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DRAFT REPORT OF THE SESSIONAL COMMITTEE I

Rapporteur: Mr. Rénaud Clerismé (Haiti)

Speakers:	Mauritania
Secretary-General of UNCTAD	China
Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the Special Coordinator for LDCs	Egypt
Cuba for the Group of 77 and China	Bhutan
Islamic Republic of Iran for the Asian Group and China	Norway
Ethiopia	Sudan
Belgium for the European Union	Zambia
Bangladesh for the LDCs	Haiti
United States of America	Guinea
Benin	Morocco
Japan	Poland
	Nepal
	Algeria
	EAU

Note for delegations

This draft report is a provisional text circulated for clearance by delegations. Requests for amendments to statements by individual delegations should be communicated by **Wednesday, 17 October 2001** at the latest, to:

UNCTAD Editorial Section, Room E.8104, Fax No. 907 0056, Tel. No. 907 5655/1066.

**THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES
FOR THE DECADE 2001–2010**

(a) Outcome of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

(b) Towards the development goals defined in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001–2010

(Agenda item 3)

1. In opening the deliberations on agenda item 3, the **Secretary-General of UNCTAD** stated that the two scenarios for LDCs laid out in the *Least Developed Countries Report 2000* remained relevant. Most of the LDCs continued to be caught in a low-level equilibrium trap. It was therefore vital that there should be a genuine implementation of the Programme of Action, requiring appropriate arrangements and mechanisms involving all stakeholders in the process. He emphasized that one of the first tests of genuine implementation was to ensure that the commitments agreed in Brussels and the proposals which had emerged in the Zanzibar Ministerial Meeting of LDCs were duly reflected in the preparatory process for Doha. It was for the developing countries themselves, and the LDCs in particular, to define what would be necessary from their perspective for a round of trade negotiations to be described as a truly genuine development round. He highlighted that, in contrast to its predecessors, the new Programme of Action included a broad range of quantitative development goals and targets that would enable the evaluation of progress while on the one hand, this was of immense significance, on the other hand, it also posed a major problem, since although there were targets, the necessary data to monitor them might not be available. This situation implied that it was currently impossible to construct a baseline from which to monitor progress in terms of concrete outcomes of the new Programme of Action.

2. However, also in LDCs for which data was available, it was apparent that the economic and social conditions were dilapidated in many of them. Most LDCs were currently off-track in terms of the achievement of the development goals and targets set in Brussels. He concluded by urging the delegates to renew their efforts to make a difference for the LDCs and to avoid the pessimistic scenario, which was likely to occur if business continued as usual.

3. The **Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the Special Coordinator for Least Developed Landlocked and Island Developing Countries** introduced the two interrelated item 3(a) and 3(b) and their relevant background documents TD/B/48/16 and TD/B/48/14. Concerning item 3(a), he stressed that for the genuine implementation of the Programme of Action, it was necessary to take into account a number of factors. These factors included: (i) the necessity to draw on lessons from past implementation experiences; (ii) clear identification of roles and responsibilities of all actors involved in the implementation at all levels (national, regional and international); (iii) the need for a coordinated follow-up, review and monitoring; and (iv) the need to consider the Programme of Action as a flexible tool responsive to new developments. In this context, he mentioned that the UNCTAD secretariat

had already initiated steps towards dual objectives. One step relates to the implementation of those commitments that fall under the mandate of UNCTAD and another step relates to the development of a comprehensive implementation strategy or a “roadmap”. The basic tenets of the “roadmap” were identified as: (a) providing a general set of guidelines for mainstreaming actions of the Programme of Action into work programmes and intergovernmental machineries by different stakeholders; (b) outlining clearly sequenced priorities and strategies through consultative processes with various development actors; and, (c) mobilizing stakeholders and resources. He introduced item 3(b) as an attempt to provide a baseline on where the LDCs and their development partners now stand in relation to the quantifiable development and poverty reduction goals within the Programme of Action with a view to initiate discussions for building consensus on clearly defined indicators of achievement.

4. Referring to the “deliverables” of the Brussels Conference, he called upon development partners to initiate and support their implementation. While acknowledging the renewed commitments by donors to make the Integrated Framework (IF) effective in the spirit of the commitments undertaken in Brussels, he drew attention to the enormous gaps in trade-related capacity-building, in LDCs, which can only be bridged through additional contributions to the IF Trust Fund. Finally, he reiterated that UNCTAD will maintain its full role, in collaboration with the IF core agencies, to ensure the successful implementation of the IF PILOT Scheme. He stressed that in order to do so, donor contributions to the UNCTAD LDC Trust Fund should be increased.

5. The representative of **Cuba**, speaking on behalf of the **Group of 77 and China**, stated that the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action had provided the international community with a framework for concerted efforts to respond to the needs of the LDCs over the next decade. He urged the Trade and Development Board to mainstream the Programme of Action into the work programme of UNCTAD, as invited by the Conference, as well as in the intergovernmental process, including the proposal for converting its current Sessional Committee I into a Standing Committee on LDCs. He expressed the full support of the Group of 77 and China for the proposed conversion. He stated that the Group of 77 and China attached great importance to the implementation of the Programme of Action which required resources at the national, regional and global levels and a coordinated response by LDC Governments and their development partners.

6. He welcomed the secretariat’s report on progress in its activities since the Conference and the preliminary ideas on a “roadmap” providing general guidelines for the monitoring and implementation of the Programme of Action. He noted that the finalization of the “roadmap” will add value to the mainstreaming effort of the Programme of Action in the work programmes of all agencies and other stakeholders strengthen coordination and interaction among them for the effective implementation of the Programme. He applauded the initiatives of the UNCTAD secretariat, that reflected renewed commitment and vision, crucial in realizing concrete action-oriented results in the LDCs. He underscored the need to embrace the views and thoughts of Geneva delegations with regard to the implementation of the outcomes of LDC-III, as they have, within UNCTAD, been dealing with LDC issues for

the last two decades. He pointed out the need for the regular and constant exchange of views between Geneva and New York delegations which would only serve to further strengthen efforts in advancing common goals of the Group of 77 in multilateral fora. Several challenges which faced the implementation of commitments and for monitoring included: the need to reverse the declining trend in the levels of external resources, including the need for a substantial increase in the UNCTAD LDCs Trust Fund; and the need to improve the measurement tools through the strengthening of national statistical systems to generate and manage relevant data in LDCs, as recognized in the Programme of Action. Finally, he called on the Board to propose concrete ways to rectify inadequacies in internationally comparable data made available to monitor development goals and targets, as well as for a timetable, assigning responsibility, for constructing a full baseline assessment of where the least developed countries and their development partners now stand, in terms of levels of achievement and progress, in relation to the quantifiable and non-quantifiable development goals of the Programme of Action, drawing on the expertise and work already undertaken in existing international and national bodies.

7. The representative of the **Islamic Republic of Iran**, speaking on behalf of the **Asian Group and China**, said that his group fully supported the outcomes of the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for LDCs and called for their full and effective implementation. In this context, the Group concurred with the approach outlined by the secretariat with regard to the “roadmap” aimed at full and effective implementation of those outcomes as contained in TD/B/48/16. He stressed that the Group believes that the “roadmap” exercise when completed would provide appropriate guidance for all stakeholders for the implementation of commitments and actions agreed at the Brussels Conference. Moreover, he expressed satisfaction on the important implementation activities and initiatives undertaken by UNCTAD in the main areas of research and policy analysis, advocacy and consensus-building as well as technical assistance and capacity-building. He underlined that it was high time for the Board to consider the request of paragraph 113 of the Programme of Action to mainstream its implementation into the work programme of UNCTAD as well as in the intergovernmental process. With regard to paragraph 116 of the Programme of Action, pending the recommendation of the Secretary-General of the UN to the General Assembly, it was the strong view of the Asian Group that UNCTAD should continue the implementation of substantive and technical issues in the Programme of Action in line with its overall mandates. He agreed that objective criteria and indicators of the commitments are necessary to assess levels of progress in achieving the goals and targets of the Programme of Action and to monitor its implementation. He proposed that particular effort should be made to clarify where the donors stand in relation to the aid targets of the Programme of Action. In this connection, he stressed the necessity to undertake joint action by LDCs and their development partners to strengthen national statistical systems. He underlined that the Board should propose concrete ways of rectifying inadequacies in internationally comparable data. He also called the Board to propose a timetable and assign responsibility for constructing a full baseline assessment of where the LDCs and their development partners now stand in terms of levels of achievement in relation to the quantifiable development goals of the Programme of Action.

8. The representative of **Ethiopia**, speaking on behalf of the **African Group** said that he concurred with the positive assessment of the Third United Nations Conference on LDCs and fully supported the outcomes of the Conference and called for their full and effective implementation. He called on the Board to propose concrete ways of rectifying inadequacies in internationally comparable data available to monitor goals and targets, involving actions by both LDCs and their development partners to strengthen national statistical systems. He urged the secretariat to intensify consultations with all actors in the development process so as to finalize the “roadmap” as quickly as possible. He expected the “roadmap” to provide guidance to all stakeholders for the implementation of the commitments and actions agreed at Brussels.

9. Concerning the implementation and follow-up of the Programme of Action, he pointed out that it was not appropriate to hold hostage the implementation process until the Secretary General of the United Nations had submitted his recommendation. Moreover, he stressed that transforming the current Office of the Special Co-ordinator for the LDCs connoted improving the quality and strengthening the existing structure. He emphasized that it was not in the interest of the LDCs to detach substantive and technical issues from UNCTAD. He also called on the Board to mainstream the Programme of Action into the work programme of UNCTAD and stressed the importance attached by his group to the conversion of the Sessional Committee into a Standing Committee on LDCs. He concluded by saying that the implementation of the Programme of Action required the mobilization of all stakeholders and resources. In this context, he appealed to donor countries to enhance their contributions to the LDC Trust Fund.

10. The representative of **Belgium**, speaking on behalf of the **European Union**, congratulated UNCTAD for the successful organization of LDC-III. In this regard, he stressed the high importance the European Union had accorded the Conference by not only hosting it but also driving the preparation process toward a successful outcome. He pointed out that the Conference was a success as it resulted in the adoption of a comprehensive Programme of Action based on a partnership approach and ownership by LDCs. He expressed the European Unions’ commitment to support the implementation process in spirit of solidarity and partnership.

11. He said that under the seven commitments of the Programme of Action, the objectives, actions and roles concerning development partners were well reflected. He further added that the European Union had played a significant role in ensuring progress in such important areas as market access, untying of aid and debt reduction in the context of HIPC etc., at LDC-III. In expressing the European Union’s support with UNCTAD’s efforts in ensuring follow-up to the implementation of the Programme of Action, he requested the secretariat to keep the European Union informed of the evolution and new developments in this respect. He cited the efforts of UNCTAD secretariat in preparing LDCs for the upcoming WTO ministerial meeting, particularly the organization of LDC Trade Ministers Meeting in Zanzibar, and the efforts by the LDCs to develop a joint position was appreciated as an indication of LDC’s taking ownership of their development process.

12. Although the European Union appreciated document TD/B/48/14 on development objectives and indicators, he stated that efforts should be taken to identify quantitative indicators such as measuring good governance and its evolution, which is of great importance to the European Union. Nevertheless, he stressed the European Union considers this as an evolutionary process requiring continuous discussion. In the context of follow-up, he stressed that the European Union was also fully in support of paragraph 115 and 116 of the Programme of Action and would reiterate the same at the upcoming 56th session of the General Assembly. Regarding the transformation of the sessional committee to a standing committee, he requested the secretariat provide further details on financial and organizational consequences of such transformation prior to consideration.

13. The representative of **Bangladesh**, speaking on behalf of the **Least Developed Countries** (LDCs), stated that although the economic concerns of the least developed countries had been at the forefront of the development debate for more than three decades, the results were not encouraging. He observed that the Brussels Declaration provided hope that the next decade would be different from the previous two. He stated that LDC-III had provided a good opportunity to review the daunting development crisis in LDCs and that the Conference recognized LDCs' critical need for concrete support from the developed countries in terms of resources for development, debt relief, enhanced market access for their products and increased FDI, among other things. He commended the initiative of UNCTAD in addressing the issue of indicators in quantifying development goals and noted that it set the tone for a meaningful assessment of the Programme of Action. He noted, however, that it should not overshadow the ultimate goal of the Programme of Action, which encompassed objectives beyond the scope of quantifiable development goals. He pointed out that the LDCs as a whole had undertaken major structural reforms, but while most LDCs had undertaken vigorous reform programmes, international support, particularly in concessional flow of resources, had largely remained unfulfilled and was a cause of much concern.

14. He stressed that from the perspective of the LDCs, Commitments 5 and 7 of the Programme of Action were among the most crucial ones. He also called on the international community to assist LDCs diversify their export base to overcome external terms of trade shock. He welcomed the initiative by the European Union to adopt an "Everything but Arms" amendment to the EU's Generalized System of Preference (GSP) to improve market access opportunities for exports from the LDCs. He also commended initiatives taken by other countries to help the LDCs in trade and called on all developed countries to open their markets to exports from LDCs, noting that it would be significant for LDCs, while not being burdensome to the importing countries. He commended UNCTAD for its support to the LDC Trade Ministers Meeting at Zanzibar in preparation for the 4th WTO Ministerial Meeting and expressed the hope that the cause of LDCs will be promoted there. He stressed the usefulness of the Integrated Framework for Trade Related Technical Assistance in overcoming supply-side constraints and urged UNCTAD participation with its implementation. He spoke of the continuous decline in the level of ODA to LDCs while their access to private investment finance remained extremely limited. He underscored the need for increased external support to LDCs to complement internally generated resources and urged the developed world to encourage investment in the LDCs. He spoke of the increasing digital and knowledge divide

between the LDCs and the rest of the world and urged assistance to LDCs to bridge the growing technology gap. Finally, he stated that the Brussels Programme of Action was different from the earlier programmes of action both in terms of scope and specificity of commitments and called for the momentum of the Conference to be maintained and for LDCs' development partners to give their full support in helping them achieve their development goals.

15. The representative of the **United States of America** congratulated Mr. Ouane for his work as Officer-in-Charge of the OSC/LDC Office. However, he expressed concern over the absence of a permanent coordinator for this office. He reiterated that LDCs have the primary responsibility for their own development, even though developed countries, other developing countries and international organizations play an important role in supporting their efforts. He congratulated UNCTAD for involving a wide array of different actors in organizing the LDC-III Conference and called for such wide cooperation to be pursued in the follow-up and implementation of the Programme of Action. He cited the United States' own efforts in assisting LDCs'-USAID's Global Development Alliance (GDA), launched in May 2001. Moreover, he stressed that the United States supported UNCTAD's leading role on LDCs issues and is reluctant toward setting up a new support structure. Commending the documentation prepared by the Board, and in particular the design of criteria to follow on the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, he called for the creation of new criteria to check progress on good governance and social integration. Finally, he questioned the opportunity to transform the Sessional Committee on LDCs into a Standing Committee. He also stressed that it would be appropriate to wait for the outcome of the recommendations of the Secretary-General for the LDC-III follow-up mechanism, as well as for the UNCTAD's mid-term review on its intergovernmental machinery.

16. The representative of **Benin** declared that the Third United Nations Conference on LDCs had been a crucial stage in the reflections on and search for policies aimed at fighting poverty and improving the living conditions in the LDCs. He stated that the implementation and the follow-up of the Programme of Action allowed for the avoidance of the inadequacies of the previous two conferences on LDCs. He emphasized that Benin would continue to strive for the coherent and effective implementation of the Programme of Action within renewed partnerships and promising cooperation.

17. The representative of **Japan** pointed out that the Government of Japan is one of the largest donors to LDCs. He stressed the importance of ownership and self-help in LDCs and delivered assurances that Japan will continue to provide necessary cooperation in various ways. Regarding ODA, he indicated that Japan's assistance to LDCs, at \$1.0 billion in 1999, was the largest in the world for the past two consecutive years. He laid out the following five areas which Japan attached maximum priority in providing its assistance: (i) poverty reduction and social development; (ii) human resources development and capacity-building for policy formulation and implementation; (iii) fostering the LDCs private sector; (iv) democratization; and, (v) reduction of debt-burden. In addition, he stated that Japan had accepted the DAC recommendation untying ODA to the LDCs. In the field of trade, he said that Japan has expanded preferential measures for LDCs in 2001. This had resulted in

approximately 360 items being added to the duty-free list – approximately 99 per cent of mining and industrial products, including all textile products had been made duty-free and quota-free. He also gave assurances that Japan would continue its efforts to expand the scope of duty-free and quota-free products from LDCs. Furthermore, he outlined Japan's support in LDCs capacity-building efforts to implement the WTO agreements through seminars, human resources development and bilateral technical cooperation. He also highlighted Japan's commitment as announced at LDC-III, to provide financial assistance for a pilot scheme of IF for trade-related technical assistance for the LDCs. He also announced Japan's willingness to forgive all ODA and non-ODA debts owed by the HIPCs, including 31 LDCs. He also stated that 18 LDCs had already reached their decision points under the enhanced HIPC initiative and that Japan's debt cancellation for these countries would total \$3.8 billion. In addition, he emphasized Japan had committed a \$200 million contribution to the World Bank's Trust Fund for debt relief.

18. Regarding follow-up of the LDC-III Programme of Action, he outlined the following parameters Japan considered essential: (a) LDC's have the primary responsibility for their own development and development partners should complement their efforts, guided by the programme; (b) existing resources and mechanisms should be fully utilized with institutional rearrangements only if budgetary neutral; (c) the Programme of Action should be translated into national policies in accordance with the specific situation of each country; and, (d) the role of the UN system and other relevant multilateral organizations should be to facilitate the follow-up by LDCs and development partners.

19. The representative of **Mauritania** stated that LDC-III had established a strategic international partnership designed to eradicate poverty and ensure sustainable development. The Programme of Action which was adopted would create the necessary conditions to reverse economic decline and favour sustainable development for the least developed countries of the world. He stated that the implementation of those measures would promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development of the LDCs and facilitate their integration into the world economy. However, he noted that those objectives were similar to those adopted at the second UN LDC Conference in Paris in 1990, which were not achieved. He observed that although the Conference had taken note of the situation, the hope was that through the concerted efforts of the development partners, the international organizations, civil society and the LDCs themselves, the measures agreed to at Brussels would achieve a different result. Finally, he warned that the international community could ill afford the spectacle of meeting every 10 years at great expense and with great expectation only to conclude measures similar to those taken 10 years earlier, and to take note that the earlier measures had again fallen far short of expectations, leaving LDCs worse off. Such a repeat situation was not only ethically wrong but called into question the credibility of the international community. He cautioned that there was a common responsibility to avoid this negative tendency and bring about positive concrete results.

20. The representative of **China** recalled the difficulties hindering the development process in LDCs, and stressed the importance of implementing efficiently the Programme of Action for LDCs for the Decade 2001–2010. Moreover, he declared that designing and

implementing an appropriate follow-up mechanism would be of crucial importance to the achievement of the Conference's objectives. In order to facilitate the implementation process, he called for appropriate indicators to be created. He expressed his country's wish that developed countries provide assistance to LDCs, notably in the areas of market access, ODA and debt reduction. He also stressed the importance of South-South cooperation. Such assistance should be delivered taking into account the specificities of each LDC, and by avoiding excessive conditionality. Finally, he outlined China's assistance to LDCs and cited the 10 billion RMB debt relief recently provided to debt burdened African poor countries and LDCs.

21. The representative of **Egypt** stated that the Third UN Conference on LDCs provided an opportunity for LDCs and their development partners to reiterate development commitments. In this regard, she confirmed the Conference was an important event. She emphasized that the Programme of Action for the Decade 2001–2010 had avoided the weaknesses of programmes from previous decades and the Brussels Declaration gave a strong political message to the international community. She commended the role of UNCTAD secretariat in the preparatory process of LDC-III, and linked the success of the Conference to the deep understanding of the development preoccupations of LDCs by UNCTAD, which had directed 43 per cent of its Technical Cooperation resources on this group of countries. She commended the work that has been accomplished by UNCTAD since Brussels. She referred to the technical support to the Zanzibar Ministerial Meeting and other preparatory LDCs activities for the upcoming Doha meeting as indication of the seriousness of UNCTAD in dealing with LDCs development problems.

22. She stressed Egypt's awareness of the special needs of LDCs and that the responsibility for mitigating poverty does not rest exclusively with LDCs themselves, but rather is a collective duty that all development partners should share together. She stated that Egypt has made effort, within its capacity, to assist LDCs, and cited her Government's introduction of a duty-free and quota-free import system for 55 export items from LDCs, and the granting to a further 77 export items of a drastic cut in custom duties as well as particularly favourable conditions for the LDC participants in trade fairs organized in Egypt. Decisions for debt cancellation for LDCs had also been taken. In conclusion, she declared that Egypt is committed to the implementation of the Programme of Action and called on the donor community to shoulder their responsibility vis-à-vis the Action Plan.

23. The representative of **Bhutan** delivered his Government's deep appreciation to the UNCTAD secretariat for having organized a successful Third United Nations Conference on the LDCs and expressed satisfaction with the outcome and the adoption of the Programme of Action. He regarded the implementation of the Programme of Action as a challenge that encompassed shared responsibility by LDCs and their development partners. He commended UNCTAD's efforts in developing an implementation monitoring mechanism and urged UNCTAD's continued participation in realizing the objectives of LDC-III. He expressed concern at the inability of LDCs to take advantage of opportunities and benefits offered by globalization. Therefore, he emphasized the importance of supporting LDCs build-up their capacities for integration into the global economy. In this context, he expressed hope that the

Fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha would seriously address the problems of trade and trade related issues of LDCs as reflected under Commitment 5 of the Programme of Action and of the Zanzibar Declaration of LDC Trade Ministers.

24. He outlined Bhutan's Ninth Five Year Development Plan for the period 2002–2007, based on its development philosophy which is rooted in the concept of "Gross National Happiness" emphasizing the need for a people centred development. He pointed out that to further enhance self-reliance, measures are being implemented to decentralize the planning process by empowering people at the community level to directly participate in the development process. He also stated that the plans and programmes being pursued in Bhutan are in consonance with the guidelines of LDC-III Programme of Action. He concluded by acknowledging the support of development partners and the committed leadership of the Government of Bhutan as the main contributing factors to Bhutan's achievement of significant progress in its development, and expressed confidence that such cooperation continue in the coming decade.

25. The representative of **Norway** stated that his country attached great importance to the outcome of LDC-III and that the Brussels Declaration and the new Programme of Action gave clear indication of a more vigorous partnership in promoting social and economic development for the poorest countries. He commended the European Union and UNCTAD for their preparation and organization and applauded the LDCs on their constructive contribution to the Conference. He stated that the OECD countries would go a long way to opening their markets for all products originating in LDCs. Norway itself would phase out all customs and quotas by July 2002. The OECD's decision to untie their development assistance to the LDCs could also lead to substantial improvement in terms of quality of aid. The international community was also committed to doing more on debt relief measures for the LDCs and was set to promote productive investments and private partnerships in the LDCs. He stressed that the most important deliverable from Brussels was the commitment made by the LDCs themselves at the national level. There was clear acknowledgement in the Programme of Action that development could not take place unless basic domestic conditions were in place and that the main responsibility for development and poverty alleviation lay with the LDCs themselves. The international community could only assist LDC Governments in reaching their potential.

26. He underlined the need for more international support to the LDCs, particularly if the development targets were to be met and stressed the importance of including the private sector in a broad international partnership for development, primarily in the area of investment. He emphasized that international organizations an important role had to play in securing commitments and forging genuine partnerships for the implementation of the Programme of Action to facilitate the follow-up mechanism. He cautioned against transforming the existing sessional committee to a standing committee at this stage, and said that more reflection was needed before establishing a new permanent structure. Finally, he stated that UNCTAD would remain important for the LDCs and Norway would continue to advocate for continued emphasis of LDCs in UNCTAD activities. He further stated that a well-coordinated partnership, including both the public and private sectors, for the

implementation of the Programme of Action, would be a major achievement and the main deliverable from the LDC process.

27. The representatives of **Sudan** declared that the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries provided an important opportunity for LDCs and their development partners to make a new start and avoid the mistakes which hindered the effective implementation of the past two programmes of actions. Citing the Zanzibar Ministerial Meeting and the Land-locked Countries Meeting held in New York last August, he commended UNCTAD's efforts in favour of LDCs. He reiterated full support for UNCTAD to continue its efforts in implementing the Conference's Programme of Action in the area of its competence. He stressed that the implementation and the follow-up of the outcome from LDC-III is the collective responsibility of the international community, and stated it is important that all efforts be extended to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action. He expressed appreciation to the UNCTAD secretariat for its effective support of LDCs in their preparation to LDC-III.

28. The representative of **Zambia**, associating himself with the statement made by the representative of Cuba speaking on behalf of the G77 and China, welcomed the initiatives taken by UNCTAD since the Conference, to ensure early follow-up and implementation of the Programme of Action and to ensure that momentum generated in Brussels was not lost. He commended UNCTAD for its assistance to LDCs' request for support to the Zanzibar LDCs Trade Ministers Meeting which had been well organized and successful. He called for the strengthening of the Office of Special Coordinator, both in terms of financing and human resources and for the resources of the LDCs Trust Fund to be substantially increased. He urged LDCs and their development partners to mainstream the commitments of the Programme of Action in their national development frameworks and development cooperation programmes, respectively.

29. He noted that the Integrated Framework for Technical Assistance was the agreed framework for mainstreaming trade into LDCs' development and poverty reduction strategies and stated that if properly funded, it had the potential of accelerating the integration of the LDCs into the global economy. He noted, however, that actual delivery of capacity-building projects lagged significantly behind plans and needs assessment. He urged donors and implementing agencies to seek to redress this problem as a matter of urgency. Finally, he called for a scheduling rationalization of major meetings of UN bodies to take account of the limited capacity of some delegations to participate effectively at different meetings held at the same time.

30. The representative of **Haiti** said that the increasing gap between rich and poor countries had provoked grave tensions and had been one of the factors behind the increasingly vocal contestation of the anti-globalization movement, and behind the recent tragic events in New York. The Haitian delegation however, noted that measures have been taken to fight the exclusion of LDCs, including the Integrated Framework Programme and the LDC-III Global Programme of Action. He stated Haiti supported calls for the full implementation of point 8 of the Brussels Declaration stipulating that at least 0.15 per cent of developed countries GDP be allocated to ODA in favour of LDCs. He expressed Haiti's

strong support of the various measures in favour of LDCs taken by UNCTAD and its contribution to other international events or works in favour of LDCs. In the context of new development partnerships, Haiti acknowledged the need to take national measures for its own development. It has, for example, contributed financially to some of the projects defined in the national Round Table on Trade, which was held in the Context of the Integrated Framework. Finally, he stressed the importance of the application of paragraph 116 of the Programme of Action on the creation of an effective follow-up mechanism. He stated that Haiti hoped the recommendations by the UN Secretary-General and the decision by the General Assembly on implementation mechanisms be produced soon.

31. The representative of **Guinea** stated that his country – as an LDC – suffers from the lack of a diversified export base and export markets. As such, it welcomed the ratios for investment and growth retained in the Global Programme of Action. She also expressed her country's satisfaction with the success of the Conference itself and with UNCTAD's preparation of the LDC Ministerial meeting in Zanzibar. The representative stressed the importance of development partner's financial support, in order to diversify and develop Guinea's economy. She expressed gratitude to the European Union for its "Everything but Arms" initiative, as well as for hosting the LDC-III Conference. She also thanked Hungary, Japan, Morocco, Norway, New Zealand, and the United States of America for the market access concessions they granted to Guinean exports and invited other countries to follow such example.

32. She expressed Guinea's wish to benefit from additional assistance from UNCTAD in implementing the WTO agreements, and its desire to be included in the next pilot phase of the Integrated Framework. The representative recalled that increased ODA and reduced debt burden would allow her country to improve development efforts. Finally, she stressed that the only way for her country to reach its development objectives is by fully implementing the global Programme of Action. In this regard she called for concerted efforts from LDCs and the rest of the international community, and for additional financial backing from development partners.

33. The representative of **Morocco** stated that the world's economy is going through tremendous change and as a consequence of this process, LDCs are being marginalized in world trade. Although ODA was the primary development option to many LDCs, aid has been declining for many years. Past and recent promises to stop economic decline for LDCs had not produced the expected results. As such, he stressed the need to draw lessons from past mistakes in order to redress the situation and acknowledged that the Programme of Action agreed in Brussels could help in this process. He expressed the hope that UNCTAD remain the main executing agency on LDC issues. He outlined Morocco's initiatives to help LDCs, including: the elimination of taxes on imports of raw materials from LDCs since 2001; debt cancellation; and, technical cooperation in mining and fishing as well as in training. Moreover, he reiterated Morocco's willingness to offer further assistance even in light of its own limited means.

34. The representative of **Poland** said that the Outcome of the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries was a good example of increased

consciousness to difficult social and economic situations prevailing in many of the poorest countries, particularly in Africa. In his view, the Conference had been concrete and fruitful and he stated his Government, following the recommendation of Brussels Conference, decided to improve market access to products originating from LDCs. The majority of goods from LDCs will be exempted from any tariff or non-tariff barriers as of 1 January 2002. He also expressed the view that LDCs should be assisted in their efforts to improve the quality of their products and services.

35. The representative of **Nepal** recalled the underlying themes of the Brussels Programme of Action were set in recognition of the marginalization of LDCs, resulting from historical structural difficulties in their development. He said that to reverse this trend a political commitment was necessary. He stated that both the Declaration of Brussels and the Programme of Action reflected the need for partnerships among LDCs themselves and with development partners. He expressed the need to revitalize partnerships with an appropriate institutional mechanism to follow-up implementation both in the form of an international secretariat and in an effective intergovernmental mechanism. He stressed that specific areas of such partnerships were contained in the commitments of the Programme of Action and thus underlined the need for more work to further crystalize the Programme of Action into more clearly defined goals and benchmarks. He also underlined the need for institutional arrangements for follow-up as stated in paragraph 116 of the Programme of Action. This implied the need for leadership at a very high level, and the ability to coordinate among the various initiatives to assist LDCs emerge from marginalization and to monitor progress, as well as the need to deploy adequate resources and manpower for the evaluation and fulfilment of its mandate. In this regard he stated the Secretary-General's report is eagerly awaited. On trade issues, he said that the international community should try as much as possible to allow the Brussels Programme of Action and the Zanzibar Declaration to be reflected in the Doha Declaration. In conclusion, he said that his delegation looked to the UNCTAD Secretary-General for leadership in translating these concerns.

36. The representative of **Algeria** underlined the dramatic economic situation of LDCs. Despite the previous conferences and the assistance provided, LDCs had become more and more dependent on external assistance. He stated that this situation confirmed that nothing could be achieved without the full involvement of the LDCs in their own development process. In this context, he indicated that Senegal, South Africa and Algeria had recently issued a "new initiative for Africa" which took into account the specificity of the development issues of African countries including African LDCs.

37. The representative of **OAU** emphasized the importance of paragraphs 116 and 113 of the Programme of Action. With regard to the recommendation for an efficient and highly visible follow-up mechanism of paragraph 116, the representative stressed the need for UNCTAD to strengthen its technical and analytical expertise on LDC issues. He commended UNCTAD for the steps already taken to mainstream the relevant recommendations of the Programme of Action into its work programme. He stated the OAU fully supported the recommendation given on paragraph 113, inviting the Board to consider converting its Sessional Committee on LDCs into a Standing Committee in order to address substantive

issues related to the implementation of the Programme of Action. He also welcomed the discussion on issues related to the identification of indicators for monitoring the progress of LDCs. He called for a methodological consistency in the conceptualization of the indicators, as well as bridging gaps in the adequacy of data, required to measure the indicators. He expressed OAU's expectation that the discussions lead to consensus-building on how to overcome these problems and provide guidance to UNCTAD for further work in this area. Monitoring of progress must be an integral part of the implementation of the Programme of Action.