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Welcome remarks

by

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and**

**High Representative for the Least Developed Countries,
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at the Launch of the Report

**“Governance for the Future – Democracy and Development
in the Least Developed Countries”**

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Mr. President, we are delighted that you accepted our invitation to this event. It is, indeed, a great honour - and a pleasure - to have your presence at this special event at the UN headquarters this afternoon. Permit me to take this opportunity to once again congratulate you - now in person - on your resounding election victory. Allow me, Mr. President, to thank you again most sincerely for your strong support and encouragement as the Foreign Minister to me, to my Office and to our work as we were establishing ourselves.

The holding of yet another peaceful election in Tanzania is certainly a stellar example of the efforts of the Least Developed Countries to entrench democracy, stability and good governance. I am confident that under your wise, able and determined stewardship, Tanzania will continue to grow from strength to strength and realise its full potential.

It is heartening to see so many people gathered here today who deeply care for the world's 50 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you. Special thanks to you Mark not only for gracing the occasion but also for the initial strong support as the head of UNDP when the project was crystallizing. And his successor Kemal had been very supportive as we were completing this work. Therefore, again, my warm thanks to both of you.

Let me take this opportunity to welcome the distinguished representatives of the Least Developed Countries and their development partners as well as my colleagues from the UN Secretariat. I thank you very much for your presence. Allow me to extend a particularly warm welcome to Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila who has just joined us as the Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser for Africa.

The report we have before us, "Governance for the Future - Democracy and Development in the Least Developed Countries" is unique in that it is the first ever UN report to provide a comprehensive analysis of the governance challenges facing a group of countries that are often politically, economically and, to some extent, attention-wise marginalized.

Furthermore, the study is a critical contribution to our collective efforts to implement the 2001 Brussels Programme of Action – the international agenda that is devoted to the particular needs of the LDCs.

Commitment 2 of the seven in the Brussels Programme is clear - good governance at both national and international levels is essential if we want to see success in tackling poverty and underdevelopment in these most vulnerable countries. That was the first time when good governance was included in an elaborate manner in a UN document through North-South consensus.

And I do believe the publication before us has succeeded in showing us that good governance and sustainable development is in fact indivisible. As a result of the

painstaking research and study, we now have a clearer picture of our accomplishments and shortcomings.

Significantly, the report reveals that despite serious human resource constraints and severe structural weaknesses, both African and Asian LDCs have made significant strides towards durable governance over the past two decades. From the use of ‘mobile judges’ in the Pacific LDCs to the use of community courts in Rwanda, the report showcases commendable examples which illustrate how some of the most efficient and creative solutions in overcoming development and governance problems can be found in LDCs themselves.

On the other hand, the report does not shy away from pointing out areas where much work needs to be done. Researchers should be congratulated not only for identifying ‘weak spots’ but also for presenting forward-looking policy alternatives and recommendations grounded on specific analysis and experience within an LDC context. Indeed, we must be careful not to prescribe a single model of democratic governance, especially when poverty remains the biggest challenge to good governance.

Good governance efforts remain incomplete unless those are reflected also at the global level. As we move ahead to the five-year comprehensive Mid-Term Review of the Brussels Programme by the UN General Assembly in September, we must remember that partnerships are crucial to global problem solving. The LDCs can sustain the current momentum of their efforts against heavy odds only with the effective support of the international community.
