrha, Minister of Trade & Industry, Ethiopia, Chair of the Conference,
H.E. Jothan Napat Nauka, Deputy Prime Minister, Vanuatu, Vice Chair of the Conference,
My dear friend Mr. LI Yong, Director General, UNIDO
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
ladies and gentlemen,

The Eighth LDC Ministerial Conference on the topic of “Accelerating Industrialization in the LDCs” is now closing.

Our objective today was to share experiences and identify best practices that LDCs can build on in the period beyond 2020.

This sure was an intensive but also very productive day. I am heartened to have witnessed the active engagement of Member States, the United Nations and other international organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society. It is encouraging to see how we all can come together, can rally because none of us wishes to see the LDCs and their peoples left behind!

The Ministerial Declaration we have just adopted together with the proceedings of the Conference that will be prepared in the coming weeks are important building blocks for the future.

They will be critical building blocks on the road we now must travel together to frame the next 10-year Programme of Action of the LDCs from 2021-2030. A key aspect will have to be sustainable economic growth inter alia through industrialization as a critical component for moving up in the value chain and building productive capacities in the LDCs.

I will not attempt to summarize the rich discussions, but make a few short observations.

The Conference has shown that there has been important progress made by UNIDO's LDC Member States towards inclusive and sustainable industrialization. This has contributed to moving up the value chain, to economic growth, and structural transformation, helping the LDCs move towards achieving the graduation criteria and increase productive capacity. International support measures on international trade can play an important role, and LDCs should make full use of these opportunities.

However, there is much unfinished business of the IPoA.

We need to build on achievements in the new Programme of Action at LDC-V. We must assist the LDCs to take full advantage of the Fourth Industrial Revolution to leapfrog, rather than being left further behind.

And last but not least, it is essential to build climate resilience into all development policies, including on sustainable industrialization.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen
Once more, I express my gratitude to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for your generous hospitality throughout this Conference.

I thank Mr. LI Yong and the dedicated UNIDO secretariat team at UNIDO. You have worked so hard to make this Conference a reality. I could not have hoped for a better collaboration with OHRLLS.

My thanks must also go to the interpreters, technical staff and so many others for their hard work behind the scenes. Thank you!

Above all, I thank all delegations for their substantive contributions and high level of engagement which made this Conference a successful one.

This is a closing day but our shared journey towards LDC-V has only just begun. An intensive and critically important process is now ahead of us.

Today's Declaration and deliberations must now go forward to the regional preparatory meetings and the Preparatory Committee meetings.

We will have further opportunities to engage and build on these discussions at the WTO Ministerial and at UNCTAD XV.

As I said at the opening, UN LDC-V is a unique opportunity for the LDCs and their development partners to work together to leave no one behind.

Together, we must deliver a new Programme of Action that completes the “unfinished business” of the IPoA and that helps accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It must be a forward looking programme that takes advantage of new and emerging opportunities while also tackling emerging challenges.

We cannot collectively afford to have the LDCs fall further behind.

OHRLLS and I personally are committed to do the utmost to deliver a rigorous, inclusive and robust preparatory process to help ensure a successful outcome at UNLDC V in 2021.

The peoples of the LDCs count on all of us. Let us stay fully engaged and travel this road together.

Thank you.