

STATEMENT

**by the First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation
Mr. Andrey Denisov
at the Fourth United Nations Conference
on Least Developed Countries**

(11 May 2011, Istanbul)

Mr. Chairman,

First of all, I would like to thank the Turkish Government for the excellent organization of the Conference and warm welcome.

This Conference is one of the key events for the UN in 2011 in the area of development. It is intended to become an important step in the mobilizing efforts of the international community aimed at overcoming social and economic difficulties that the least developed countries (LDCs) are facing.

We welcome the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action. This document seems to have significant added value as compared to the Brussels Programme for 2001-2010. The international architecture of development assistance has changed over the past decade. The Istanbul Programme offers a new concept of the global partnership for the benefit of LDCs. It singles out priority areas of activities, both for the countries of this category and for the development partners, which within their existing capacity, help LDCs in poverty eradication and in solution of other social problems.

We believe that the Istanbul Programme adequately reflects modern challenges that the LDCs are facing. It clearly states their needs and main priorities in ensuring sustainable economic growth and structural transformation of economies and fighting poverty.

It is true? That LDC economies are highly vulnerable to external shocks. The global financial crisis, aggravated by challenges in the field of global energy, climate change and food security, threatens the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by countries which are in a specific position due to their historic background or geographical situation,

Russia, as a new, emerging donor, takes practical steps aimed at rendering assistance to the LDCs, first of all through increased financing of international cooperation programs under the auspices of the UN and within the G8 and G20 frameworks.

Our country reaffirms its commitment to international development cooperation and to constructive interaction with a broad range of partners, including private sector and civil society, with the aim of timely achieving the MDGs throughout the world.

Russia seeks to enhance its contribution to the development assistance, in particular for the benefit of the LDCs. Over the last three or four years, the average yearly volume of Russian development aid has been maintained at the level of \$400 million, without taking into account written-off debts whose volume over the ten years that have passed since the Brussels Summit amounted to billions of dollars.

Mr. Chairman,

The UN MDG Summit held in New York in September 2010 has become a milestone in the implementation of the global social and economic agenda. It confirmed the leading role of the UN as the main international forum for collective decision-making and elaboration of standards for multilateral cooperation for development.

The agenda on the achievement of the MDGs set out in the Summit Outcome Document provides for the implementation by all the countries of

their commitments concerning financing for development and effective use of aid.

In order to achieve the MDGs it is important to overcome negative consequences of the global financial and economic crisis and climate change. Global anti-crisis efforts must be fully aligned with the priorities of international economic, humanitarian and environmental cooperation set forth by major UN fora.

The global crisis has brought about, as a tangible consequence, decline in income and reduction of food consumption by the poor, which is primarily true for the least developed countries. Russia consistently increases financing of food assistance programmes. In 2010, Russia's annual contribution to the WFP grew up to \$20 million, which, taking into account ad hoc emergency assistance, totaled \$30 million.

Russia contributes also to building international trade capacity of the LDCs. Special preferences are applied for imports from those countries, thus promoting exports of their traditional national industries, crafts and agriculture. Moreover, Russia supports LDCs by contributing \$50 million to the World Bank's Vulnerability Financing Facility in 2009-2011.

The Russian Federation reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and goals of the Almaty Programme of Action on addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries. We seek to facilitate its implementation and propose comprehensive measures for developing transport operations in the Eurasian space.

We are convinced that the international community should join efforts in assisting least developed countries to enable their immature economies not only to withstand the current complex environment, but also develop at a sustainable pace. The main pre-requisite for that is to create conditions for the LDCs to strengthen their own capacity.

Sustainable development of the LDCs is an important component of the world financial and political stability. We will further support these countries, since many of their problems affect our common interests, and we intend to address them jointly with our partners.

Thank you.

Выпускающие:

(В. Гладнева)

(Ю. Зыкин)