



PAKISTAN

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8 EAST 65th STREET – NEW YORK, NY 10021 – (212) 879-8600

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Statement by

**H.E. Ambassador Abdullah Hussain Haroon
Permanent Representative of Pakistan**

At the

**High Level Plenary Meeting
Devoted to the Midterm Review of the
Almaty Programme of Action**

New York, October 3 2008

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Abdullah Hussain Haroon, Permanent Representative of Pakistan in the High Level Plenary meeting devoted to the Midterm Review of the Almaty Programme of Action
(October 3, 2008, United Nations, New York)

Mr. President

Pakistan welcomes the convening of the High Level Meeting on Midterm Review of the Almaty Programme of Action. We view this process and its outcome as an important step towards meaningfully addressing the special needs and concerns of Landlocked Developing States.

2. We are confident that this timely endeavour will translate into a comprehensive course correction exercise aimed at learning from the past experiences with a view to guiding our future work.

Mr. President

3. We meet at a difficult time to carry out this important mid course review of the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action that addresses the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries.

4. Only recently we carried out two other equally important reviews at the UN on Africa's Development Needs and MDGs achievement. The message from those high level engagements was clear: namely; implementation is the biggest challenge; and lack of finances still remains the greatest obstacle in realizing the development promises and commitments made.

Mr. President,

5. The unfolding global development emergency manifested through the triple crises of food, fuel and finance is making the implementation challenge even more complex and daunting. Not just for the LLDCs but also for their transit neighbours who are often of broadly similar economic structures and faced with similar scarcities of resources.

6. An effective strategy to improve transit transport systems has also become particularly relevant in the wake of rising commodity and high oil prices. A coherent strategy should enable significant economies of scale by using trade as an instrument for achieving development objectives through improved shares for both landlocked and transit developing countries in global trade.

Mr. President

7. Pakistan strongly supports the LLDCs in their quest for greater and across the board recognition of their special needs both financial and technical. We also remain committed to helping them within our limited means to overcome the formidable obstacles and pursue their development goals. However the requirements of establishing and maintaining efficient transit transport systems are of such magnitude that landlocked and transit developing countries cannot accomplish much on their own.

8. A concerted effort is, therefore, required to evolve policies and mechanisms which can generate the financial resources required to invest in the transit transport infrastructure projects. Such investments need increased financial assistance from the development partners, donor countries and international financial and development institutions.

9. Similarly, an early, successful and development oriented completion of the WTO Doha Round of trade negotiations, allowing the removal of distortions in global trading regime and providing enhanced market access particularly to the LLDCs, has never been more important and urgently needed as it is now. The continuing impasse in the Doha Trade Negotiations is indeed alarming and a source of serious concern.

Mr. President

10. Pakistan, as a transit developing country actively participates in the process of Almaty Programme of Action (APoA) and remains committed to providing easy, efficient and expeditious transit access to our landlocked neighbors to help them expand their international trade.

11. In fact promoting regional connectivity and to make Pakistan a regional transit hub is an integral part and central pillar of our national vision for trade and transport sector. Pakistan's location at the crossroads of South, Central and West Asia is indeed helpful in this regard.

12. To this end, as part of our National Trade Corridor Program (NTCP), Pakistan is not only improving and upgrading its existing logistics and transport infrastructure including highways and railway system but has also embarked on constructing new road networks, seaports, airports and other related facilities.

13. Various linkage roads up to Gwadar, a modern port to the west of Pakistan are also being constructed. With the commissioning of the Gwadar port, Pakistan will be able to provide dedicated, efficient and cost effective transit trade and port facilities to our landlocked neighbors including latest facilities for cargo vessels at par with any modern port.

14. On the services sector, the Government of Pakistan is in the process of revamping the entire customs procedures including the introduction of the Custom Reform Project (CARE). The NTCP provides specific targets and timelines for achievement in all critical areas including trade facilitation.

15. Pakistan has also ratified ATA Carnet and is in the process of accession to the TIR Convention.

Mr. President,

16. Before I conclude, let me also avail of this opportunity to thank Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs and his team for their good work in making our deliberations productive and useful. I would also like to thank Ambassador Yukio Takasu of Japan for successfully facilitating the intergovernmental consultations to finalize the outcome of the Midterm Review meeting.

I thank you Mr. President.
