

**Statement of His Excellency Mr. Masud Bin Momen, Permanent Representative of
Bangladesh to the United Nations on behalf of LDCs in the Second Committee on
Follow up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries
under Agenda item no. 22(a)
UNHQs, New York, 19 October 2016**

Thank you, Mr. Chair

1. I deliver this statement on behalf of the 48 least developed countries. We align ourselves with the statement made by Thailand on behalf of the G77 and China.
2. We thank Secretary General for his analytical report on the "Implementation of the Programme of Actions for the Least Developed Countries for the decade 2011-2020". This report provides us with a comprehensive picture of the challenges faced by the LDCs and efforts made towards sustainable development in those countries.
3. The IPOA represents a shared vision and the common aspirations of LDCs and their development partners based on commitments, accountability and partnership. It recognized that LDCs as the most vulnerable group of countries need effective national policies, enhanced global support and appropriate mechanisms at all levels for the achievement of the Programme of Action. The 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction recognize the vulnerabilities of the LDCs and in doing so complement the spirit of the IPOA.
4. The LDCs are making serious efforts to implement the IPOA and other internationally agreed development agenda. Their performance in attaining the MDGs was impressive. In 2014, 12 LDCs reached the GDP growth rate of 7% or more in line with IPOA. The number of Internet users per 100 people almost doubled, from 4.4 per cent in 2010 to 8.6% in 2014. There have been several initiatives to enhance transport networks in both Asia and Africa. The share of air freight of least developed countries in world transport has almost doubled, from 0.47 per cent in 2010 to 0.81 per cent in 2014. Access to electricity in least developed countries also increased slightly, from 31.5 per cent of the population having access in 2010 to 34.5 per cent in 2012. There has been some improvement in creating an enabling environment for the private sector in the LDCs. 11 LDCs are ranked among the top 100 for starting a business.
5. However, the pace of development has been slow and uneven. Many LDCs could not achieve most of the MDGs. Some LDCs saw sharp decline in GDP growth in 2014 as a result of extreme weather events, a drop in commodity prices and regional security challenges. There still remain significant obstacles to structural transformation. The share of manufacturing in least developed countries in the period 2011-2014 remained stagnant when only three LDCs, Bangladesh, Comoros and Angola significantly increased the share of manufacturing in GDP. When the LDCs are predominantly dependent on agriculture for their economic growth, it is discouraging to hear that the average share of value added in agriculture as a percentage of GDP has declined from 25.4 per cent in 2001-2010 to 23.7 per cent in 2011-2014. Almost all least developed countries are food deficit countries. With respect to science, technology and innovation, LDCs are lagging behind in all aspects.

6. While the percentage of exports from least developed countries in relation to total world exports almost doubled between 2001 and 2010, progress has been slow thereafter, with least developed countries accounting for roughly 1.1 per cent of the world's exports in 2014, slightly declining from 2013, mainly as a result of the decline in commodity prices. Exports from least developed countries also remained highly concentrated, with almost 70 per cent of merchandise exports depending on three main products in 2014 (composition varies between countries). In respect of FDI, less than 2% of the global FDI have been directed to the LDCs.

7. Despite many discouraging facts continuing to exist, LDCs are gradually meeting graduation criteria. Only 3 countries, Botswana, Cabo Verde and Maldives, had graduated up to 2011. Samoa graduated in January 2014. We are happy to see that now 10 additional least developed countries had reached the graduation thresholds in March 2015.

Mr. Chair,

8. The Mid-Term Review of the IPOA held in May this year rightly affirmed that speedy progress in the LDCs would require a holistic as well as multi-stakeholder approach, strong political commitment to implementation and follow-up and monitoring. Let me highlight a few points here that needs to be taken into account for the progress of the LDCs:

First: There is no alternative to strengthening partnership at the global level for enhancing productive capacity building in the LDCs. Much higher investment is required for the LDCs to bridge the gaps in infrastructure, skill development, women empowerment, employment generation, ICT and access to energy. Efforts are to be stepped up to make technology available to the LDCs. We look forward to the adoption of the draft Charter of the Technology Bank in 2016 and its operationalization. We call upon all stakeholders for their generous contributions in this regard. We thank Turkey for hosting the Technology Bank.

Second: Development partners must fulfill their ODA commitments to LDCs. We are encouraged to see that a few countries have met or even surpassed their commitment to 0.7 per cent of GNI for ODA and the target of 0.15 to 0.20% of GNI for ODA to the LDCs. Similarly, in the trade sector, LDC products must have duty-free and quota-free access to the markets of other countries, particularly the developed ones.

Third: LDCs have limited capacity to face vulnerability posed by climate change, disasters and outbreak of life threatening diseases. There must be strong international support for the LDCs to strengthen their resilience by mitigating risks and adapting to challenges.

Fourth: The 71st UNGA will deliberate on the 2016 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR). The QCPR should reflect the key priorities of LDCs contained in the IPOA and 2030 Agenda. It should support LDCs in a unified and targeted approach, cutting across sectors and pillars of the work of the United Nations.

Fifth: The global financial, economic and trade institutions and other global rule-making bodies needs to be more inclusive of the LDCs and more responsive to their concerns and aspirations. There have to be additional sources of financing and tailored programmes and initiatives for their progress in different productive sectors.

Sixth: In the framework of the South-South Cooperation, the countries of the South must extend support to the LDCs to implement the IPOA and the 2030 Agenda as a complement to North-South cooperation.

Mr. Chair,

9. The graduation of even one LDC to the Middle Income Country category is a testament to the success of the endeavours made by the UN not to leave anyone behind.

I thank you for your attention.