



**Fourth United Nations Conference  
on the Least Developed Countries**

Distr.: General  
1 March 2011

Original: English



Istanbul, Turkey  
9-13 May 2011

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**Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee  
for the Fourth United Nations Conference  
on the Least Developed Countries**

**Second session**

New York, 4-8 April 2011

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

**Substantive preparations for the Conference**

**Summary of outcome documents of pre-Conference events**

*Summary*

The present document contains a summary of the outcome documents of the various pre-Conference events that were organized from December 2009 to March 2011.

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\* A/CONF.219/IPC/7.

## I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly decided, in its resolution 63/227, to convene the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at a high level in 2011. The Conference has the mandate to comprehensively assess the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action; share best practices and lessons learned; and identify obstacles and constraints encountered as well as actions and initiatives needed to overcome them. It will also identify new challenges and opportunities for least developed countries; reaffirm the global commitment to address the special needs of the least developed countries; and mobilize additional international support measures and actions in favour of the least developed countries. Finally, it will result in a renewed partnership between the least developed countries and their development partners.

2. It requested the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) to ensure effective, efficient and timely preparations for the Conference and to further mobilize and coordinate the active involvement of the organizations of the United Nations system. The Office of the High Representative organized four inter-agency consultative group meetings during 2009 and 2010 to coordinate the United Nations system activities in support of the preparatory process for the Conference. Forty-five United Nations system organizations participated in those meetings, which agreed on a list of pre-conference events. The present document provides the summary of recommendations of the nine thematic pre-conference events that were held between December 2009 and March 2011.

## II. Summary of the outcomes of pre-Conference events

3. The following summaries were extracted from the reports prepared by pre-conference event organizers. The full reports of those meetings are reproduced in the compilation of summaries of pre-Conference events, prepared in two parts and distributed at the first and second Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee sessions.<sup>1</sup>

### A. Impact of global economic crises on least developed countries' productive capacities and trade prospects: threats and opportunities

#### **Conference organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in cooperation with OHRLLS, and held in Vienna on 3 and 4 December 2009**

4. The discussions on economic diversification pointed unequivocally to the need for least developed countries to add value to their basic products. It was natural that moves to diversification and to industrial development should not lose sight of the need to promote agri-business as a way for countries to move up the value chain and increase productivity at each stage. For the manufacturing sector, if adding value was the way forward, an indispensable part of the equation was technology transfer.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.un.org/wcm/content/site/ldc/home>.

5. The reinsertion of industrial policy into the global economic agenda was becoming a reality after several decades of isolation. For least developed countries, this was of particular importance since the growing recognition of the need to diversify their economies called for major structural changes. This time around, however, the changes should not be wholly led by Governments; rather, they should be led in equal partnership with the private sector. That was the direction of the new industrial policy.

6. The conference ended with the adoption of a plan of action and ministerial declaration that placed productive capacity at the centre of the least developed country development agenda.

## **B. Migration, development and remittances in the least developed countries' context**

**Seminar organized by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Population Fund and the MacArthur Foundation and in cooperation with OHRLLS, and held in New York on 17 June 2010**

7. To maximize the benefits of human capital mobility towards development and better leverage remittances contributions, the seminar stressed the need to: (a) enhance data collection; (b) maximize the benefits of human mobility; (c) facilitate transfers of migrant remittances; (d) leverage diaspora contributions; (e) enhance capacities and institutional reforms; and (f) target measures to poor and vulnerable populations.

8. The development policies of least developed countries and their development partners should be geared at encouraging circular migration, co-development measures and skills development. In order to facilitate remittance transfers, it was concluded that home and host countries should lower transaction costs and work towards channelling more remittances into productive use and private sector development activities through co-development schemes. Nevertheless, least developed countries should incorporate a coherent and holistic migration strategy as part of their overall development strategy so as not to be overly dependent on remittances.

## **C. Enhancing the mobilization of financial resources for least developed countries' development**

**Ministerial meeting organized by OHRLLS and the Government of Portugal, and held in Lisbon on 2 and 3 October 2010**

9. The meeting stressed the importance of the following actions for least developed country development: (a) domestic resource mobilization; (b) enhancing the quantity and quality of official development assistance to least developed countries; (c) attracting foreign direct investments to least developed countries' priority sectors through home country incentives; (d) tapping innovative sources of finance, including migrant remittances for least developed countries' development; (e) the creation of a special crisis mitigation and resilience-building facility for least developed countries to enable them to respond to shocks; and (f) the establishment of a "global financial safety net" for least developed countries on a permanent basis that could make a major contribution to their socio-economic development.

10. Least developed countries needed to strengthen their domestic institutions, policy processes and systems for managing financial resources, including external resources. Least developed countries and their development partners should increase their efforts for capacity-building in several areas related to the mobilization of financial resources, including the capacity for revenue collection, debt management, use of official development assistance (ODA) and use of remittances for development purposes. The development capacity of least developed countries needed to be enhanced by building necessary institutional and human capacities. In all the areas discussed, the role of developing country partners for resource mobilization for least developed countries needed to be explored further, building on positive developments over the past decade.

11. The meeting concluded that it was crucial to mobilize political support at all levels to improve resource mobilization for least developed countries' development in order to further develop the proposals discussed in Lisbon.

#### **D. Sustainable tourism development in least developed countries**

##### **Meeting of high-level experts organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and held in Caen, France, from 12 to 14 October 2010**

12. Participants highlighted the contribution of international tourism to socio-economic progress and poverty reduction in least developed countries, and made the following suggestions:

(a) At the national level, to (i) create a safe and stable enabling environment to encourage sustainable tourism development and encourage investments; (ii) mainstream sustainable tourism development in all national development strategy documents; (iii) harness product specialization and branding to strengthen market position of least developed country tourism destinations; (iv) pay more attention to the preservation of environmental assets and of natural and cultural heritages; (v) promote decent work and respect the rights of the individual in the wider tourism sector; (vi) adopt and implement investment, tourism and trade policies that support national strategies for sustainable tourism development; (vii) strengthen linkages and create synergies between tourism and other economic, environmental and cultural sectors for poverty reduction; and (viii) develop national mechanisms to support tourism enterprise viability and competitiveness.

(b) At the international level, to (i) strengthen technical and financial assistance to least developed countries in the area of sustainable tourism development, particularly for infrastructure development, product diversification, institutional capacity-building, human resources and skill development, and marketing of tourism products; (ii) encourage foreign direct investment with developmental impact to the tourism industries in least developed countries; (iii) establish a joint cooperation mechanism between least developed countries and their development partners to promote sustainable tourism in least developed countries; (iv) explore modalities of international support for the creation of national or subregional entities that will be able to extend development services to small tourism enterprises; (v) explore the possibility of creating an international venture capital fund to finance private or public investment projects in the field of tourism in least developed countries; (vi) support least developed countries' efforts to access knowledge and relevant and environmentally friendly technology to protect and develop their biodiversity,

cultural and natural heritages, and to mitigate and adapt the adverse impacts of climate change; and (vii) encourage regional or subregional integration programmes of direct relevance to sustainable tourism development for the benefit of the least developed countries.

## **E. Enhanced international support and smooth transition of least developed countries towards graduation**

### **Event organized by OHRLLS, and held in New York on 15 October 2010**

13. The presentations and ensuing interactive discussions with delegations from least developed countries and partner countries examined the reasons behind the slow progress made by least developed countries towards achieving the internationally agreed goals and graduating from the category, and suggested policy measures to make the transition from least developed country to post-least developed country life a prospect to be looked forward to.

14. It was stressed that new and concrete international support measures were urgently needed to ensure a smooth landing into post-least developed country life and reassure graduating least developed countries that their development efforts would not be suddenly disrupted. A proposal was made to ease the transition process by using the least developed country identification criteria as aid allocation criteria. That would conduce to aid allocation that would be fairer, since it would compensate for structural handicaps. Flexibility should be applied in the allocation of development financing, based on the real problems and challenges of beneficiary countries, irrespective of their status.

15. Several representatives expressed their concern regarding the lag in the implementation of the commitment to provide full duty-free and quota-free market access for least developed countries' exports. Preferential schemes, such as the European Union's Everything but Arms initiative, as strengthened by the forthcoming relaxation of applicable rules of origin, were particularly appreciated. However, it was noted that the actual utilization rate of preferential tariff treatment mattered and ultimately determined the effectiveness of the special support provided. Supply-side constraints should also receive priority attention through targeted support with a view to enhancing productive capacities in the least developed countries. Delegations highlighted the persistent structural constraints faced by the least developed countries and their extreme vulnerability to external and internal shocks, including the negative impact of climate change. These constraints should all be taken into account when designing support measures for least developed countries, including "smooth transition" measures. The international community was called on to fully implement the Brussels Programme of Action official development assistance commitments. The special needs of geographically disadvantaged least developed countries, such as small island and landlocked least developed countries, were also highlighted given their high economic and environmental vulnerability, smallness and remoteness from international markets.

## **F. Building productive capacities in least developed countries for inclusive and sustainable development**

### **Event organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and held in Geneva from 27 to 29 October 2010**

16. The development of productive capacities in least developed countries was viewed as critically important in order to reduce their structural weaknesses, promote sustainable growth, enhance their beneficial participation in international trade and achieve substantial poverty reduction. The best approach to developing productive capacities in the least developed countries would be an integrated policy approach encompassing national policies, international policies and South-South development cooperation. Least developed countries themselves, in cooperation with the private sector and civil society, should take the lead in devising targeted and coherently articulated national policies to promote productive capacity development adopting a mixed economy approach for strategy implementation in which markets and the State worked hand-in-hand. These national efforts should be vigorously backed up with enhanced international support mechanisms and development-friendly global economic regimes, and also supported through enhanced South-South development cooperation between least developed countries and other developing countries, and among least developed countries.

17. The view was expressed that unrealized opportunities for enhanced international support mechanisms for least developed countries to promote the development of productive capacities existed in the areas of (a) development aid, debt relief and contingency finance; (b) trade; (c) commodities; (d) investment; (e) technology; and (f) trade logistics. In realizing those opportunities, attention had to be paid to the challenges of climate change adaptation and mitigation. The ownership by the least developed countries of the process of developing their productive capacities was paramount and should not be undermined by the delivery of international support. Moreover, voice and representation in international decision-making was the key to ensuring that both least developed country-specific international measures and global economic regimes were least developed country-development friendly. Enhanced South-South development cooperation should also promote the development of productive capacities.

## **G. Trade and development in the least developed countries: the Aid for Trade Facilitation Agenda**

### **Meeting organized by the Development Research Group of the World Bank in cooperation with OHRLLS, and held in Geneva on 13 December 2010**

18. Among the issues raised in presentations and discussion were: (a) the importance of investment in data, research and analytical tools on aid effectiveness and trade, especially in regard to the least developed countries. New approaches to knowledge products and partnerships tailored to the least developed countries on aid effectiveness and trade were needed, and the World Bank and other institutions could assist in that; (b) the need for increased coordination between the least developed country agenda and other multilateral development agendas, including that of the Group of Twenty (G-20) and of emerging economies. Duty-free, quota-free market access for least developed countries was considered a key component of

increased coordination; (c) the need for least developed countries to take a more proactive approach in making the World Trade Organization's system of enforcement mechanisms work to their advantage. That included the full implementation of existing commitments and enhanced monitoring of commitment enforcement; (d) natural resource endowments present a significant opportunity and potential source of income for least developed countries in the coming decade. In order to maximize the development potential that accompany those endowments, careful investment and capacity-building strategies are critical; (e) the small size of most least developed country markets makes economic integration critical to ensuring competitiveness and increased private sector investment and, in that regard, public-private partnerships are a key tool in informing country integration strategies; (f) the private sector, which now represents important components of business development strategies, has an increasingly important stake in ensuring that least developed countries are fully integrated into global value chains.

19. As part of its contribution to the process of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the World Bank presented a proposal for a new Aid for Trade Effectiveness Research Partnership to assist least developed countries in benefiting from trade-related research, data and knowledge. The proposed partnership would call for coordination on research to improve trade aid effectiveness for the least developed countries in a post-financial crisis environment. It would build on the World Bank's new Open Data, Open Knowledge, Open Solutions Initiative.

## **H. Enhancing food security through agricultural development and access to food and nutrition**

### **Event organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in cooperation with OHRLLS, and held in New York on 16 December 2010**

20. The view was expressed that effective mechanisms for enhancing food security through agricultural development and improved access to food and nutrition in least developed countries involved measures over the long term that had to be addressed at both the national and international levels in order to boost sustainable investment, innovation and productivity. In the short term, social safety nets and bilateral food-related development assistance were important in ensuring that sufficient food was available to the poorest households. Assistance to poor smallholder farmers to boost production was critical. At the international level, preparing a coordinated global response to global speculation in food prices was another urgent task. That should include measures to allow concerted government intervention in food markets if there was a strong indication that speculation was driving prices. International coordination could help minimize the potentially dangerous implications of food hoarding and restrictions or bans on food exports. Producer-consumer cooperation schemes, and schemes that promote integrated agricultural production should be reviewed and, if possible, modified or new schemes developed to respond to emerging challenges faced by least developed countries.

21. A medium-term priority was to address the under-capitalization that limits food production and productivity in least developed countries. Inexpensive and reliable credit for small farmers and enhanced public investment in infrastructure and irrigation were therefore important. With greater public and private investment

in agriculture and rural development, including in agricultural research and development, least developed country smallholder farmers could improve their own nutrition and incomes and contribute to national food security and economic growth. Another priority was to reduce long-standing agricultural export subsidies and domestic support policies in developed countries, which had hurt agriculture in least developed countries. In the long term, raising agricultural productivity in least developed countries was crucial in addressing the substantial increase of both food consumption and land use for non-food purposes. Least developed countries had to design a policy framework that would create the right incentives for investment in agriculture and define the appropriate mix between food and export crops. They had to provide the necessary infrastructure and extension services and calibrate their national trade policies to promote agriculture production; eliminate non-tariff and other barriers to agricultural trade and investment; and provide better training and knowledge to farmers and other actors along the value chain. At the international level, those efforts had to be supported through increased ODA and investment in appropriate infrastructure and agricultural research and development, and by removing distortions in the international agricultural market.

## **I. Policy dialogue on promoting democratic governance for least developed country development: towards a more inclusive, responsive and capable State**

### **Event organized by the United Nations Development Programme in cooperation with OHRRLLS, and held in Geneva on 8 December 2010**

22. Governance and growth were considered necessary for a more inclusive development and crucial to ensure the ownership of development processes by least developed countries themselves. There was a strong focus on the need to ensure gender equality, and women's empowerment, as neglecting women's role had severely undermined the social, political and economic progress of many societies. At the same time, it was also argued that governance alone could not be the solution for development and poverty reduction. The effects of globalization, climate change, investment in the agricultural sectors, and re-examining the framework of development aid had to be taken into account also. It was underlined that the principles underpinning national governance were equally important at the global level, thus the demand for greater voice and participation of least developed countries in international forums. Within the international context, South-South cooperation was seen as a key lever and resource, and one that had been underutilized as an approach within the realm of governance. At the national level, accountability and transparency of the State were deemed to be extremely significant both vis-à-vis financial accountability and Government's accountability towards its citizens.

23. It was also highlighted that typologies of countries mattered, and the specificities of countries had to be addressed adequately. This was particularly pertinent in the context of countries in, or emerging from, crisis, and being aware and addressing the root causes of conflict and poverty were seen to be extremely important. Suggestions articulated the need for the next programme of action to address the maturing of democratic governance in different contexts.



24. Issues related to women's active participation, strengthening the role of the media and civil society, ensuring that Parliaments are able to fulfil their oversight role, ensuring equitable service delivery, and ensuring accountability and transparency in public processes were highlighted in particular. South-South cooperation needed to be given a more important role for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. There was a need for more policy space for least developed countries to ensure a more effective form of governance and political leadership to enable the promotion of a strong developmental State.

## **J. Science, technology and innovation: setting priorities, shaping and implementing policies for least developed countries**

### **Meeting organized by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TUBITAK) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in cooperation with OHRLLS, and held in Istanbul on 7 and 8 February 2011**

25. The meeting noted that the previous Programmes of Action for the least developed countries had not addressed the issue of science, technology and innovation sufficiently and that it was precisely in that area where the new Programme of Action could make a real impact regarding the development of least developed countries. It was noted that the lack of science, technology and innovation capabilities was both a cause and an effect of being least developed and that least developed countries were characterized by unarticulated knowledge systems, lack of sufficient entrepreneurial activities and under-resourced institutions.

26. The meeting agreed that institutional change was required for upgrading knowledge systems and production capabilities in least developed countries and that it was necessary to establish a favourable and enabling environment to facilitate acquisition and adaptation of technology. The promotion of entrepreneurship that could transform innovative ideas into products and processes, as well as an enhanced science, technology and innovation focus in education policy, were mentioned as elements crucial to technology-integrating development in least developed countries. The meeting also agreed that a substantial increase of the share of science, technology and innovation in ODA was necessary and that ODA would have to be channelled to address underinvestment of activities related to science, technology and innovation in least developed countries. The idea of a Global Facility for science, technology and innovation development in least developed countries was broached with the aim to help least developed countries access and absorb critical technologies. Such a centre could bring together existing bilateral and international organizations and related programmes and initiatives and tailor them to the needs of least developed countries and act as a clearing house for technology transfer on concessional terms. The Government of Turkey offered to host such a facility in Istanbul.

## **K. Building a knowledge base for innovation and creativity to promote development**

### **Conference forum organized by the World Intellectual Property Organization, and held in Geneva on 14 and 15 February 2011**

27. The main objective of the forum was to provide an opportunity to summarize the conclusions of the regional forums and facilitate discussions with a view to finalizing and identifying the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) deliverables to be submitted for the consideration of ministers at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The keynote addresses and the message noted with appreciation the various WIPO tools for accessing technical and scientific information for technological capacity-building. They commended the new approach initiated by the Director General of WIPO, which brought together development partners, especially international organizations, to promote a balanced IP system that would help least developed countries achieve their development goals. It was acknowledged that the approach of the Director General of WIPO offered a new alternative for development, using innovation and creativity as a tool for tackling problems related to technological capacity-building and the overall development problems of least developed countries.

28. The ministers and participants strongly recommended that the following WIPO deliverables should be presented at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries for consideration and approval by ministers: (a) intellectual property and innovation policies and strategies; (b) enhanced human technical skills; (c) improved access to knowledge and strengthened knowledge infrastructure; (d) establishment of technology and innovation support centres; (e) strategic use of branding; (f) national capacity-building based on needs assessment; and (g) enhanced support for documentation digitization, protection and commercialization of IP assets, including Traditional Knowledge, Traditional Cultural Expressions and Genetic Resources.

## **L. Harnessing the positive contribution of South-South cooperation for least developed countries' development**

### **Ministerial meeting organized by the Government of India in collaboration with OHRLLS, and held on 18 and 19 February 2011**

29. At the meeting, the Government of India announced additional support measures to least developed countries, including (a) an additional five scholarships every year for each least developed country; (b) a special fund of \$5 million over the next five years for the follow-up to the Istanbul Programme of Action; and (c) a \$500 million credit line facility over the next five years for least developed countries.

30. There had been a broad consensus that South-South cooperation is a vital force in the world economic landscape. During the last two decades substantial changes had taken place at the global level in the control and distribution of resources and in the capabilities and needs of countries. High and sustained growth rates in larger developing countries, particularly Brazil, China, India and South Africa, made those countries the centre of the new geography of international trade — as producers, traders and consumers in global markets. The unprecedented and growing

complementarities among countries of the South had created a “complementarity-competitiveness” continuum. It was underscored that a South-South cooperation strategy focusing on a number of key thrust areas, identified for and by least developed countries in the new draft Programme of Action, should be considered favourably in order to further consolidate and expand the transformation taking place in South-South trade, investment and economic cooperation.

#### **M. Reducing vulnerability due to climate change, climate variability and extremes, land degradation and biodiversity loss: challenges and opportunities for least developed countries**

##### **Meeting organized by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in cooperation with OHRLLS, and held in New York on 28 February 2011**

31. The meeting observed the slow progress in assisting least developed countries in strengthening their adaptive capacity and reducing vulnerability to climate change and related environmental stresses, while noting progress in planning in many areas which must now be put into action. The need for more adequate, predictable and accessible funding was highlighted, along with the need to coordinate implementation at the national level across the Conventions and related programmes. The meeting also raised the need for a joint technical expert group or task force that would advise and support least developed countries in implementing the three Rio Conventions and related programmes, including those addressing disasters, climate variability, food security and resilience building.

32. The following goals were identified as emerging priorities for least developed countries in reducing their vulnerability to environmental stresses over the next decade: (a) strengthen the human and institutional capacities of least developed countries, and provide adequate financial resources and technologies to least developed countries to reduce vulnerability to climate change and environmental degradation and mainstream resilience in development; (b) provide large-scale opportunities for low-carbon development and technology innovation and transfer to address social and environmental goals, in order for least developed countries to effectively benefit from the global green new deal; (c) establish a framework that ensures that forests are conserved and benefits are captured by marginal groups; (d) address enduring inequalities in global economic relations between countries; (e) strengthen least developed country participation in the Rio Conventions and the Group of 77 and China; and (f) strengthen synergistic relationships between the Rio Conventions and other international programmes, including delivery of technical advice and support.

#### **N. Digital inclusion for least developed countries: innovation, growth, sustainability**

##### **Meeting organized by the International Telecommunications Union, and held in Geneva on 8 and 9 March 2011**

33. The pre-conference event was held to review progress made towards the implementation of the 10-year Brussels Programme of Action and to explore innovative ways of using information and communication technologies as a catalyst

in alleviating poverty and stimulating growth in least developed countries under the new Istanbul Programme of Action.

34. The meeting noted that information and communication technologies facilitate progress in other sectors such as trade, productive capacities, environment, disaster-risk reduction, disaster management, education, gender mainstreaming, health, agriculture, and climate change as these technologies permeate every facet of human life. Information and communication technologies played a catalytic role in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality and empower women, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensure environmental sustainability, and develop a global partnership for development). Of all the Millennium Development Goals targets, the most progress was made in achieving those related to information and communications technologies. All the least developed countries surpassed the targets set by the Brussels Programme of Action to attain 5 main lines per 100 inhabitants, which was possible owing to the rapid growth of mobile communications. However, many of the least developed countries failed to attain the targets set for Internet penetration. With the introduction of broadband, rapid growth in Internet connectivity was expected along the lines of mobile communications growth.

## **O. Promoting universal access to essential services**

### **Meeting organized by OHRLLS, and held in New York on 10 March 2011**

35. The four themes considered at the meeting were promoting universal access to education, energy, health, and water and sanitation. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat moderated the panels on universal access to education, energy, health, and water and sanitation, respectively. The meeting reaffirmed the need to develop policies that link economic and social considerations and underscored the need for strong political will and commitment in promoting universal access to essential services in least developed countries. While the advantages of public/private sector partnerships were recognized as a vital ingredient in ensuring that access to essential services was enhanced in least developed countries, the leadership role that national governments play must also be enhanced.

36. The following were among points highlighted during the meeting: (a) the adoption of incentive measures that would attract entrepreneurs to invest in providing essential services; (b) the creation of enabling environments that are conducive to small- and medium-sized enterprises delivering essential services at an appropriate and affordable rate; (c) the decentralization of services as a way to address the disparities that have emerged in least developed countries between the rural and urban dwellers, with the rural dwellers missing out on infrastructure and facilities as well as access to the essential services; (d) adoption of new technologies; and (e) adoption of good business models as a factor that can promote access to essential services in least developed countries. In this connection, greater capacity-building in least developed countries on how these models could be tailored to specific least developed country situations and circumstances was underscored. It was acknowledged that capacity-building in appropriate business

practices was not always at the forefront when considering issues on essential services, but the argument was made that, without such interventions, access to essential services, including with regard to the four themes being considered, might not be as successful as it could be.

37. Participants were in agreement that the outcome of the Istanbul Conference and a new programme of action for the next decade should highlight the need to access essential services. That was premised on the need to encourage the development of policies that link social and economic considerations at the national level, supported through appropriate international support.

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