**Press Release**

**Thematic Discussion on LDC-5 PrepCom-1**

**Bold, innovative, improved and coordinated support measures are required to ensure sustainable graduation - Ambassador Rabab Fatima**

**New York, 26 May 2021:**

To ensure the sustainability of the graduating and the graduated countries we need bold, innovative, improved and coordinated support measures from the development partners, United Nations system, and other international and regional organizations, said the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the UN, Ambassador Rabab Fatima. She was speaking at the virtual thematic discussion on LDC5 PrepCom entitled, ‘Towards Improved Support to Graduating and Graduated Countries’ as the Chair held in New York today. The discussion event was organized by the Permanent Mission of Bangladesh, the United Nations Committee for Development Policy (UN-CDP) and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS).

Highlighting the tremendous challenges faced by the graduating and the graduated countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ambassador Fatima Said, “It is highly important to ensure Sustainable Graduation Support facility (SGSF), especially in trade, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and financing for those LDCs.”

She urged the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) to strive hard and come up with some concrete ideas for SGSF to ensure the sustainability of the graduation and to prevent any slide back on this trajectory.

Ambassador Fatima, Co-Chair of the LDC5 PrepCom, expressed her hope that the ongoing PrepCom will play a pivotal role in the lead up to the LDC5 Conference in Qatar in 2022. She further added that the international community and development partners should take appropriate supportive measures for the graduating and the graduated countries especially in view of the additional challenges brought on by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Participating in the event, Directors of UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP), Dr. Debapriya Bhattacharya and Mr. Taffere Tesfachew provided deep insights and expert advice on the enhanced monitoring mechanism by the CDP and the working methodology of the SGSF.

Mr. Mohamed Aslam, Minister of National Planning, Housing and Infrastructure of the Maldives and Mr. Gregoire Nimbtik, Director General, Prime Minister’s Office of Vanuatu both discussed the experiences and challenges of graduation in their countries.

Director, UN-OHRLLS and Chair, IATF, Deputy Head of Unit of EU Commission, Deputy Secretary General of ITU, UN Resident Coordinators in Bangladesh, Lao PDR and Djibouti; representatives of the Permanent Mission of Lao PDR, Nepal and Bhutan spoke at the event, among others. A large number of diplomats from UN members States, representatives of UN and others international agencies also participated the thematic discussion.

The week-long preparatory committee meeting of the LDC5 conference commenced on 24 May in New York and will be concluded on 28th May 2021.

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