



Government of Malawi

**STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED BY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY DR. LAZARUS McCARTHY CHAKWERA,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI,**

**ON BEHALF OF THE LDCs GROUP DURING A MEETING  
OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

**ON THE THEME:**

***“FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF COVID-19 AND BEYOND”***

**TO BE HELD**

**ON THE SIDELINES OF THE 75<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs,  
Lilongwe 3.

29<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

- **Right Honourable Prime Ministers of Canada and Jamaica;**
- **Your Excellency Secretary General of the United Nations;**
- **Your Excellencies.**

I have the honour of addressing you on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

I commend the Secretary-General and the Prime Ministers of Canada and Jamaica for convening this High-Level Meeting. I also acknowledge their leadership in launching the “***Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond Initiative***” and undertaking substantive discussions on this topic since May, 2020. I look forward to a successful and result-oriented outcome of this process.

The world is facing a turbulent time amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Though the pandemic is indiscriminate, its impact is different. Some advanced countries with strong fiscal space and robust resilience capacity are managing the crisis relatively well. In LDCs, the impacts have manifested in the disproportionate attainment of SDG’s.

Prior to COVID 19 the progress on SDG’s was already slowing down. Around 35 per cent of the population of LDCs still lives in extreme poverty, while 34 percent is suffering from severe food insecurity. Real GDP growth rate for LDCs reached 4.8 per cent in 2019. If the pandemic is not contained, the rate is expected to weaken to 0.8 per cent in 2020. **I, therefore, call for the full implementation of the LDCs Statement on COVID-19 which has been issued as an official document of the United Nations.**

The Ministerial Finance Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2020, gave an opportunity to various countries to discuss and provide feedback on the “**Menu of Policy**”

**Options”.** The Options requires identifying people-centered solutions to the global economic crisis and to lay the groundwork for sustainable, resilient and gender-responsive future in order to build back green, better and stronger.

The global response to the current crisis has three components cutting across all the six agreed Discussion Groups. The components include: the mobilization of new resources necessary in response to the current emergency; the allocation of such resources to ensure a swift and inclusive recovery; and the creation of conditions to ensure that finances are invested in a sustainable and resilient future.

Whilst echoing calls for a coordinated global response, we further call for a global stimulus package for LDCs in order to save our economies and societies from collapse. We need support for social protection systems and employment generation. We also need free and affordable access to medicines, vaccines, diagnostics and other health technologies for COVID-19 and other health priorities.

We call upon development partners to fulfill their Official Development Assistance commitments to LDCs by doubling the assistance. We also call for the fostering of a broader coalition of partnerships involving private sector and other alternative sources of finance.

We emphasize and reiterate the call for a renewed and revitalized global trade framework that will help to rebuild the world economy and protect LDCs. The discussions for such a renewed framework should begin now so that SDG target of doubling LDCs export share is not missed. We further support the proposal of establishing a global

coordination and cooperation mechanism for joint trade and investment promotion for crisis-relief, economic recovery and sustainable reconstruction. The operationalization of a new investment promotion regime for LDCs as set out in the SDGs is paramount. The UN Secretary-General's Global Investors for Sustainable Development Initiative should be fully embraced by all relevant entities.

We commend the G-20, the IMF and the World Bank, for the debt relief initiatives. However, these are not enough for LDCs. As the crisis unfolds, more LDCs are likely to default. We, therefore, call for a new global debt relief initiative for LDCs, drawing lessons from the previous Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. All development assistance to LDCs needs to be grant-based to avoid further debt escalation.

LDCs need tailored and fast-tracked access to all soft loan windows offered by global and regional development banks and other development finance institutions. I reiterate the call for a special allocation of US\$50 billion Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), enacting a voluntary redistribution of unused SDRs in favour of LDCs.

On our part as LDCs, we must work hard and work smart, in collaboration with our development partners, to address climate change. We need to identify measures to expand fiscal space and foster their domestic resource mobilization by preventing illicit financial flows, base erosion and profit shifting, and facilitating contributions to the digital economy during the emergency and beyond.

We should harness Science, Technology and Innovation in order to realize major breakthroughs in retrofitting our economies. For years, LDCs have been disadvantaged due

to the huge digital divide. Now is the time to deliver on the pledges of the advanced world to give us access to modern technologies, including new and renewable technologies.

As we are preparing for the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs to be held in 2022 with the aim of boosting our economies, saving lives and livelihoods, and protecting our planet, we count of your support.

**I thank you for your attention!**