

**STATEMENT BY DR ARJUN KARKI, INTERNATIONAL CO-ORDINATOR OF
LDC WATCH AND CHAIR AND SPOKESPERSON OF THE LDC-IV CIVIL
SOCIETY FORUM, AT THE SECOND MEETING OF THE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY COMMITTEE ON LDC-IV
*4-8 April 2011, New York***

Mr. Chairman Ambassador Jarmo Viinanen;
Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Secretary General of UN LDC IV; Ambassador Acharya; Chair of the Bureau of LDCs;
Ambassador Apakan, host of the UN LDC IV Conference; Excellencies; my colleagues from civil society; Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our collective calls and concerns as global civil society at the opening of the second intergovernmental preparatory committee meeting for the UN LDC-IV. Today we are just a month away from Istanbul where you will forge a renewed and strengthened development partnership for the next decade. We are calling for Istanbul to be a historical watershed in terms of adopting a bold new agenda which will lead to the graduation of at least half of the LDCs. Civil society voices from across the globe at the PGA Hearing last Friday expressed the urge for a meaningful Programme of Action that will set the stage for a world without LDCs!

At the first PrepCom three months ago, we called for a visionary alternative development pathway that places people at its centre, an agenda that ends suffering, upholds human rights, gender justice and supports human dignity. We have seen enough of humanitarian crises caused by a development process driven by market-led globalization that places profit and power above peoples and the planet. The Fourth UN Conference on LDCs will just be another costly exercise if we do not learn from the failures of the past programmes of action.

We know that you have been working through issues over the past weeks in informal sessions. However, we also hear that there are some difficult issues blocking your progress. We urge you to resolve these without lowering the level of your ambition. An agenda without clear targets and tangible commitments will not make a difference. /

We remind you that the Millennium Development Goals were derived from undertakings across other agendas. It is ironic that we hear some governments are not prepared to establish targets because there have not yet been discussions on MDGs post-2015.

It is not acceptable to sideline issues on trade because of the existence of the WTO, or to refuse to negotiate issues of debt cancellation because of the presence of other forums on debt. The urgent need for regulation of the international financial system should not be excluded in the negotiations in deference to the IMF. Neither should climate change be treated as an exclusive domain of the UNFCCC process. If this Conference is to come up with a credible, effective and comprehensive Programme, it must address the demands of the most underdeveloped and vulnerable segments of society. /

Civil society is calling for an agenda that will support transformative change. We reiterate our urgent call that the Istanbul Programme of Action include the following:

1. Agricultural development that places small farmers at the centre of policy to realise food security and food sovereignty;
2. Strong action for climate justice and the protection of the world's most vulnerable people from the devastating impacts of climate change;

We call on rich, industrialized countries to commit to deep, drastic, unconditional cuts in carbon and GHG emissions through domestic measures. This must be expressed in international legally binding agreements and provide condition-free, additional and non-debt creating public finance to cover the full costs of adaptation in LDCs.

3. Delivery of long-standing promises for fair and supportive policies on international trade and a stop to bilateral and regional trade agreements that are inequitable and undermine the important role of governments in promoting equitable development.
4. Immediate and decisive steps for debt cancellation for LDCs;
LDCs spend over \$6 Billion every year on debt servicing. In many LDCs, more money is spent on debt servicing than on essential services like healthcare, drinking water and energy. Therefore, we demand enhanced level of support to deal with water and energy poverty in LDCs.
5. More and better aid in the form of untied grants and other financial resources to invest in productive capacity and human development;
6. Transformation and a restructuring of the international financial system towards greater regulation of financial markets and speculative activities especially on staple food commodities. The mandate, governance, policies, and operations of International Financial Institutions must be thoroughly evaluated and fundamental changes must be undertaken.
7. Democratic ownership by peoples and a recognition of the critical role of a developmental state

These are just some of the elements that are essential if the new Programme of Action for LDCs is to make a difference. Governments must not take the easy option of removing the difficult decisions from the agenda. An ambitious Programme should be inspiring and be the basis for broad ownership across LDCs and development partners alike. Inclusive development must be a bottom-up process.

In closing, we hope that by the end of this week, you will have achieved significant progress towards a Programme that will help usher in a new bright future for the world's most vulnerable peoples. We urge you to quickly move beyond your well-rehearsed political positions and to fulfill your important roles and responsibilities over the next few days. We look forward to engaging and interacting with you in the process. We wish you the very best in delivering political leadership, commitment and direction. Please do not fail us!

Thank you very much.