

REMARKS BY
HIS EXCELLENCY DR. TOGA GAYEWEA MCINTOSH
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
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MR. PRESIDENT
EXCELLENCIES,
DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I am pleased to be in this picturesque city of Istanbul which is uniquely placed as a bridge between two continents. I wish to extend sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government and people of Turkey for the very kind courtesies extended me and members of my delegation since our arrival here. We also want to thank the Government of Turkey for hosting this Conference. We wish to express our appreciation and commend the Secretary General of the Conference and his collaborators for the excellent organization of the Conference.

Forty years ago, the United Nations classified 25 countries as least developed and needing special attention and help. We have gathered here today four decades later to review progress made by the countries which found themselves as the weakest and poorest in the global space. We have also come to adopt action program to fight against poverty and structural deficiencies in these countries.

Today the ranks of the LDCs have swollen to 48. Countries find themselves coping with situations that threaten not only their own fragile existence but also situations that challenge the stability of the whole world, including hunger, poverty, climate change, environmental degradation, terrorism, conflict, refugees and migration. It is indeed difficult to be hopeful against such a tapestry of daunting challenges, reinforced by non-stop images of strife and turmoil across our world. Though difficult, our choice is limited. We must act, and the action must be now!

We have been reminded again and again in high level interactive sessions at this Conference that the solution to breaking out of our poverty trap in the LDCs lies in our own hands. The success of what we do or what we need to do lies squarely in our hands. The success of what we do also lies in the hands of our development partners. The key to unleash the abundant stored up potentials on our side and opportunities within the world and apply them effectively is right within our grasps.

In this context, I agree with those who cite the critical need for the building of a coordinated and harmonized political will. Policy makers, decision makers and program executioners must have the necessary political will to organize and mobilize requisite resources to move the development process forward on a sustained basis. It should be a shared political will; a will that must find a useful place in our Istanbul

Declaration. Doing business as we have always done will continue to give us sub-optimum results.

As was rightly argued by the Managing Director of the World Bank, it is now imperative for both LDCs and partners to think outside of the box and seek, and embark upon unconventional measures. It is now time for us to think and act anew and in a more innovative way to optimize development results.

As I conclude my brief remarks, I would like to table a critical advice for our collective reflection as we leave Istanbul. There is the need for us to keep in view always the essence and requirements of the Istanbul Program of Action. It is important for us, members of the LDC family, to own up to the program and be willing and able to lead the fight against our common structural challenge. It is also important for us as partners to ensure that within the frame and context of the Istanbul Program of

Action, resources mobilized be strategically used to give the greatest returns and maximum results.

Here, we are talking about ensuring effective partnership. We are talking about the appropriate targeting and the allocation of the limited available resources relative to rising demands for development resources. Our willing partners will have to deliver what has been promised and we, the members of the LDCs, have to equally make good on what we are given. This, together translate into effective partnership. Partnership with a strong and ultimate focus on awarding graduation certificates to the “poorest and weakest segment” of our global community.

I thank you for your kind attention.