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**Statement by H.E. Dr. A. K. Abdul Momen, Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Bangladesh at UN, on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, at Second Committee on agenda item 23: Groups of countries in special situations  
Conference Room 2, UNHQ, 29 October 2015**

Mr. Chair,

Thank you for giving me the floor.

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of 48 Least Developed Countries. We align ourselves with the statement made by the delegation of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. At the outset, let me thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the groups of countries in special situation. We would like to express our thanks to Under-Secretary-General Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya and his team at the UN-OHRLS for their substantive and continued support to the least developed countries.

3. The Member States are all aware of the fact that the least developed countries are the poorest, weakest and most marginalized segment of the international community. These countries are constrained by low per capita income, low level of human development, and high vulnerability to economic and natural shocks. These countries unquestionably deserve most focused attention of the international community in their individual and collective development efforts. It can safely be said that without the development of LDCs, the global aim of sustainable development where 'no one is left behind' will remain a myth only.

4. The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) provides the detailed roadmap for reaching the target of halving the number of LDCs by 2020. Full and effective implementation of the IPoA by all stakeholders is essential for reaching this ambitious yet achievable goal.

Mr. Chair,

5. ODA is still the largest source of development finance for many LDCs. It is a matter of grave concern that instead of increase, the ODA to LDCs has fallen by 15 per cent in 2014, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General. This needs to be reversed immediately. We call upon the development partners to fulfil their ODA commitments of providing 0.15-0.20 per cent of their GNI to LDCs. Let us also remind ourselves that in Addis Ababa, our leaders encouraged ODA providers to set the target of 0.20 per cent of their GNI as ODA to LDCs. We appreciate the development partners who have committed to disburse 0.20 per cent of their GNI as ODA to least developed countries by 2030. We also call upon developing countries to assist LDCs in their development efforts, while recognizing that this support complements and does not substitute North-South support mechanisms.

6. Trade plays a catalytic role in strengthening the productive capacity of LDCs, and it can play the role of engine for development. Unfortunately, LDCs' share in the global trade which was around 1 per cent in early 1970s has been stagnating around 1 per cent after four decades although the number of LDC countries almost doubled. LDCs reiterate that duty-free quota-free market access of all products from all LDCs to all developed countries is important for strengthening the economic performance of LDCs. Developing countries who are in a position to provide so, are also urged to provide duty-free quota-free market access to products from LDCs. Aid for Trade can play an important role 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. In this regard, we call for at least 50 per cent share of the aid for trade going to LDCs. Preferential and simplified rules of origin that will contribute meaningfully to market access by LDCs are essential for fulfilling the commitments of the LDC package of Bali WTO Ministerial Meeting. WTO acceding LDCs need support in the area of capacity building for their accession process based on their level and needs of economic development. We are keenly looking forward to the 10<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Meeting to make further progress in these areas.

Mr. Chair,

7. The high vulnerability of least developed countries to economic, natural and environmental shocks and disasters, as well as climate change are exacerbated by the different natural and man-made crises. Ebola epidemic in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea; devastating earthquake in Nepal and recently in Afghanistan, floods in Myanmar and cyclone Pam in Vanuatu are some of the recent examples of the calamities destroying the already vulnerable economies and infrastructure of LDCs. We

need to undertake necessary measures in building the resilience of LDCs to withstand various kinds of shocks and crises. Least developed countries also suffer from heavy debt and volatile debt scenarios.

8. The difficult situations faced by many least developed countries in terms of external debt need to be urgently addressed by ensuring debt sustainability, including through cancellation of multilateral and bilateral debts owed by LDCs, and through provision of concessional funding, including grants. Least developed countries are also victims of financial recessions in the developed countries, without being involved in the process. The continued impact of recessions on the LDCs is a clear indication that the call made by developing countries, including LDCs, to developed countries that their economic policies be formulated having in mind its negative effects on poor countries have not been fully heeded. We reiterate this call. To absorb and overcome all these crises and economic external shocks, it is important to have a resilience fund for least developed countries. LDCs will also need international assistance in all priority action areas highlighted in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Reduction.

9. 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 that will help least developed countries.

Mr. Chair,

10. LDCs would like to express their appreciation to the members of the High-level Panel of the Secretary-General for undertaking the feasibility study on the Technology Bank for LDCs, and for providing with their positive recommendation. The panel has provided details regarding the technology bank including its functions, governance, staffing, linkage with the UN and possible sources of funding. We therefore invite the Secretary-General to undertake necessary steps for operationalizing the Technology Bank during the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNGA, as stipulated by the General Assembly during its 68<sup>th</sup> and 69<sup>th</sup> Sessions. We call upon the development partners to provide necessary financial support for the operationalization of the technology bank. We thank UN-OHRLLS for its secretariat support to the High-level Panel and look forward to its continued support to the operationalization of the Technology Bank.

11. The LDCs also would like to flag the importance of establishing an International Investment Support Center for LDCs. In this regard, we can build on the platform of The

Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We seek support and positive engagement of all stakeholders for this center.

Mr. Chair,

12. The IPoA sets an ambitious objective of enabling half of LDCs reach the stage of graduation by 2020. While LDCs are trying their best, development partners should provide adequate support to LDCs in achieving this objective in a timely manner. Graduation is an important milestone in the development trajectory of a country. However, for a win-win situation for all, both developed and developing countries, development partners should continue their support to especially to an LDC even after graduation with a view to ensuring the achievement of the SDGs and stabilization, which are much wider than reaching the graduation threshold.

13. LDCs recognize that a number of key priorities and challenges of this Group have been addressed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We believe, strong synergy and coherence among the implementation of the IPoA, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and 2030 Agenda is essential. It is needless to say that the LDCs require increased and strengthened support to secure coordinated implementation and coherent follow-up of the IPoA, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda. UN system organizations, especially the Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, need to further strengthen their support to LDCs. Therefore, OHRLLS needs to be adequately resourced.

Mr. Chair,

14. The Comprehensive High-level Mid-term review is critically important for LDCs for stock taking, and for charting the future path for development plans of LDCs. We want to see a comprehensive outcome coming out of the Mid-term review that provides strong impetus to the realization of the existing initiatives and commitments and launch concrete and specific global initiatives and measures, building on the decisions contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcome of the COP21 of the UNFCCC. We are ready and willing to constructively engage with our partners in the negotiations.

15. Finally, Mr. Chair, if we are looking for a world without hunger and poverty, if we are aiming at a world of pro-people, pro-planet, more equitable, more inclusive, more peaceful and sustainable world for all where no one is left behind, a win-win situation

for all of humanity – the differential and preferential or affirmative treatment for LDCs in all critical areas must be upheld and maintained for the benefit of all countries of the world, rich and poor. Let me conclude with a quote from our Nobel Laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore and I quote in Bangla: “Jare tumi niche felo, she tomay tanichhe je niche, poshchate rekhechho jare, she tomare poshchate tanichhe”. It means, those whom you are putting down, are sure to pull you down, and down further. Mr. Chair, those that will be neglected and left behind are sure to pull you down.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.

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