



**STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**Deputy Permanent Representative of the  
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations**

**General Statement**

**Preparatory Committee for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the  
Least Developed Countries**

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**(Please check against delivery)**

**Thank you, Chair.**

Afghanistan aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the statement delivered by the representative of Malawi on behalf of the Least Developed Countries, and the statement delivered by the representative of Kazakhstan on behalf of the Landlocked Developing Countries.

As a Least Developed Country, Afghanistan takes this opportunity to re-emphasize the importance of the Fifth United Nations Conference on LDCs and a robust preparatory process that builds the necessary consensus for a bold and progressive Programme of Action.

Afghanistan welcomes the election of the bureau members and wish them success. Afghanistan assures you of our full cooperation and stands ready to support you. We further welcome the election of Canada and Bangladesh as co-chairs.

Further, allow me to thank Turkey for hosting the successful Fourth UN Conference on LDCs in 2011, during which we adopted the Istanbul Programme of Action. We are grateful for Turkey's continued support to LDCs and action for the implementation of the IPoA.

We thank Qatar for their briefing on the status of preparations for the conference. We are encouraged by the steps taken so far. I also want to reiterate Afghanistan's gratitude to Qatar for hosting the conference and for their generous support to LDCs.

Afghanistan also thanks USG 'Utoikamanu and her team for their extraordinary efforts to facilitate a successful conference and for their valuable support to countries in special situations. We are also grateful for the PGA's special attention to the plight of our countries and for creating the Advisory Board for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

**Dear colleagues,**

We are happy to meet today to kick-start the preparations for LDC5 and to see us moving forward with the conference despite the lingering challenges posed by COVID-19.

Afghanistan looks forward to being deeply engaged in the preparatory process leading up to the conference. Our preparations must be based on a systematic study of the implementation of the IPoA and an analysis of the restraints and challenges faced by LDCs. The two regional reviews are critical in this regard.

Afghanistan, furthermore, would like to emphasize the importance of the following points for the new Programme of Actions:

First, it must build on the IPoA's principles and objectives, focusing on national ownership and genuine partnership and solidarity. It must also be anchored in the 2030 Agenda and the realities currently facing LDCs.

Second, it should have an increased focus on human capital development and resilience. Our ultimate goal should be to create self-reliant societies that can withstand external shocks. As such, the program must also consider long-time support for graduating countries to make sure they never fall back into an LDC situation.

Third, we believe the outcome must include points on the challenges faced by countries in conflict and post-conflict situations since a large number of the LDCs are also in a conflict or post-conflict situation. Therefore, we urge partners to consider points related to good governance and partnerships across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Fourth, the outcome should seize on opportunities presented by technology and partnerships with the private sector. Technology has the potential to accelerate our development trajectories significantly, but the digital divide is holding us back. Afghanistan is encouraged by the Technology Bank's potential role for LDCs in this regard.

Lastly, other issues that are incredibly important for LDCs and should be thoroughly considered in the outcome document include climate change, regional cooperation, connectivity and transit, South-South cooperation, sustainable infrastructure investment, combatting corruption and illicit financial flows.

**Dear colleagues,**

Afghanistan looks forward to working with all of you during the months ahead to ensure a successful conference and a Programme of Action that charts our way to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

**Thank you.**