

**Statement by**

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Sustainable Development**

**During the General Debate  
On Groups of Countries in Special Situations**

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**Mr. Chairman**

I join other delegations in congratulating Under-Secretary-General Chandra Acharya for his appointment as the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island developing States.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Algeria on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

In the same breath I wish to thank the secretary General for the comprehensive report presented in this Chamber this morning.

**Mr. Chairman,**

South Africa fully supports the efforts to effectively implement the Istanbul Programme of Action whose overarching goal is to overcome the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries: to eradicate poverty; achieve internationally agreed development goals; and enable half of the 48 least developed countries to graduate out of this category by 2020.

As we are all aware that 33 of the 48 Member States classified as least developed countries by the United Nations, are African countries. These LDCs on the African Continent have experienced economic growth of 7 per cent for several years, though reducing poverty has proven to be more a challenge. South Africa reiterates the need to catalyse efforts to liberate the millions of people from the bondage of poverty. This ten year Programme of Action is confirmation of the importance and urgency of our collective initiatives.

We will continue to promote the socio-economic development of the African Continent. With limited resources, South Africa has used the African Renaissance Fund (ARF) and has managed to give increased funding to support post conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD) efforts which have been an important milestone for South Africa and the Continent as we look towards the future.

In addition, South Africa is committed to economic development through regional and international co-operation in an interdependent world. We will continue to advocate for countries of the North to be more responsive to the developmental needs of developing countries and, in particular, the Least developed countries.

We are mindful that, at the core of our development efforts, is the NEPAD. This year NEPAD celebrates its eleventh year of existence. The African Union, NEPAD and the African Development Bank are critical participants in the process of rejuvenating our infrastructure. Accordingly the support of the international community in addressing the lack of adequate physical infrastructure in LDCs remains critically important for the development of LDCs.

**Landlocked developing countries.**

My delegation supports efforts to speed up the implementation of the specific actions in the five priorities agreed upon in the Almaty Programme of Action and those contained in the declaration on the midterm review of the Almaty Programme of Action, in a better

coordinated manner, in particular for the construction, maintenance and improvement of their transport, storage and other transit-related facilities, including alternative routes, completion of missing links and improved communications and energy infrastructure, so as to support the sustainable development of landlocked developing countries.

Efforts to implement the two programmes referred to above will no doubt be a significant contribution to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, the overarching framework agreed by the world leaders at the dawn of millennium.

I thank you for your attention.