



SOLOMON ISLANDS

STATEMENT BY

**HONOURABLE MANASSEH MAELANGA
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR HOME
AFFAIRS**

**AT THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES 9-13 MAY 2011**

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you on your election and thank through you the Government and people of Turkey for the kind hospitality accorded to my delegation and the excellent facilities provided for this Conference.

I align this statement to the statement delivered by the Hon Prime Minister of Nepal as global coordinator of the 48 LDC and Argentina as Chair of G77.

My appreciation also go to the Secretary General of the Conference, His Excellence Mr. Chieck Diarra and his team. We are equally encouraged to see the participation of parliamentarians, civil society and the private sector, here in Istanbul. All these tracks have fed into the Conference, after all the proposed Istanbul Program of Action hopefully to be adopted on Friday this week is a multi-stakeholders international framework.

Mr. President,

The new Program of Action must have the vision, ambition and courage to graduate 50% of the 48 least developed countries from their current status by 2020. It is a school of countries that for the last couple of decades have seen their numbers grow from 24 in 1971 to 48 in 2011. Sadly only three countries graduated, Botswana in 1994, Cape Verde 2007 and Maldives in 2011. This is said against the backdrop of the review of the (2001-2010) Brussels Program of Action.

Mr. President,

My presence here today is not to seek sympathy from the international community rather to create a new development path for LDCs development that recognizes their unique challenges. Istanbul framework must be a renewed, strengthened and honest partnership with the international community. A cooperation, cemented by a result oriented, forward looking and comprehensive program of action that will integrate our people more meaningfully into the global system.

Mr. President,

In presenting this statement I am mindful that negotiation on the proposed program of action is still on going. We only have three days remaining to agree on a framework that suppose to lift LDCs from extreme poverty. I note with deep concern on the lack of progress in the negotiations in the areas of trade and ODA commitments beyond 2015 .

The Istanbul program is aimed at structurally transforming LDCs economies within the next ten years. This means, investment in LDCs national productive sectors beyond 2015 with the objective of achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth.

Construction of necessary infrastructures to facilitate trade and regulations to add value and improve the supply chain of national products is a must if we are to effect the required structural transformation. A technology bank is being sought by LDCs in the program which if established is a new development that small to medium industries and communities will benefit from.

All these developments create employment. Investment in small holder farmers and renewable energies build resilience to mitigate crisis and free up foreign exchange receipts. This approach is aligned to Solomon Islands aspiration on broadening and diversifying its domestic market with the establishment of satellite growth centers around the country that encourages infant industries to take root and grow.

Mr. President,

Like finance, favorable market conditions are key deliverables in the proposed Istanbul Program of Action. Implementation of the Hong Kong Ministerial declaration, on duty free, quota free and market access for all LDC products. Much of these frameworks have not been fully utilized due to complexities relating to the rules of origin. The LDCs therefore are seeking a uniform and simplified rules of origin. My delegation remains positive that the negotiations will rise above differences and find a favorable international space for LDCs whose global trade accounts for a mere 1%.

Mr. President,

LDCs remain vulnerable to external shocks. The food, energy, and financial crisis plus the negative impact of climate change have reversed hard fought MDG gains made over the years.

In the case of climate change this is an everyday challenge for a Small Island Developing LDC. The frequency and intensity of disasters have increased over the years. Looking back at the last ten years there has never been a period when Solomon Islands was free from recovering from disasters. Whichever way we look at it, Climate change remains a threat multiplier which continue to place stress and at times reversed gains made on achieving our MDGs.

My delegation strongly support an LDC crisis facility within the proposed Istanbul Program of Action to build resilience and mitigate against these crisis.

Mr. President,

In closing, the international governance system will need to recognize LDCs special situation and provide for LDC voice, representation and a window to address its development challenges.

This is the twentieth year Solomon Islands has been part of the group. With the adoption of the proposed Istanbul Program of Action, I hope when we retrace our

journey after Istanbul, at the review session, we hope to celebrate the early harvest of the Program.

Thank you Mr. President.