

27 May 2016

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mogens Lykketoft,
President of the 70th Session of the General Assembly,
At the Opening Segment of the Midterm Review of the Istanbul
Programme of Action for the LDCs**

President of the Mid-term Review, Minister Çavuşoğlu,
Honourable Ministers,
Under-Secretary General and UNDP Administrator Helen Clark,
Under Secretary-General Gyan Chandra Acharya,
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure to be with you this morning.

At the outset, allow me to thank the Government of Turkey for its sustained commitment and support for the Least Developed Countries and for hosting this important conference.

Like many of you, I have come here from the World Humanitarian Summit.

And taken together, that Summit and this conference lay the gauntlet down to world leaders: it is your responsibility to ensure that the plight of the world's most vulnerable people and countries is front and centre of global and local efforts to achieve peace, human rights and sustainable development.

That, of course, is the essence of the Istanbul Programme for Action and it also echoes the 2030 Agenda's most coveted principle of leaving no-one behind.

Based on the lessons of the MDGs and current trends on inequalities both within and between countries; it will also be one of the primary challenges as we move forward with universal SDG implementation.

The Political Declaration for this conference sets out how we can overcome this challenge as it relates to LDCs and I sincerely thank the distinguished representatives of Belgium and Benin for their outstanding work in facilitating agreement on that declaration.

To me, there is one fundamental message that we must take from that Declaration and indeed from this conference:

People living in poverty, the people of all 48 LDCs cannot afford to wait for future opportunities, they have a right to a better life now.

All of us are stakeholders in their future and it is essential that we move now to spend less time talking about problems and more time taking action to resolve them.

Following the World Humanitarian Summit, agreements in Sendai, Addis, New York and Paris; action plans for other vulnerable countries and this mid-term review on the Istanbul Programme for Action, we now have a series of solid frameworks which point to what needs to change and what actions different actors need to take.

Now we must demonstrate that we are serious about making that change happen.

Indeed, the Political Declaration makes reference to plenty of commitments and initiatives which if implemented would significantly support LDCs.

This includes giving meaning to the principle of national ownership, strengthening democratic governance, putting in place an enabling environment and strengthening national capacity to attract investment, strengthen productive capacities and generate much needed economic growth and jobs.

It includes working in partnership with civil society, the private sector, development partners and others to generate the resources and skills needed to strengthen human development, empower women and girls, develop local infrastructure and rapidly extend access to energy including renewables.

It includes steps to ensure that global funds, initiatives and decisions such as the Addis Tax Initiative, the Green Climate Fund, WTO decisions, the Global Infrastructure Facility and the LDC Technology Bank etc deliver tangible outputs as quickly as possible that benefit LDCs.

And finally, it of course includes a scaling up of resources from domestic sources, official development assistance, South-South Cooperation and beyond.

All actors must fill their side of the bargain and this includes donors that must live up their historical responsibilities towards the world's poorest countries, meet the 0.7 GNI commitment and follow others who are directing over 50% of their ODA to LDCs.

At the same time, the synergies in terms of implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the different agreements, must be reinforced.

In a world beset by a series of crises, we have to make the very best use of what is available to us; we have to join forces with interested partners and simplify how countries can access support from the UN system, global funds and other initiatives.

Excellencies, the outcome of the Mid-Term Review demonstrates that LDCs and their development partners are fully committed to taking concrete actions these next five years to advance structural transformation across all LDCs and ensure graduation from LDC status for at least half of these countries.

Let us therefore leave here committed to putting our shoulder to the wheel and shifting our focus from grand global processes to the hard work of national implementation supported and meaningful global initiatives.

Only with concerted efforts, can we advance together towards a better future for all – where no one is left behind.

Thank you.