

Permanent Mission of Nepal

Geneva

Statement by Nepal at the 65th Annual Session Part I of the Trade and Development Board, UNCTAD, Geneva, 4-12 June 2018

Item-08, Activities of UNCTAD in support of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024

(Delivered by Bhuwan Paudel, Second Secretary)

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

I thank the Director of the ALDC Division of UNCTAD, Mr. Paul Akiwumi for his opening remarks in the agenda item. My delegation associates with the statements made earlier by Paraguay on behalf of LLDCs.

Mr. President,

- The economies of the LLDCs remain in a disadvantaged position due to higher costs of transport and transit and corresponding higher costs of trade transactions. Compared to their transit neighbours, LLDCs pay two to three times or even more to send a container of cargo to the market. Higher cost of economies make them less competitive in comparison to coastal countries.
- Available statistics show that the share of LLDC exports in global exports fell to 0.97 % by 2015, which was an average of 1.21% between 2011 and 2014 period. Total merchandise exports from LLDCs declined dramatically in 2015 by 30%, to US\$ 160 billion. It means their competitiveness in the global markets has further eroded.
- Their remoteness from the international market and lack of integration into the global economy calls attention for partnership and cooperation to make a difference.
- Around 50 percent of LLDCs being LDCs also, these are countries in special needs. The basic problems lie in improving stronger connectivity with the outside world on one hand, while also achieving structural transformation of the economies of these countries through productive capacity building.
- Harmonization of policies and regulations with regard to transport and transit, and faithful compliance by the transit countries in providing unfettered access to the nearest seaport are necessary basic requirements for improvement. Importantly, more investment is needed in improving multimodal transport system and strengthening of transport corridors, including through the new construction as well as upgradation of infrastructure.

- Ensuring preferential market access to the LLDCs in the international trade and extending support and partnerships in improving trade facilitation measures in line with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement is crucial. UNCTAD's role in introducing ACYCUDA in 99 developing countries, including 23 LLDCs is appreciable. More policy and strategic innovations are expected in these areas.
- Nepal has entered the phase of development and shared prosperity following the promulgation of the constitution, elections to the three tiers of development and the formation of a strong elected government. **For LLDCs like us, better integration in the world economy and beneficial participation in global trade are urgently needed for eliminating poverty, accelerating economic growth, creating jobs and building peace, resilience and prosperity.**
- UNCTAD support in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LDCs for the Decade 2014-2024 bears significance at this juncture.
- *Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Review* of the developing countries will help in improving the competitiveness of firms and industries. We request UNCTAD to further expand the STI policy review at the request of the member states. E-commerce is a fast emerging issue of high importance for all countries. In this context, I appreciate UNCTAD for its rapid e-trade readiness assessments of a number of Member countries, including Nepal. Similarly, UNCTAD is expected to extend capacity building support to the needy LLDCs in enhancing the strength of their service trade over and above the trade in commodities.
- It is high time that the next year will be a midterm review of the Vienna Program of Action and we are looking forward of UNCTAD active involvement in the review process. We are convinced that the midterm review is the important occasion to redraw the attention of the international community to the development challenges faced by LLDCs, particular in the context of achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the pledge of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind.

I thank you all for your kind attention!!

08 June 2018

Statement by the delegation of Nepal at the 65th Annual Session Part I of the Trade and Development Board on Agenda Item 10-Contribution of UNCTAD to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020

Geneva, 4-12 June 2018

(Delivered by Bhuwan Paudel, Second Secretary)

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates

At the outset, my delegation thanks the experts from UNCTAD Secretariat for presentation of the report.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made earlier by Bangladesh on behalf of the LDCs group

My delegation commends the role played by UNCTAD in bringing LDCs specific issues and agenda forward at various forums for intergovernmental consensus, publishing flagship reports on LDC themes, conducting research on sectoral issues that are of particular interest to the LDCs and providing technical cooperation, among others.

Mr. President,

The IPOA aims to address the multiple socioeconomic development challenges facing the poorest and weakest segment of the international community by identifying specific goals and targets to be achieved by 2020. The good news of 2017 was that with the graduation of Equatorial Guinea altogether five countries have graduated so far, and the CDP decided to recommend Bhutan, Kiribati, Sao Tome and Principe, and Solomon Islands for graduation. Similarly, Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar also met first time the graduation criteria. However, the goal of graduating half of the LDCs is impossible to be realized. The international community is falling far short of meeting the target of doubling export trade of LDCs to 2 percent by 2030. The trade and economic growth indicators of majority of the LDCs are not encouraging at all.

The deep-rooted structural constraints and multiple vulnerabilities such as lack of infrastructure, export diversification and value addition, low capacity and productivity, and gaps in ICTs uses, just to name a few, are longstanding problems faced by LDCs. LDCs are not the countries with homogenous attributes. One size fits all approach cannot rightly address the gravity of their specific problems. We call on UNCTAD to focus its works on how appropriate policies and measures can be devised to effectively implement all internationally agreed development frameworks in favour of LDCs based on their needs.

Mr. President,

The declining trend of FDI will have significant implications for the ability of the least developed countries to meet the investment ratio of 25 per cent of GDP originally agreed in the Brussels Programme of Action.

We hope that policy and strategic support of UNCTAD in the areas of felt needs would further help in graduation of the least developed countries. Productive capacity building is instrumental in improving the economies of the LDCs and balancing the trade deficit at large.

Mr. President,

We look forward to working with UNCTAD in all possible areas through its three pillars of consensus building, research and analysis and technical cooperation. UNCTAD should continue to contribute to balancing the trade and development issues by incorporating other issues of relevance in their operation.

Nepal would like to reiterate its full support to UNCTAD that needs to continuously reorient, reinvent and revitalize itself to remain relevant, and express its readiness to work with other member states for achieving the desired outcomes.

I thank You Mr. President.

08 June 2018