

**Statement delivered by H.E Mani Prasad BHATTARAI, Ambassador/
Permanemt Representative of Nepal on behalf of the
LDC Group at the 70th regular session of the Trade and Development
Board (19 to 28 June 2023), General debate Item: 3
19 June 2023**

Words:635

**President of the Trade and Development Board, Ambassador Khalil Hashmi,
Secretary-General of UNCTAD Ms. Rebeca Grynspan,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

Good morning!

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the LDC Group. We also align ourselves with the statement delivered by the Chair of G77 & China, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania. This is also the first statement delivered by Nepal on behalf of the group after taking the leadership of LDC Global coordinator in April this year.

At the outset, I take this opportunity to congratulate you Ambassador Hasmi for taking lead of the crucial responsibility of the Chair of the Trade and Development Board. We believe that under your able leadership this body will carry out its mandated responsibilities successfully.

On behalf of Nepali delegation and LDC Group rest assured our full support in discharging your responsibilities.

Mr. President,

We thank the Secretary General for her comprehensive statement this morning covering different agenda items including the annual report and crucial issues of the implementation of the outcomes of UNCTAD 15, preparatory process of the UNCTAD 16 among others.

LDC Group would like to reiterate that as highlighted in the Bridgetown Covenant adopted by the UNCTAD 15, UNCTAD should strengthen its special focus on the trade and development needs of the least developed countries across all areas of its mandate, in accordance with the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action) and relevant successor agreement which in this case is the Doha Program of Action (2022-2031) adopted by the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries held in March 2022.

The DPoA emphasizes that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should continue to address the challenges faced by least developed countries through the conduct of intergovernmental consensus-building, especially through the Trade and Development Board, and to contribute to the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action, including through its technical assistance to least developed countries. The institutional capacity of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in the research and analysis of least developed country issues should be maintained to this end.

Hence, we see the critical role of the Trade and Development Board in implementing the outcomes of the 5th LDC Conference.

Mr. President

Though the World Health Organization has recently declared an end to COVID-19 as a global emergency, the ramifications of the pandemic have shown no indications to end in any short time sooner. Global poverty continues to rise. Inequality gaps within and among countries are widening. As countries, basically the LDCs were striving to emerge from the impacts of pandemic, the Russia-Ukraine conflict posed another global crisis that included energy crisis and food security and LDCs are the hardest hit.

Similarly, the LDCs which are least responsible for global emissions are in the front lines of the climate crisis. LDCs are also facing soaring debt, undiversified economies, lack of productive capacities, export marginalization, energy crisis, infrastructure constraints among others. The preexisting vulnerabilities of LDCs have been further exacerbated by these global challenges.

In this context, our Group underscores the enhanced international solidarity and cooperation to fight against the ongoing challenges as we move together in achieving the sustainable development goals while leaving no one behind. The climate financing goals, and ODA commitments made by the international community must be predictable and fulfilled.

Our group also takes this opportunity to thank UNCTAD for its continuous efforts directed at the transformation agenda of LDC including through technical cooperation programs, building resilience in LDCs and research and analysis. The support is equally crucial to achieve graduation from the LDC category while maintaining the graduation sustainable.

We wish for a successful conclusion of this session with fruitful outcomes.

I thank you, Mr. President.