



Statement of H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN, New York, as Lead Discussant on the topic “Means of Implementation” at the UN-OHRLLS Consultative Meeting: LDCs priorities in the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs
1630 hrs, 9 November 2013, Glen Cove Mansion, New York

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Since the group of LDCs was created in the UN structure, till date there have been four major UN conferences, and I am sure the total number of meetings, seminars, workshops and retreats held all over the world discussing the future of this marginalized group is in the figure of hundreds, if not thousands.

2. What is the result of this huge number of meetings? In 1971, there were 25 LDCs, and that number now has reached to 49 countries and currently, nearly 1/5th of global population live in LDCs and sadly, at least half of them live below the poverty level, I mean, below \$1.25/day. They are still dependent on one or two of their export items and vulnerable to global shocks. Their situation, in spite of international meetings and conferences, have not improved much. Neither their share to the global trade improved much. For example, four decades ago in 1971, their share to the global trade was around 1%, and the latest report shows that at present it is stagnating around 1.2 percent.

Mr. Chair, Excellencies, distinguished colleagues and participants,

3. Please don't misunderstand me. I am not questioning the well intention of the UN Members in assisting the LDCs or the poor and vulnerable people. Rather, my question is more on how to channel this positive cooperative attitude of the global community into means of implementation that are practical, pragmatic, meaningful, and can really make tangible positive changes in the life of people in LDCs.

4. Let me go back to IPoA and the 8 Priority areas that we set for action and these are:

1. Enhancing Productive capacity (ICT, Roads & Highways, Railways, Maritime & Air Transport, Energy, Science, Technology, Innovation)
2. More investment in Agriculture to ensure food security (to end hunger, unfortunately, only financial shocks added additional 50m into poverty level)
3. Doubling the LDC Trade (although it increased from 1% to 1.2% in 40 years, but recent evidence shows signs of weakening both exports and imports of LDCs as they grow at much slower rate than previous years)
4. Commodities (modest achievements in trade and economic diversification---share of extractive industry is still high)
5. Higher Investment in Human and social development (education, training, health, youth development, shelter, water & sanitation, gender equality & empowerment, social protection)
6. Assist LDCs to face Multiple crises and other emerging challenges (economic shocks, climate change & environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction)
7. Mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building (domestic mobilization, ODA, FDI, Remittance)
8. Enhance Good governance at all levels

To achieve or to implement these goals, many policy prescription were discussed. Let me go over a selective few and these are:

- Commitment by the development partners and also LDCs to integrate the IPoA into their respective national cooperation policy framework and into their development strategies. Many LDCs have done it but it may be time for DPs to include ODA into their regular budgets;
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- To double the share of LDCs exports by 2020, timely implementation of duty-free, quota-free (DFQF) market access for all LDCs is essential;
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- Strong reaffirmation of fulfilling the official development assistance (ODA) promises by 2015 and agreement on reviewing the ODA commitment for further enhancing resources to LDCs after 2015;
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- Enhancing the share of assistance to LDCs by the development partners for Aid for Trade;
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- Adopting investment promotion regimes by the development partners (through fiscal and other tax incentives);
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- Strong emphasis on technological innovation and technology transfer to LDCs, including development partners' commitment to provide enhanced financial and technical support for this sector;
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- Developing risk mitigation strategies for crisis mitigation and resilience in LDCs (to create a Fund)
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- Strong call for the establishment and full operationalization of the Green Climate Fund and pledges by development partners to promote and facilitate clean development mechanism projects in LDCs;
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- Ensuring mutual accountability of LDCs and their development partners for delivering their commitments undertaken under IPoA; and
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- Ensuring good governance, gender equality and empowerment of women and rule of law in LDCs as well as strengthening voice and representation of LDCs at international forums.

5. The overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action ([A/CONF.219/3/Rev.1](#)) is to enable half of LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation from LDC status by 2020. To achieve it, economic growth of LDCs should be at least 7% per annum; and such can be achieved through enhancing productive capacities; and by reducing the vulnerability owing to various economic and environmental shocks.

6. IPoA stipulates a renewed and strengthened partnership for development and no wonder, it postulated highest number of actions under financial resource

mobilization. It calls for the whole of the UN system, Bretton Woods institutions and development partners to fully engage in the process. Good news is, UN system and agencies except BWIs are engaged in it. Good news is, bi-annual and mid-term reviews of the progress of IPoA are being conducted at national, regional and global levels.

Unfortunately, except few states, most of the country from the North did not meet their ODA commitment. The reports of the UNSG, as well as different reports from the OECD show that the ODA to the LDCs have been declining over the years. This trend needs to be stopped and reversed with immediate effect. Therefore, we suggest the development partners to factor the ODA budget for LDCs into their regular national budgets so that they meet it. In addition, we are asking our development partners and also emerging economies for increasing their assistance to LDCs.

7. In this consultative meeting, we are talking about LDC priorities in the Post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs. The priority list will not be effective if the tools for implementation of these priorities are not strong enough. For effective, synchronized and harmonized development in all three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental, LDCs need strong global support.

8. For economic development that is cognizant of the environmental balance, FDI and trade can play key role. For attracting FDI to LDCs, both infrastructural backbone as well as development of productive capacity is needed, and here comes the issue of meaningful and demand-driven ODA and technology transfer in an effective way. I believe the proposed Technology Bank will be a useful component of implementation. Trade, as we said, is of course another key component for sustainable development. The duty-free quota-free market access for all products from all LDCs with preferential Rules of Origin that are simple, transparent, and contribute to facilitating meaningful market access for LDCs are crucial for assisting LDCs to get foothold in the fast paced global economic highway.

9. For LDCs, useful economic development will lead to social development. At the same time, the development partners should not shy away from their commitments towards LDCs in the area of social issues. We are yet to achieve all

the MDGs, and with less than 800 days remaining of the deadline, it is important that we go for the big push to attain all MDG goals.

10. On the issue of environment under the discussion of SDGs, I would like to flag that LDCs are the most vulnerable to natural disasters. Most of them suffer severely from extreme weather events like draughts, floods, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, and even ocean acidification, which further threaten food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. It is crucial that LDCs are provided adequate and meaningful support in addressing the environmental challenges. Otherwise, without being the major polluters, they may become the major victims of environmental degradation.

11. I know that the Sustainable Development Financing Committee is in close touch with the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development to ensure coherence in the post 2015 development agenda. It is important that both these substantive groups, while working their way forward, devote special attention to the needs of LDCs, and come out with concrete ideas, suggestions and proposals that will assist LDCs in their ultimate goal of graduating at least half of them by 2020.

Mr. Chair,

12. I have just tried to flag the issues that I believe are important to ensure that the means of implementation for achieving LDC priorities in the post-2015 development agenda scenario are pro-LDC. Any development agenda that is meant to be pro-people and pro-planet must be pro-LDC. Otherwise, the world will fail to use the word “development” in a meaningful way.

In conclusion, we know 'business-as-usual' is not going to work to achieve IPoA. We also know, as per SIPRI Report, in 2012, the global community spent \$1,734 billion for defense and it may be time to divert a significant portion of such resources to the LDCs to help humanity, to end hunger and poverty, and also to enhance and ensure a 'win-win situation' of global security and prosperity for all.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.
