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Statement by H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to UN, on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries at the General Debate of the 70th Session of the Second Committee on 7 October 2015

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries. We align ourselves with the statement of Group of 77 and China.

2. First of all, let me congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Second Committee. We also take this opportunity to congratulate the Members of the Bureau. This important committee will have a very busy session this year, working on the ways and means of implementation of the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that was adopted by our leaders a few days ago. We all will have to engage in intense discussions to ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals and Targets adopted on 25 September 2015 translates into specific actions that are tangible, implementable, and more importantly benefit the billions of people of this planet. The Group of LDCs will be with you and your colleagues in the Bureau in that endeavor.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of LDCs is a long established category of the most vulnerable countries, and they deserve most focused attention from the international community in their individual and collective efforts to graduate from this category. The differential and preferential treatment for LDCs must be maintained for the benefit of all countries of the world, because, Mr. Chairman, we cannot achieve sustainable development universally when LDCs are left behind.

4. In that context, Mr. Chairman, the LDCs would like to draw the attention of the UN Member States to the historic roadmap called the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA). Full and effective implementation of the IPoA by all stakeholders – the LDCs, development partners, the UN system and all other stakeholders – will ensure that the target envisioned in that document – halving the number of LDCs by 2020 - is achieved.

5. For building a solid economic foundation and to get LDCs into the global development path, it is of utmost importance to improve their productive capacity including industrialization,

diversification and infrastructure development. It is also imperative to enhance global partnerships to address the structural challenges faced by LDCs to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth. We appreciate the support by our development partners in our efforts in this regard, and urge them to enhance their assistance to LDCs in these areas.

6. There are of course several aspects and angles of productive capacity building. Trade plays a catalytic role. LDCs reiterate that duty-free quota-free market access of all products from all LDCs to all developed countries, as well as developing countries who are in positions to provide so, are important for strengthening the economic performance of LDCs. Aid for Trade should also be further strengthened to enhance the participation of LDCs in the global value chain. To realize the potential of trade as an enabler of poverty reduction and job creation, LDCs should be supported to double their global share of export by 2020. It is also important to support the full integration of LDCs into the global trading system. In this regard, capacity building and technical assistance should be strengthened to the WTO acceding LDCs to facilitate their accession process based on their level and needs of economic development. Building on the IPoA and Addis commitment, we call for at least 50 per cent share of the aid for trade going to LDCs. Full implementation of the Bali Package is vitally important. We are keenly looking forward to the 10th WTO Ministerial Meeting to make further progress in these areas.

7. Access to and utilization of modern technologies and building domestic capacities for innovation are vitally important for ensuring that LDCs are effectively merged into the global technology highway. In this regard, we look forward to operationalization, by the current session of the UNGA, of the Technology Bank and Science, Technology and Innovation Supporting Mechanism, as decided in the IPoA, and later endorsed by the 68th and 69th sessions of the UNGA. Provisions of adequate funding from all sources would be key to success of the Technology Bank.

Mr. Chairman,

8. The LDCs also would like to reiterate the importance of establishing an International Investment Support Center for LDCs. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda provides a solid platform on which we can start building. LDCs will work closely with development partners, Members of the G77 and the UN Secretariat to operationalize the center.

9. It is also important to establish a crisis mitigation and resilience building fund for LDCs to ensure sustainability of their hard-earned development gains. As has been proven again and again, the LDCs are extremely vulnerable to external shocks – ranging from public health emergencies and natural disasters to stock market fluctuations in the developed world. The resilience fund is a necessity to protect the LDCs from all these crises, which are realities in today's world. It is imperative that Member States work together on this issue, and agree on a mechanism that will be meaningful and effective in addressing the challenges faced by LDCs.

Mr. Chairman,

10. Official development assistance continues to play a critical role in development efforts of many LDCs. We are deeply concerned that ODA to LDCs continues to fall for couple of years in a row. This needs to be reversed. We are thankful to the development partners who have reaffirmed their collective commitment to meet the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their GNI as ODA to least developed countries in the short term, and to disburse 0.20 per cent of GNI as ODA to least developed countries within the time frame of the Agenda 2030. Let me also flag the provisions of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda that encourage ODA providers to consider setting the target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of GNI as ODA to least developed countries. Without predictable and increased ODA, LDCs will find it impossible to achieve sustainable development. We also call upon those developing countries, which are in a position to do so, to help LDCs in their development efforts, while recognizing that this support does not substitute for North-South support mechanisms.

11. Climate change is a question of life and death for many LDCs. COP21 in Paris provides the best opportunity to agree on a deal that can save our lives, livelihoods and the planet. We are looking forward to an ambitious deal coming out from COP21.

12. Finally, Mr. Chairman, let me reassure you of the constructive engagement and support of the LDCs in the works of this important committee. It is on all of us to implement the agenda that is for the benefit for the peoples and the planet, and LDCs will not shy away from their responsibility in this regard. To ensure that we have a pro-poor, pro-planet, sustainable, inclusive, peaceful development path where no one is left behind, Mr. Chairman, you will have the Group of the Least Developed Countries by your side.

I thank you.
