Remarks by H.E Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations on behalf of the Least Developed Countries at the SDG Action Event on Innovation (UNHQs, New York, 17 May 2017)

Thank you, Mr. President.

I have the honour to make these remarks on behalf of LDCs. The Group aligns itself with the remarks made by Ecuador on behalf of the G77 and China.

At the outset, I would like to thank you for convening this SDG Action Event that highlights Innovation as catalyst for fostering economic growth, strengthening productivity and widening knowledge base.

Two days back at the ECOSOC event on STI, we reiterated that STI are surely effective means in implementing the SDGs particularly in the LDCs who continue to face considerable challenges in enjoying the benefits that innovation and connectivity can offer. Only 6.7% of households in LDCs have Internet access against 34.1 per cent in developing countries. 19 of the 20 countries with the lowest percentage of Internet users are LDCs. Even disparities prevail within countries especially between rural and urban areas.

The implementation of many SDGs and targets are deeply contingent upon leveraging modern and clean technologies. STI can support the LDCs in their fight against poverty, financial exclusion, climate change, disasters, outbreaks of endemic diseases and so forth. The huge young population in the LDCs can provide a good opportunity to promote STI in those countries. I would like to submit a few points in this regard:

A stronger commitment and political will of the international community is of utmost importance to support the LDCs in utilizing STI to realize the 2030 Agenda and the IPOA.

The Technology Bank for the LDCs must be made fully operational to facilitate in the LDCs the development of endogenous science, technology and innovation knowledge base and capacity and the acquisition and application of appropriate modern technologies. It would also foster the transfer of appropriate technologies and know-how to LDCs.

It is necessary to enhance vertical coordination between policies and strategies adopted by countries to ensure more public investment in Research and Development and regional and global/multilateral policies and agendas. The policies need to be coupled with modern infrastructure and service delivery systems.

LDCs also need adequate financial support to harness innovation. While public-private partnership is a tested means to fund innovation in our countries, support from the development partners would contribute a great deal in this regard. Also, in the framework of the South-South and Triangular Cooperation, there should be more concrete initiatives among the countries in the South to exchange their innovations, experiences, lessons learnt and best practices.

I thank you all for your kind attention.