

**Statement Delivered by Nepal on behalf of the Least Developed Countries Group at
the 73rd session of the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD**

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*Item 8 – UNCTAD contributions to the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for the
Least Developed Countries*

Time: 4 mins

Words: 602

Madame President of the Board,

Acting Secretary General,
Excellencies and

Distinguished Colleagues

It's my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the LDCs Group. The Group aligns itself with the G77 and China statement delivered by Pakistan.

We thank the secretariat for providing the background note and the comprehensive contents therein.

The report reflects the dire situation LDCs are facing and the recommendations provided are welcomed.

Madame President,

Geneva Consensus reiterated that the LDCs must strengthen their productive capacities for sustainable graduation. Climate induced shocks can decimate the years of development efforts within few hours. Prolonged conflict or economic shocks thousands of miles away could trigger fiscal constraints and, energy and food insecurity in the LDCs. Pandemic like Covid can impede the much-needed economic progress for years. Debt could hinder their capacity to invest in basic services like health and education.

LDCs face double disadvantage. First, we have less capacity to produce goods and services and second, we have less influence in the global financial/economic systems. Both need to change.

Madame President,

We are deeply concerned by the lag in achieving the milestones outlined in the Doha Programme of Action including the annual economic growth rate, share in global merchandise trade, number of LDCs aimed to be graduated, ODA, investment and debt sustainability, among others.

Against this backdrop, the LDC Group stresses that UNCTAD should strengthen its assistance to the LDCs, while also acknowledging that the UNCTAD's assistance to the LDCs are praiseworthy and also limited by the availability of resources.

Madame President,

We commend UNCTAD's positive contribution to the causes of LDCs through its three pillars of actions.

We echo the findings of the UNCTAD LDC Report 2025 that substantiates that the services could be a path to structural transformation for the LDCs only if the services are closely linked to manufacturing, agriculture and other productive sectors.

UNCTAD's work on mainstreaming of microenterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises, addressing inequality and poverty, leveraging climate finance and digitalization, strengthening sectoral policies, supporting women enterprises, data and statistical capacity building, and negotiations remains instrumental. These assistances could enable LDCs policymakers to formulate objective, quantifiable and effective policies.

Preferential access to global market for LDCs' remains crucial yet underutilized. The special and differential treatment rendered to the LDCs through the WTO agreements must be effective, operational and delivered. Its relevance remains high before and also after LDCs graduation. Smooth graduation of LDCs should be complemented by the effective operationalization of the Graduation Support Programme as envisioned in the Geneva Consensus.

Madame President,

We value the works of UNCTAD on regional cooperation and economic integration that could foster resilient domestic and regional value chain, and facilitate entrepreneurship and quality jobs in the LDCs. UNCTAD's works on making emerging technologies and economic avenues favourable to the LDCs are important. UNCTAD's work on North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation must centralize the needs of the LDCs.

38 of 44 LDCs benefitted from ASYCUDA and remains instrumental for customs automation.

Technical support to the LDCs on competition and consumer policies and combating illicit financial flows are noteworthy.

Madame President,

LDCs must be able to graduate from their LDC status irreversibly with sustainable momentum. This calls for strengthened support before, during and after graduation.

Multilateral and bilateral mechanisms must deliver meaningful and effective pathways and resources for the LDCs.

In this regard, the LDCs Group fully affirms with the recommendations in the background note.

In closing, we thank all the development partners for their continued support to the LDCs and we urge them to increase their support to the LDCs Trust fund and other technical supports.

I thank you.