

8 May 2011

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Joseph Deiss,
President of the 65th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Opening of the LDC's Leaders' Summit**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to join you at this LDCs Leaders' Summit. It is an important opportunity for you, leaders, to exchange views, to articulate and promote the collective interests of the Least Developed Countries to enhance the group's efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and to develop.

All Least Developed Countries aim at graduating from the LDCs category. Ultimately, the group should disappear! Graduation reflects a country's ability to reform and transform its economy. It is a reflection of its successful transition towards a more sustained, inclusive, and equitable economic growth.

The role of a resolute and effective leadership is crucial in this regard. Leadership is decisive to give clear direction and political guidance to drive a country's development effort.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Least Developed Countries are faced with formidable structural, economic and political challenges. As leaders, you are confronted daily with this reality. In recent years, your countries also had to face the impacts from the economic, the food and the energy crises, from frequent natural disasters, and not least from climate change.

A business as usual approach to addressing these challenges will not suffice. We are heading towards the 2015 deadline to achieve the Millennium Development Goals; our success will be measured against our capacity to achieve the goals in your countries. This is a moral duty that the international community has towards the poorest of the poor. We cannot allow for huge inequalities in wellbeing to persist in the 21st century.

Bold reforms are needed in order to create enabling business environments conducive to investment and private sector development, to job creation and economic growth. For this, determination and leadership are required.

Your engagement is key to create good democratic institutions and policies, establish good governance at all level and tackle corruption and uphold the rule of law. These are necessary preconditions for the development of productive capacities.

While globalization has its challenges, it is also offering new opportunities for the Least Developed Countries. It is important to harness these opportunities and think outside the box so as to bring the benefits of globalization to the people of the Least Developed Countries. Again, as leaders, you have a key role to play to this end.

The rapid pace of technological innovation is making it possible for the Least Developed Countries to use technology as the engine for social and economic development, such as in the area of agriculture. I am impressed by the innovative use of mobile telephony in your countries, which allows – among many other services – for farmers in the most remote places to get information on the weather and on the market prices for their produce. These are vital information for the daily living.

The current global environment also provides an opportunity to embark in a cleaner and more sustainable growth and development path. There is no need for your countries to lock themselves into carbon intensive growth paths and thus repeat the mistakes of the more advanced countries. There is an opportunity to leapfrog and to lead the international community by implementing green growth strategies and policies.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

While it is the Least Developed Countries that are responsible and must have full ownership for their own economic development and transformation, history has shown that a supportive international environment is central for success. The international community must strengthen the partnership for the development of the Least Developed Countries. International efforts must be refocused to enhance national productive capacities, and to improve the support in the area of ODA, investment, aid for trade and debt relief. Policy coherence for development must be ensured to create an international environment for trade, investment and technology transfers leading to the diversification of the economies of the Least Developed Countries.

In this context, the General Assembly remains at the disposal of all its Member States to help creating an international environment conducive to the development of the Least Developed Countries. A few weeks ago, we had, at the General Assembly, an informal thematic debate on Productive capacities in the Least Developed Countries, which – I believe - brought meaningful insight for this Istanbul conference. In June, I will organize a thematic debate at the General Assembly on Global governance, including global economic governance. I believe that this will be an important moment to contribute shaping a global governance system for the 21st century that is more efficient, more representative and more inclusive and that can therefore contribute to an international environment more favourable for the development of the Least Developed Countries.

It is in the interest of all of us that the Least Developed Countries succeed. We are all stakeholders and partners in the effort of the Least Developed Countries to reach higher economic growth and better living conditions for their people. This will contribute to making the world safer, more prosperous, more dynamic, more democratic and more united. Action, support and leadership are needed!

I thank you for your attention and I wish you constructive discussions.