

AFRICA REGIONAL REVIEW MEETING

*IN PREPARATION FOR THE FIFTH UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON
THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDC5)*

22-26 FEBRUARY 2021

HOSTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI, CHAIR OF THE LDC GROUP
IN COLLABORATION WITH UNOHRLLS AND UNECA

SUMMARY REPORT

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SUMMARY REPORT

I. BACKGROUND and OVERVIEW

The Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs for the decade 2011-2020 (IPoA) is coming to an end. The General Assembly decided to convene the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC5), at Heads of State and Government level, in Doha, Qatar, from 23 to 27 January 2022.¹

The Conference is preceded by broad-based and inclusive substantive preparations at national, regional and global level, engaging all least developed countries and their partners, parliamentarians as well as civil society, academia and private sector representatives.²

In line with the mandate contained in General Assembly Resolutions [73/242](#) and [74/232](#), the Africa Regional Review Meeting, also including Haiti, was held virtually from 22 to 26 February 2021. It was hosted by the Government of the Republic of Malawi, as chair of the LDC Group, in collaboration with the UN Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (UN-OHRLS) and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), with the support of the UN Malawi team. The co-organizers are also grateful to the Office of the Special Advisor for Africa (OSAA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for co-organizing specific thematic sessions. The Africa Regional Review Meeting was organized thanks to the generous financial support of the Government of Turkey and the State of Qatar.

The Africa Regional Review meeting provided a unique opportunity to review the implementation of the IPoA in the region, as 33 out of 46 LDCs are in Africa. The main objective was to assess the structural challenges, vulnerabilities and emerging issues faced by African LDCs and Haiti in pursuing sustainable development against the IPoA targets and goals. The meeting provided a platform for peer exchange and learning, and for all stakeholders to gain insight and agree on concrete, targeted and effective cooperative actions and recommendations that would assist these countries to overcome structural challenges and accelerate sustainable development progress over the next decade. The meeting also provided space for discussion on how to strengthen support provided to the LDCs by the international community and to build linkages to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda as well as the Agenda 2063.

Over 900 participants registered for the five-half day meeting (see List of Participants in [Annex II](#)). The Meeting was attended by delegations from Haiti and 28 African LDCs, IPoA National Focal Points, representatives from partner countries, as well as development practitioners from international and regional organisations, the private sector, academia and civil society, including youth.

The high-level opening was followed by eight thematic sessions on topics of special relevance to African LDCs and Haiti. Interpretation was provided in English, French and Portuguese.

¹ See GA resolution [74/232B](#)

² For more information on LDC5 preparations, visit: www.un.org/ldc5

The Africa Regional Review Meeting adopted a political declaration negotiated by the African LDCs and Haiti (see Annex I). The outcome document outlines components of a renewed partnership for sustainable development between the LDCs and their development partners. It is expected to be endorsed at the 53rd ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to be held on 17-23 March 2021. It also serves as an important background document for the Preparatory Committee Meetings for the LDC5 Conference to be held in New York on 24-28 May 2021 and 26-30 July 2021.

The detailed programme of the five half days of the Africa Regional Review Meeting is accessible on the UN-OHRLS website dedicated to the LDC5 Conference: www.un.org/ldc5/africa-review.

II. OPENING SESSION

The Africa Regional Review Meeting High-Level Opening Session focused on the theme: “From Istanbul to Doha - towards a new decade of partnerships for LDCs”. The Master of Ceremony was the Honourable Mr. Gospel Kazako, Minister of Information of the Republic of Malawi. Welcoming remarks were provided by Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, and Secretary-General of LDC5 Conference, and the Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi and Minister of Economic Planning and Development and Public Sector Reforms.

Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu opened the Africa Regional Review Meeting by stating the strong commitment that existed among African LDCs and their development partners to accelerate and further the inclusive and sustainable development agenda for LDCs. She mentioned the negative impacts the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have on many LDCs, as well as uncertainties and threats posed by ongoing climate change. While positive trends in tackling poverty, access to safe water and sanitation, generation of renewable energy, broadband coverage, as well as gender equality had been observed in several LDCs throughout the past decade, these were now under severe threat due to the pandemic. She cited UN Secretary-General António Guterres on the importance of equitable access to vaccines, describing it as “the biggest moral test before the global community”. Seeing the challenges and the progress made by African LDCs, she stressed the importance of this meeting in preparation for the LDC5 Conference in Doha, Qatar in January 2022, which must agree on actions enabling LDCs to build back better, increase resilience and achieve the SDGs and graduation thresholds. She expressed her hope for an ambitious action agenda and stressed the conference as an important opportunity for the international community to ensure that the LDCs were at the core of the Agenda 2030 and not left behind.

The Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima also underlined the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on already fragile economies in many LDCs. He expressed his hope that the Africa Regional Review Meeting would provide an opportunity for exchange and learning, to gain insight and agree on concrete, targeted and effective cooperative actions and recommendations that would assist African LDCs in overcoming structural challenges and thereby accelerating sustainable development progress over the next decade. He urged all participants to discuss practical ways of building back better and stronger, since the outcome of the Africa Regional Review Meeting would be important in setting the course towards the achievement of the SDGs as well as Agenda 2063.

Opening statements were delivered by H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the UN General Assembly; H.E. Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey; H.E. Soltan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar and the Honourable Ms. Karina Gould, Minister of Development Cooperation of Canada. Special opening remarks were delivered by H.E. Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, President of Malawi, Chairperson of the Group of the Least Developed Countries.

H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the UN General Assembly, stressed the unique opportunity the Africa Regional Review Meeting provided in understanding the success and challenges in implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action in African LDCs during the past decade, while informing the international community's efforts to achieve the Agenda 2030 in LDCs during the next 10 years. The Meeting highlighted the importance of deepened partnerships and the involvement of all relevant stakeholders. He called for efforts undertaken by the international community to maximise the benefits of the demographic dividend and create opportunities for youth in African LDCs and Haiti. He announced a thematic debate on digital cooperation and connectivity, which his office would convene on 27 April 2021 to explore whole-of-society approaches to end the digital divide as well as the joint event together with the president of ECOSOC on 18 June 2021, which would focus on accelerating the implementation of the Agenda 2030 in LDCs.

H.E. Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey, Host Country of the LDCIV Conference, looked at progress made by several LDCs during the last decade, while only three countries (Samoa, Equatorial Guinea, and Vanuatu) had graduated from the LDC category. As the co-chair of the Group of Friends of LDCs he assured continued support of the Group to all LDCs. He outlined six main areas of action that Turkey has been engaging in during the past decade: (i) Turkey increased its diplomatic presence on the African continent; (ii) it increased ODA in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda providing USD 2.5bn between 2009 and 2019 to LDCs; (iii) it continued support to the UN Technology Bank for LDCs; (iv) it supported the LDCs in the fight against COVID-19 and had been focussing on equitable access to vaccines as well as local production of essential medical technologies. (v) Turkey supported the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), and (vi) together with UNDP in the "Partnership in Development Program" in Lao PDR, Turkey was engaged in increasing the role of the private sector in development and its engagement through South-South cooperation. He concluded his statement by underscoring some potential priority areas of the next Programme of Action, such as building of productive capacities, promoting structural transformation, mobilizing domestic resources, and creating an enabling environment for private investments.

H.E. Soltan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, Host Country of the LDC5 Conference, confirmed the commitment of Qatar as the host country of the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs to making the conference in January 2022 a success and a milestone in supporting the LDCs to achieve comprehensive development, so they can benefit from their human and natural resources potential to achieve growth and prosperity. Qatar acknowledged the particularly negative effects of climate change on many LDCs and referred to the contribution made at the Climate Action Summit held in September 2019 of USD 100 million to support LDCs and SIDS. He reaffirmed Qatar's

continued efforts within the international community to support all initiatives aimed at finding solutions to the crises and challenges that affected LDCs and to bringing international stability and peace.

The Honourable Ms. Karina Gould, Minister of Development Cooperation of Canada, described the disproportionately negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on LDCs, which were threatening hard-won development gains. The impact of the pandemic had added to the worsening effects of climate change, conflicts resulting in historically high levels of human migration and significant pressure due to high debt levels in many LDCs. Canada had been supporting all efforts to fulfil the promise of the historic African Continental Free Trade Area and was delighted to co-chair, alongside Bangladesh, the preparatory committee for LDC5. Canada had also been partnering with LDCs on a range of initiatives to support development objectives, for example on primary education. The minister emphasized the importance of education, training and job opportunities for young people in African LDCs and Haiti, so they could get the possibility to fully contribute to their communities. She also highlighted the importance of greater access to financial markets, digital technologies and business development services for women. She concluded that the coming ten years presented an opportunity to innovate, to pivot where necessary and to align all efforts to solve the challenges African LDCs face. The future depended on the lasting commitment to move forward with inclusive solutions that would see the world achieve the SDGs together, with no one left behind.

H.E. Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, President of Malawi, shared some of the adverse impacts the COVID-19 pandemic had brought to African LDCs and some of the limitations it had exposed – especially in the fields of science, technology, and innovations. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the Group of LDCs had issued a statement on COVID-19, calling for a global stimulus package for LDCs, which included ODA support, debt relief, aid for trade and access to technologies. The immediate concern was equitable and universal access to vaccines and the necessity of declaring vaccines a global public good. Without access to vaccinations for all, the economic consequences would be higher for all countries. He stressed the importance of fully integrating African LDCs in world trade, with the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) being an important first step in this direction. He reviewed the Istanbul Programme of Action and outlined that many of its principles continued to be valid, especially looking at ownership and leadership, which placed primary responsibility on the LDCs. To live up to these principles, emphasis had to be placed on upholding the rule of law, promoting peace and justice, and ensuring the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, especially the youth. He outlined focus areas for LDCs during the next decade that would be required to build resilience and find solutions to the current global economic crisis. He thereby focused especially on building systemic resilience and crisis preparedness, domestic resource mobilisation to identify measures to expand fiscal space and prevent illicit financial flows, harnessing science, technology and innovation including renewable energy technologies, resilient food and nutrition systems that transform agri-food systems to ensure sustainability and access to healthy diets, and partnership and cooperation, urging the international community to demonstrate solidarity and provide stronger support.

III. Session 1: Ministerial Dialogue on Lessons Learned and Building Back Better

The first session of the Africa Regional Review Meeting was chaired by the Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi and Minister of Economic Planning and Development and Public Sector Reforms. The session was structured as a ministerial dialogue preceded by an introductory presentation and a keynote address. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the LDCs were stressed by over 30 high level speakers, and national recovery plans, lessons learned, and policy recommendations on how to build back better were shared.

Ms. Vera Songwe, ECA's Executive Secretary, provided an introductory presentation, based on ECA's Report on the Implementation of the IPoA during the past decade.³ She highlighted that during the ten years of IPoA implementation, African LDCs had made good progress on some social, political and health targets, but they had been less successful in transforming their economies, falling short of the 7 percent GDP growth target by 2.8 percentage points on average. Manufacturing value-added growth had been declining since 2015. Sixty percent of Africa's LDC population did not have access to electricity and one in every three African LDC pupils did not graduate from primary school. Digitalization remained a challenge with less than 20 percent of the African LDC population having access to the internet.

Ms. Songwe stressed that addressing the looming debt crisis would be vital in building forward better. It would be imperative to assist LDCs in accessing concessional financing to strengthen their response to the pandemic-induced crisis through increased access to cheap financing including through special drawing rights. African LDCs would also need to move to recovery with a focus on green investments and harnessing digital technologies and innovation to enhance growth, create decent jobs and accelerate intra-regional trade, through the effective implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). Stimulating investments in productive sectors would be crucial. Ms. Songwe concluded by stating that greater emphasis had to be placed on securing the means of implementation of the above-mentioned priorities.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the World Health Organization's Director-General, delivered the keynote address. He pointed out that COVID-19 had thrown into sharp relief the importance of better preparedness, a 'One Health approach', and 'universal health coverage'. The pandemic had severely disrupted health systems, including emergency care, primary health care, routine immunization and many other essential services. Vaccine equity and equitable distribution of vaccines, diagnostics and treatments as global public goods were top priorities. He highlighted three main lessons, learned over the past year.

- i. First was preparedness. When COVID-19 hit, investments for country and community-level preparedness were inadequate, and the international system was not well coordinated to support these efforts. These weaknesses had to be urgently addressed to strengthen the global ability to prepare for, prevent, detect, and respond to pandemics. Two proposals had been put forward: (i) a *Universal Health and Preparedness Review*, by Central African Republic and Benin, as a regular and transparent process of peer review, aimed at building mutual trust and accountability for

³ See the Report document E/ECA/COE/39/15 of 13 January 2021.

preparedness, by exchanging best practices, identifying new and emerging threats, promoting accountability and targeting investments more efficiently, and; (ii) an *international treaty for pandemic preparedness and response*, which would give force to International Health Regulations.

- ii. Second, he noted how difficult it was to predict next diseases given the fact that approximately 70 percent of all emerging and re-emerging pathogens were zoonotic. He therefore stressed that future pandemics could only be prevented through an integrated 'One Health approach' that addressed how human activities were disrupting ecosystems, encroaching on habitats, and further driving climate change. These activities included pollution, large-scale deforestation and extraction, the intensification of agriculture and livestock production, the overuse and misuse of antibiotics, and the way we produce, consume, and trade food. "Protecting and promoting human health and addressing determinants of health takes a whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach", he stressed.
- iii. Lastly, he underscored that health was not a luxury or a reward for development. Rather, it was the foundation of social, economic, and political stability. "When health is at risk, everything is at risk", he reminded the meeting. He added that health must not be seen as a cost to be contained, but as an investment to be nurtured – an investment in productive populations, and in sustainable and inclusive development. He concluded that 'universal health coverage' was essential and that building strong health systems for universal health coverage required investments in primary health care, and reliable supply of safe, effective and high-quality medicines.

The Ministerial Dialogue included 25 statements by heads of delegation participating in the Africa Regional Review Meeting, including UN agencies and civil society representatives.

The Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of Malawi, shared lessons learned from the implementation of the IPoA in his country. He noted the tremendous progress in agricultural productivity, primarily through the provision of agricultural input subsidies and value addition interventions on key agricultural crops (cassava, beans, oil seed products and pigeon peas), with the plan to start exporting globally. A major setback had been the prevalence of climatic shocks including droughts and floods. To address these shocks, Malawi had been investing in climate smart agriculture. In the energy sector, Malawi was ready to enhance energy production with emphasis on clean renewable energy, and planning to utilize its regional energy sources through connection to the Southern Africa Regional Power Pool. The Vice President noted that as a land-locked country, Malawi faced high transport costs which made it difficult to fairly compete on the global market. Progress had been made in terms of improving trade transit time thanks to the One-Stop-Border Post initiative that had streamlined border procedures and facilitated trade with neighbouring countries. In coordination with the latter, Malawi had continued to invest in rail and road infrastructure to facilitate trade with the rest of the world.

H.E. Mr. Selibe Mochoboroane, Honourable Minister of Development Planning of Lesotho, noted that his government had been actively engaging the private sector in formulating and implementing strategies that would drive economic development and create sustainable and decent jobs. Efforts had been made to improve the investment climate through the Investment Climate Reforms Process aimed at increasing private investment in the economy to promote financial resources mobilization for development.

However, challenges remained that continued to limit Lesotho's productive and absorptive capacity. He noted that the government aimed at growing its export base and attracting adequate trade and investment flows. It had developed a curriculum and assessment policy aimed at harnessing and developing the necessary skills that are better aligned to our economic strategy. Lesotho was in the process of defining its new National Vision, which was an opportunity to further streamline strategies, to ensure synergies with new global perspective including SDGs, The African Union Agenda 2063, Financing for Development (Addis Ababa Action Agenda) and the LDC development Agenda.

H.E. Mr. Francisco André, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Portugal, stressed that with global interdependence so clearly confirmed, the world had a moral imperative to make it a turning point for real change. He noted that 60 percent of Portuguese bilateral Official Development Assistance was concentrated in the Least Developed Countries and in Africa, by providing not only financial resources, but also training of professionals, especially in the areas of health and education, as well as by raising the awareness of the population, sending medical supplies, organizing humanitarian flights, and supporting micro, small, and medium-sized companies, among others. As President of the Council of the European Union (EU) since January 2021, Portugal had placed human development, a sine qua non condition for sustainable development, as a priority in the area of international partnership building for the EU. He announced that in April 2021, in partnership with the European Investment Bank, the EU-Africa High Level Green Economic and Investment Forum would be organized with a view to strengthening investment between the two continents, with particular emphasis on the green economy and energy transition, and aiming to foster an effective partnership for economic development and job creation in Africa.

Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), noted that an analysis by UNDP had found that 1 billion people could be living in extreme poverty by the year 2030 - a quarter as a direct result of the pandemic. He put forward five pivotal areas that the LDC agenda for the next decade could focus on:

- i. Green Economy: it had been demonstrated that the greening of economies was a new engine for growing wealth, increasing decent employment, and reducing persistent poverty. UNDP had been helping countries to incorporate this concept into all COVID-19 recovery and stimulus measures. An accelerated energy transition was a crucial component. With proper investment and support of key international partners, African LDCs had the potential to "leapfrog" towards clean and renewable energy that could create millions of new green jobs.
- ii. Governance: over 60 percent of countries had regressed on basic rights in 2020 as a result of measures to tackle the pandemic. He called on the UN family to continue to pool vital resources and know-how to support effective, transparent, and accountable governance systems at all levels, as stable foundations were necessary to create much-needed opportunities.
- iii. Access to Finance/Debt Relief: the current crisis required a combination of additional concessional financing, timely debt relief, and transformative reforms -- including strategic use of catalytic blended finance solutions to attract sustainable private investment.
- iv. Digital Transformation: UNDP had been helping countries take advantage of the power the ongoing digital transformation, in particular innovations that could create new jobs. Affordable

broadband would be key. A worthwhile investment of \$428 billion could achieve universal broadband connectivity by 2030.

- v. Social Protection: there was an urgent need to scale-up innovative approaches to expand social protection coverage in sub-Saharan Africa, including schemes designed to correct gender inequalities. UNDP had suggested the introduction of a Temporary Basic Income that would enable nearly three billion people to stay at home – slowing the spread of the virus.

Mr. QU Dongyu, Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, underscored the critical prevalence of undernourishment in African LDCs; which was more than double the global average. He stressed the need to protect the functioning of domestic food and agricultural value chains, notably in rural areas as food security and agriculture held the key to realize the 2030 Agenda and end poverty and hunger. He called on African LDCs and Haiti to harness the potential and power of science for the agro-food system transformation, to facilitate the adoption of innovative approaches and the use of modern technology and digital applications. FAO had been working to catalyze the global efforts for inclusive and sustainable food systems and called for better collaboration and sharing of successful experiences among the international community.

H.E. Mr. Francis Mustapha Kai-Kai, Minister of Planning and Economic Development of the Republic of Sierra Leone, emphasized the call for fair and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, the need to declare vaccines a global public good and to provide support programmes to ensure universal immunization coverage. He outlined the adverse impacts COVID-19 had on the development path of Sierra Leone, which had been otherwise on a good trajectory before the pandemic, with human capital development at its centre. He congratulated development partners on the support provided and drew attention to the need for increased resource flows to finance the recovery efforts and achievement of the SDGs. He called for adequate access to climate financing and technology transfer to enhance climate change mitigation and adaptation plans. He reiterated the need for all member states to adhere to the commitments made in the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Sierra Leone welcomed the launch of the Coalition on Sustainable Energy Access for LDCs and called upon scaling up energy investment in LDCs. He expressed the commitment of Sierra Leone, as the chair of the G7 Group of Fragile States, to international initiatives aimed at improving good governance, combatting corruption, inclusive development and delivering services to its people.

Mr. Koen Doens, Director General of the European Commission's Department for International Cooperation, European Union echoed the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen in calling for a global recovery initiative that was green, digital, socially just, resilient and considered sustainability in its various forms. He underscored climate change, which was threatening livelihoods and ultimately human existence; the need for a holistic digital rulebook that included accessibility, investments in skills, and protection of data and privacy; the need for inclusive domestic job markets that met the demands of young people and followed the demographics of many African countries; and governance mechanisms that protected democratic institutions challenged by populism and misinformation, the main global challenges of our time. He described how the EU as a partner on global recovery generated scale through the Team Europe Initiative to provide a coordinated, efficient, and

impactful response to the pandemic. In less than one year, the initiative mobilised about EUR 40bn to help partner countries respond to the crisis, led the contributions to COVAX with over EUR 2.2bn, including a recent pledge of EUR 1.4bn at the G7 meeting, and invested in structural partnerships through the work of the European and African Centres for Disease Control. In the period 2021 to 2027, the EU would aim to mobilise a focused and efficient foreign aid budget. This would entail a substantial quantitative and qualitative increase by being more flexible to adapt to evolving contexts and partner's needs, including tools to help restructure debt, provide concessional financing, offer technical assistance and foster private sector development.

H.E. Mr. Mamadi Camara, Minister of Economy and Finance of the Republic of Guinea, focused on the adverse effect of the COVID-19 crisis on the livelihoods of people and the economy of Guinea. The response by the Government of Guinea had helped mitigate these and included estimating and securing additional budgetary resources, ensuring the availability of funds for service delivery, accounting for and transparently reporting on resources deployed and ensuring the continuity of activities of essential staff. He noted that Guinea would continue its fiscal transparency efforts to improve efficiency and effectiveness of public investment and plans on strengthening public investment in growth sectors.

H.E. Mr. Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development of Norway stressed the need to prioritise a rapid and equitable roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines globally. Norway had been co-chairing the Facilitation Council of the ACT Accelerator together with South Africa to mobilize support to develop, produce and make COVID-19 vaccines, treatments, and tests available globally. He called on all countries to step up and finance the USD 27 billion missing to fund the ACT Accelerator. Norway had contributed USD 500 million to it and maintained its development funding at one per cent of the country's GDP. He noted the priority areas of international cooperation for Norway as being climate adaption and the prevention and fight against hunger and its active engagement in the preparations for the UN Food Systems Summit. Norway was also the co-leader of the Alliance for Digital Public Goods and the Norwegian global digital library being in use in several LDCs. He highlighted the need to transform the digital divide into a digital bridge to open opportunities for many people in LDCs. Together with the World Bank, IFC and regional development banks, Norway promoted private sector development and supports the African Development Bank's "Jobs for Youth in Africa" initiative. He mentioned the investment of 60 percent of Norfund's capital in Sub-Saharan Africa and concrete counter-cyclical actions to support small businesses throughout the pandemic. He noted the importance of looking at each country's specific circumstances and described the process of debt restructuring for countries in immediate debt distress by the Paris Club. He concluded by stressing the need for global solidarity and cooperation to promote financial integrity, transparency, and accountability for sustainable development.

H.E. Mr. Augustus Jonathan Flomo, Deputy Minister for Economic Management, Ministry of Finance and Development Planning of the Republic of Liberia, discussed some of the issues Liberia had to face over the past decade, including the Ebola crisis, commodity price drops and the repercussions of the war and stressed that Liberia worked very hard to ensure the national development agenda remains a key priority. For this purpose, the Government of Liberia concentrated on four policy areas of reform: restoring macroeconomic stability, ensuring a fiscally sustainable growth path, addressing weaknesses in public

sector governance and the rule of law and the provision of basic social services. He confirmed that the Government of Liberia was also focussing on private sector growth and digitizing the economy, which became a sudden priority with the COVID-19 crisis. He recognised the support received by development partners and informed about a recently launched National Aid & NGO Policy, which highlighted alignment with the national development agenda, prioritizing the use of country systems as a way of building capacity.

Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the UNSG for Disaster Risk Reduction, UNDRR, underlined the importance of the Istanbul Programme of Action in advancing the disaster risk reduction agenda in LDCs. In light of COVID-19 and the climate emergency, the need to reflect the multi-hazard and systemic nature of risk faced by LDCs in the new Programme of Action had become more urgent. Disaster risk reduction needed to be placed at the core of the objectives, principles, and priorities of the programme of action, particularly in the areas of structural transformation, productive capacities and infrastructure development. She stressed the importance of the LDC5 Conference in stepping up national action on disaster risk reduction and the need for international support on this. She concluded by commending the African member states, the African Union and sub-regional organizations on their commitment to disaster risk reduction and ensured the full commitment by her office to support African LDCs in their journey towards resilience.

Dr. Milton Reis, State Secretary for Planning of the Republic of Angola, discussed the extension of the preparatory period for graduation that the General Assembly had recently agreed to. Based on the drop in oil prices and its effect on the economy, in 2018 Angola had signed an IMF agreement under the Extended Financing Programme, which established targets such as a reduction in fiscal vulnerabilities, strengthened debt sustainability, reduced inflation, a flexible exchange regime, financial sector stability and a strengthened framework to combat money laundering and terrorism financing. To build a strong, sustainable and inclusive economy and create an enabling environment for business activities, Angola was undertaking deep institutional and economic reforms and aimed to diversify its economy. He stressed the need for adequate human and financial resources on all levels to implement the actions and recommendations of the IPoA. He concluded by focusing on the demographic potential of many African LDCs and highlighted that to take advantage of it, strategies in cooperation with development partners needed to be developed to build human capital capacity and improve the quality of education, strengthening the national social protection systems and strengthening health care systems and improve the quality of health care services.

Ambassador Pirjo Suomela-Chowdhury, Ambassador of Finland in Malawi, also outlined the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on LDCs threatening the achievement of the SDGs and increasing extreme poverty. She reconfirmed Finland's commitment to contributing to international efforts to promote sustainable development, combat climate change and respond to the pandemic bilaterally, multilaterally and via the EU. She reiterated Finland's support to the preparations for the LDC5 Conference, particularly referring to her country hosting the LDC Future Forum together with the UNU-WIDER Institute with the aim to produce science-based recommendations that would benefit the action plan for the coming decade.

Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC), noted that even before the global pandemic, the global community had fallen behind in realizing the aspirations of the IPOA. She called for choosing partnership for impact in the formulation of the new programme of action. Based on the disproportionately adverse impact of the pandemic on micro-, small- and medium-enterprises (MSMEs), she suggested that these should be at the centre of the next programme of action – supported by policies and programmes to build resilience and competitiveness coupled with Aid for Trade from traditional donors, South-South partners and the private sector. Furthermore, all economic and development policies needed to address climate change and mainstream green solutions as well as digital empowerment. Finally, investment in women’s economic empowerment had to be a priority, which ITC addressed through its SheTrades initiative, working with women entrepreneurs and partners to further develop the competitiveness and capacity of women led MSMEs. She concluded by stressing the need for partnership and international collaboration and reported on the partnership between ITC and OHRLLS to undertake a joint evidence-based export potential analysis in selected LDCs and a joint operational study focusing on best practice routes to recovery to be launched at LDC5.

Dr. Nemera Gebeyehu Mamo, State Minister of Planning and Development Commission of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, agreed on the overall uneven and mixed level of implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action. He noted the challenges of slow structural transformation and a poorly performing export sector with limited competitiveness on the path to sustainable economic growth. Ethiopia had formulated a ten-year perspective plan addressing these issues and mainstreaming the SDGs and other global goals. He highlighted the commitment of Ethiopia to promote regional integration and cooperation by a new logistics strategy, constructing infrastructure and exporting electricity to neighbouring countries. He emphasised the need for enhanced support to LDCs to overcome structural challenges and to leave no one behind.

Mr. Holger Illi, Deputy Director Africa, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, referred to Germany’s long-standing cooperation with LDCs in the face of additional challenges faced due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. He noted the launch of an Emergency COVID-19 Support Programme and the commitment of EUR 4.3 billion to partner countries as part of the 2020-2021 development budget. He stressed the need to promote equitable access to vaccines and support the global ACT-Accelerator in the G7 and G20, to which Germany contributed EUR 600 million in 2020 as the second biggest donor and recently pledged an additional EUR 1.5bn to the ACT-Accelerator. He expressed his concern about the state of progress with regards to vaccine distribution and asked for additional countries and multilateral development banks to also step in and provide funding to the efforts of the ACT Accelerator in 2021. He welcomed a discussion on how the recovery measures could be aligned with the Agenda 2030 and a “forward recovery”. He suggested building back better as the leading slogan in future development policy and policy making through carbon-neutral investments and transformative policies.

Mr. Joshua Setipa, Managing Director of the UN Technology Bank for the LDCs, outlined how COVID-19 had changed the world and impacted health, social, economic, and political structures in LDCs, putting LDCs at risk of being left further behind. He stressed the need for global partnerships and enhanced coordination to allow LDCs to respond to COVID-19, foster productive capacities, graduate from the LDC

status and achieve the SDGs. He focused on concerted efforts that needed to address inequality within and across countries, bridging the digital divide, strengthening health care systems by accelerating universal health care progress, enhancing STI capacity in LDCs and developing supportive networks by facilitating collaboration and resource sharing between public and private sector actors. He concluded by confirming the readiness of the Technology Bank for LDCs to support LDCs to identify their STI challenges and opportunities and promote structural economic transformation and the achievements of the SDGs.

Ambassador Philip Ochen Odida, Deputy Permanent Representative of Uganda to the UN in New York, noted that it was critical for the LDC5 Conference to adopt a new ambitious and action-oriented programme of action that would support LDC graduation. Notwithstanding constraints, Uganda had registered some progress including in the areas of GDP growth, increase in accessibility to electricity and use of mobile phones for financial transactions, and reduction of maternal and infant mortality and HIV rates. It had adopted its third national development plan for 2021-2025 on the theme sustainable industrialization for inclusive growth, employment, and wealth creation. This included priority policies to increase household incomes, enhance value addition and increase productive capacities and export diversification. Lessons learned were the need to strengthen public sector management, to invest holistically in human capital development; to intensify efforts to address climate change, biodiversity loss; explore alternate sources of revenue and blended finance. The new programme of action should continue robust means of implementation and monitoring systems.

Ambassador Ronaldo Costa Filho, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the UN in New York, noted some of the initiatives and projects that several LDCs were implementing together with Brazil as a partner in South-South cooperation. He expressed his appreciation for LDC5 coming at a timely moment with a new programme of action needed for the 1 billion people living in LDCs. He outlined priority areas for the programme including science, technology and innovation, to allow LDCs to participate in the global digital economy; agriculture as a priority sector for job creation in LDCs with enhanced productivity and efficiency having the potential to eradicate poverty; international trade to allow for diversification of value chains; and strategies to ensure smooth graduation and transition periods for LDCs. He concluded by reaffirming the importance the Government of Brazil had attached to LDC5 and its preparatory process.

Ms. Trine Rask Thygesen, State Secretary for Development Cooperation of Denmark, noted the particularly adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on LDCs, which was coupled with the severe impacts of climate change and ongoing conflicts. She stressed the commitment of Denmark as a long-standing partner, who was taking the joint responsibility seriously. For more than 40 years Denmark had demonstrated solidarity and delivered on the UN goal of committing at least 0.7 percent of GNI to development funding. Through the EU and as a direct donor, Denmark was supporting the COVAX facility and the World Bank's initiative on electrification of health clinics in Africa with renewable energies (ESMAP) and reprioritised DKK 1bn in 2020 to the COVID-19 crisis in developing countries. She stressed the need for building back better, greener and more equal and confirmed that Denmark would continue its work for sustainable energy for all.

Mr. Hasan Kleib, Deputy Director General, Regional and National Development Sector, World Intellectual Property Organization, outlined WIPO's contributions to the implementation of the IPoA assisting LDCs in

integrating intellectual property into their national development policies and strategies. Since 2015, WIPO had been supporting the Regional Partnership Initiative for Innovation and Technological Capacity Building for the LDCs in Africa in collaboration with UNECA and provided technical assistance to support LDCs through further capacity building measures. During the past decade, WIPO helped establish Technology and Innovation Support Centres in 22 African LDCs to assist the local research and business community. He outlined that despite some progress, LDCs still had a long way to go towards the effective use of intellectual property as a tool for development and reasoned that capacity- and institution-building for science, technology and innovation and intellectual property in LDCs should be among the key substantive areas of focus for the LDC5 conference. He underlined the continued commitment of WIPO to assist LDCs in their efforts and ensured intensification of support to promote innovation and to enhance productive capacity and competitiveness of LDCs.

Ambassador Cheikh Niang, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the UN in New York, noted that though much of the IPoA agenda remained unfinished, its principles continued to be relevant. He stated that Senegal made progress in public investments in agriculture and infrastructure, however its economy was still characterized by structural constraints and a large informal sector. Because of the pandemic about 28 percent of Senegal's enterprises had come to a sudden halt and 85 percent of households suffered a fall in their income. Based on experience with prior epidemics, Senegal had shown a high level of resilience thanks to the contribution of all parts of society. The government had invested about 7 percent of its GDP to support a national programme of economic resilience that would ensure macro-economic stability and strengthen the public health system. Senegal would start its COVID-19 vaccine campaign on 23 February 2021 and would continue until complete eradication of the virus. Ambassador Niang called for new approaches to be adopted in Doha to reduce ODA dependence of African LDCs and curb illicit financial flows. A strong partnership should emerge to facilitate public and private investments in resilient infrastructure and new technologies in LDCs. It was also essential to ensure that LDCs could more easily access climate change financing and promote the incorporation of disaster risk reduction management in all development policies.

H.E. Mr. Alexander Chiteme, Minister of National Development Planning of the Republic of Zambia, highlighted the need to accelerate development efforts so that more LDCs could record progress. He focused on the progress made by Zambia during the past decade in terms of infrastructure development, electricity generation, investments in the communications sector with increased internet subscriptions, financial inclusion, improvements in access to education with increased literacy levels, decreases in maternal mortality and stunting and an increase of households that benefitted from social protection programmes such as social cash transfers. Despite the progress made, Zambia had not been spared from the effects of climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. He outlined the main lessons learned from the implementation of the IPoA, which were the need to invest in people and improve human development indicators, commitment to structural transformation, the potential of climate change to undermine development gains and therefore the requirement for a decisive and consistent response to climate change, the need to create an enabling environment for private sector growth, good governance and addressing developmental inequality. Based on these lessons, he stressed the need to make economic diversification as well as youth unemployment, skills development, universal health coverage, the

economic participation of women and building resilience to climate change priorities in the next programme of action.

Mr. Demba Moussa Dembele, President of LDC Watch stressed the adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and expressed concerns with respect to the impact of the pandemic on the reliability of data determining the graduation prospects. He recommended an extended 9-year preparatory period for LDCs eligible for graduation for the first time, such as Comoros, Djibouti, Senegal, and Zambia, in light of the pandemic. He supported the request by the LDC Group for an extension of the WTO TRIPS general transition period for an additional 12-year period after graduation. He stressed the need for structural transformation and diversification of LDCs economies as well as the need for an open internet, based on net neutrality as a common good. He called upon the international community to adhere to commitments on financial flows, trade and technical assistance made to LDCs in 2001 in Brussels and 2011 in Istanbul. And he called upon the UN and all development partners to ensure timely and equitable access to vaccines for LDCs, highlighting this as a global responsibility and urged development partners to fulfil the pledge made of allocating 0.2 percent of their GNP to LDCs. He concluded by recommending providing more policy space for LDCs in international decision-making, strengthening their ownership and leadership and providing more space to LDC Watch and other CSOs to enhance their participation in debates on development issues on all levels.

Mr. Nickson Kasolene, Youth representative, Central Committee member, TEJO (World Esperanto Youth Organization), stressed the need to solve the health crisis, security issues, improve access to education, productive employment and decent work as well as fill the gaps with respect to infrastructure, transport, access to energy and ICT, which continued to hold back the development of many African LDCs. He underscored that the majority of the population in many African LDCs were made up of young people and that young people could be agents of change. To ensure that young people were included in policy and decision-making processes that would define their present and future, it was necessary for governments to recognise young people as equal partners and relevant stakeholders.

Session 2: Building peaceful, just and inclusive societies – organized in cooperation with OSAA

Session 2 was held on 23 February 2021 and was moderated by Ms. Cristina Duarte, Under Secretary General and Special Adviser on Africa to the United Nations Secretary-General. The session featured presentations by H.E. Mr. Eisenhower Mkaka, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malawi; H.E. Ms. Victoria Ouédraogo Kibora, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Civic Participation of Burkina Faso; Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa, Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa; Dr. Cyril Obi, Program Director, The African Initiative, Social Sciences Research Council; Mr. Raphael Obonyo, Young Activist and Public Policy Specialist. H.E. Ms. Marie Chatardová, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations in New York, acted as lead discussant and an interactive discussion followed.

Participants discussed progress made in the areas of governance and building peaceful, just and inclusive societies recognizing that the theme of the session corresponded with “good governance at all levels”, which was one of the eight interrelated priority areas of the IPOA.

Participants acknowledged that despite the existing challenges, all of which were exacerbated by severe impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, many LDCs had made some progress in achieving good governance, rule of law, protection and promotion of human rights, and democratic participation. Against this background, however, the prevalence of conflict continued to be high in African LDCs and election-related violent protests and terrorism were on the rise. In many cases, civil unrest was entwined with political instability, high unemployment, particularly among the youth, radicalization, forced migration, and the effects of climate change, especially in the form of competition over scarce resources. This situation resulted in socio-economic disruptions and development setbacks including in pushing populations into food insecurity not only in conflict affected LDCs but in their sub-regions and the continent at large.

Participants assessed the causes of instability across LDCs. One of the driving factors highlighted in the session was the unequal and limited access to vital-and-everyday services such as water and sanitation, education, healthcare and housing, which in turn, amplifies socioeconomic disparities and magnified perceived hopelessness towards addressing poverty and marginalization, therefore eroding trust and the social contract between citizens and their governments. The COVID-19 pandemic had put additional pressure on governments' capacity to deliver basic services to their citizens.

Participants shared country experiences in building peaceful, just, and inclusive societies as well as initiatives by international organizations to support these efforts both at the national and regional levels. It was reiterated that countries' constitutions and laws explicitly prohibit all forms of discrimination, including those that are based on race, ethnic groups, gender, and religions. Building on these premises, LDCs have formulated strategies aimed at strengthening governance institutions to promote the rule of law and ensuring access to justice, while guaranteeing equality and non-discrimination. Where conflict erupted, LDCs designed reintegration programmes that rested on restoring state authority along with provision of basic public services and support to communities to build livelihoods. In support of national and regional efforts, development partners of LDCs had also rolled out strategies, plans and projects. These focused on national as well as regional cooperation to promote complementarity as well as synergies of activities, partnerships and innovations, and mobilize expertise and financial resources for implementation.

Participants felt that policymakers should enhance their understanding of real or perceived exclusion and lack of representation with a view to make policy-processes more inclusive of youth and other important stakeholders. In this regard, it was recommended to promote a new social compact based on bridging unequal access to resources, justice and economic opportunities to build greater resilience and drive social transformation.

Participants agreed that one of the core elements of this social contract was improved and equal public service delivery. There was a need to build social legitimacy to consolidate political legitimacy with the aim of building resilient societies.

There was also a consensus that ensuring improved and equal access to public services by all requires inclusiveness through the whole programmatic cycle – from planning and budgeting to monitoring and accountability. This would require building and strengthening of inclusive institutions, where civil society,

women, youth, minorities and people with disabilities and all other important and relevant stakeholders, have opportunities to make their voices heard.

Participants shared the view that along with equal access to public service, structural transformation of the economies of LDCs, decent employment generation, access and use of technologies, including those needed for the production of vaccines, were also essential ingredients to building conducive environment for peace and security in LDCs. Related to this, participants noted that local level and individual youth-led socially and economically profitable initiatives needed to be promoted since they provided opportunities to improve their lives and their communities.

The importance of increasing transparency in public service delivery as well as equitable access to functioning, impartial and responsive grievance redress mechanisms and distribution across the continent was noted as a critical step in efforts to prevent instability and conflict.

They also acknowledged the importance of adequate domestic and regional mediation and conflict resolution mechanisms/frameworks and reiterated the needs to build synergies among these institutional tools.

Participants stressed the need for more responsive leadership, good governance, effective justice and peace institutions and social investments in the youth and vulnerable populations by prioritizing education and research-based knowledge production as key drivers of social justice, food security, health security, human capital expansion and technological innovation which will enable LDCs to accelerate their drive towards sustainable development.

Participants noted the importance of further strengthening capacities in systematizing prevention-orientation in planning and delivery of development outcomes and in further integrating socio-economic analysis into political engagement strategies in LDCs.

There was a need to promote young people's inclusion in the peace and security agenda. Governments must create inclusive spaces and platforms for young leaders to learn from and share practical knowledge and skills with experienced professionals.

Further, participants recognized the critical need of building partnerships, with LDCs being in the driving seat. They also concurred that building peaceful, just, and inclusive societies could not happen without the effective participation and voice of LDCs in global governance and reiterated calls for reforms in the global governance architecture. The attainment of such reforms is precedent to a truly just and inclusive global community.

IV. Session 3: Rethinking structural transformation in African LDCs in the era of technological advancement and innovation

Session 3 was held on 23 February 2021 and was moderated by Ms. Maria Torres Macho, UN Resident Coordinator in Malawi. The session featured presentations by the Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi and Minister of Economic Planning and Development and Public Sector Reforms; Mr. Mario Pezzini, Director, OECD Development Centre; Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, Director, International Telecommunication Union (ITU); Mr. Ken Shawa, Senior Economist,

Regional Office for Africa, International Labour Organization (ILO), Ms. Naria Santa Lucia, General Manager Digital Inclusion and Community Engagement, Microsoft Philanthropies; Ms. Boutheina Guermazi, Director of Digital Development Department of the Infrastructure Practice Group, World Bank Group. Mr. Farrukh Alimdjano, Industrial Development Officer within the Innovation and Digitalization Division at the UNIDO Department of Digitalization, Technology and Agri-Business, acted as lead discussant and an interactive discussion followed.

Participants focused on the important role of technological advancement and innovation as enablers for structural transformation to build back better after the pandemic and to achieve the SDGs. This was crucial for African LDCs as these countries relied on a limited export base, dominated by export of low value primary agricultural or natural resource-based products.

Participants called for countries to re-invigorate their manufacturing sector through the use of new technologies and by ensuring strong and forward-looking linkages with, for example, agriculture and mining sectors by promoting value addition. Technology could be a passport to development if fully integrated in relevant sectors. Digital tools could make agricultural activities more productive and support manufacturing and services to be more connected. Agro-industrialisation policies were recommended as they had the potential to reallocate resources from labour-intensive and less productive activities towards more capital and technology-intensive ones that were more efficient. The need for digital connectivity and digital platforms to support the structural transformation and employment creation for communities, youth, and women was also underscored.

The COVID-19 pandemic had created a political momentum for accelerating digital transformation with digital as the new paradigm for development. To sustain this, public and private institutions had to play an important role. The session recommended building new and upgraded partnerships between the public and the private sector. The private sector should be engaged in co-designing and supporting projects using data-driven approaches. This type of investment could have catalytic effects on projects that governments could scale up.

Participants stressed the need to invest in (digital) education and skills development to close the digital divide between rural and urban areas as well as women and men and increase human capacity and labour productivity so that LDCs will be able to reap the benefits of digital transformation. While digital literacy was a first step, digital fluency and life-long-learning systems would be required, especially in local environments that provided the required knowledge and adaptation possibilities for entrepreneurs.

In addition, the need to tackle challenges of affordable broadband connectivity was underscored. This could be done through appropriate policies and regulation, alternative funding models, infrastructure sharing, and creating the right conditions for private sector investment, amongst others. Also, existing technologies needed to be adapted to local needs.

Participants recommended the adoption of a comprehensive approach that looked at digital transformation in a holistic manner as having the potential to raise growth per capita, by 1.5 percent per year, and reduce poverty headcount by 0.7 per cent per year. For this to happen, the individual challenges of African LDCs had to be addressed, including the digital infrastructure, broadband access, availability,

safety and affordability, skills, entrepreneurship, inclusion, data protection, protection of intellectual property rights and cybersecurity.

V. Session 4: Mobilizing resources for sustainable development in African LDCs

Session 4 was held on 24 February 2021 and was moderated by Mr. Anders Berlin, Senior Adviser, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF). The keynote address was delivered by Ms. Susanna Moorehead, Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Chair, OECD. The session featured presentations by Honorable Felix Mlusu, Minister of Finance, Malawi; Honorable Augustus J. Flomo, Deputy Minister for Economic Management, Ministry of Finance Liberia; Ms. Rola Dashti, Executive Secretary, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA); Ms. Preeti Sinha, Executive Secretary, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF); Mr. Theophilus Jong Yungong, Head of Programmes, African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD); Mr. Admassu Tadesse, Group MD and President Emeritus, Trade and Development Bank (TDB); Dr. Sarah Ssewanyana, Executive Director, Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC), Uganda. An interactive discussion followed.

The discussion acknowledged the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the already vulnerable and fragile LDC economies. It was noted that SDGs were off-track, but now they were going backwards, with the huge funding gap widening further. For example, tax revenues and remittances have declined and FDI flows have collapsed, while international trade had also been severely affected. At the same time access to borrowing had also become harder and illicit financial flows are still prevalent in many African LDCs.

Most speakers called for stronger collective political will and effective partnerships across all sectors and across all borders, including the private sector, to build back better and greener for women, children and men. The need to break down silos was reiterated to implement solutions that have been discussed for a long time. For all sources of finance, a stronger case for investment in LDCs needed to be made, including a rethinking of the risk appetite.

It was flagged that tax revenues in African LDCs were low, partly due to their large informal sector. Thus, innovative ways for mobilizing domestic resources were needed. For example, Malawi was incentivizing the informal sector to bring them into the formal sector for tax purposes, for example through credit-financing facilities that could be accessed through SME associations or cooperatives.

The need to be strategic to support revenue generation was also flagged, including broadening the tax base to sectors not adequately contributing to tax revenue, for example natural resource extraction as well as reducing tax evasion. In this respect the need for capacity building as well as resources for the implementation of reforms were highlighted, as well as the availability of support, for example through tax inspectors without borders.

It was also suggested that the government could promote national solidarity funds, that brought together the richest people in the country to create a fund that was targeted towards creating opportunity for the poor.

At the same time the need to improve efficiency of spending of public resources was mentioned, including balancing of social services with economic infrastructure and addressing inequality through inclusive

spending. Fiscal sustainability of social programmes should be ensured, creating opportunities and not dependencies. The key role of financial sector reforms was flagged, including the development of adequate payment infrastructure.

Speakers informed that ODA to LDCs has declined between 2011 and 2019 and total ODA is not expected to increase. It was noted that DAC donors in addition to their bilateral ODA also contribute through multilateral channels, including support to COVAX.

Thus, the need to prioritize ODA to LDCs as well as to enhance effectiveness of ODA was flagged. This would include better coordination among development partners and alignment of aid with national priorities, including through budget support or sector wide support. The issuance of new Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), combined with a redistribution mechanism targeting SDGs was recommended. Furthermore, the important role of South-South cooperation was highlighted.

It was mentioned that in many LDCs the debt to GDP ratio was increasing and the composition of debt changed towards less concessional sources. Thus, responsible borrowing for productive use and responsible lending, not overburdening countries was recommended. This would include investment in revenue generating infrastructure and other capital investments that could support the long-term debt servicing.

Most speakers welcomed the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) to enhance fiscal space and called for its extension. In addition, the need for debt restructuring mechanisms to ensure long-term debt sustainability, was flagged, including debt for SDG or climate swaps. It was also highlighted that the international financial architecture needed to take LDC interests into account.

Speakers recommended that ODA needed to be combined with other sources of financing, making ODA more catalytic. However, obstacles to blended finance mentioned, included limited fiscal space for co-financing as well as small sizes of potential projects.

It was suggested that donors, LDCs, and institutional investors collectively work on a blended finance initiative to fund SDG in LDCs. Furthermore, the need to aggregate deals to reach minimum sizes required by finance providers, the need to develop pipelines of projects in LDCs and guarantees to reduce risks were discussed. A global roadshow was suggested to expose the LDCs to institutional investors to showcase their return potential.

There was agreement that governments needed to create enabling environments for the private sector to invest in risky markets and create employment for youth. The need for risk mitigation strategies including guarantees, to enhance finance for local companies including SMEs was highlighted. The role of public-private partnerships was also discussed.

The Trade and Development Bank was mentioned as an example combining public and private capital. The importance of understanding the requirements of private institutional investors, like pension funds from within and outside Africa was underscored. TDB created opportunities to co-finance investment, including for trade (vaccines, fertilizer). It attracted risk adjusted bankable business, due to enhanced credibility. The sharing of experiences of different financial institutions was also recommended.

Several speakers focused on the need to enhance financing for green solutions from all sources, including innovative solutions like bonds for biodiversity. It was recommended to extend development effectiveness principles to climate finance and to consider externalities of financing decisions. It was flagged that a green transformation could create income and thus resources for increased investment.

It was mentioned that to address fiscal risks emanating from natural disasters, Malawi was investing in risk transfer financing instruments, including sovereign insurance.

VI. Session 5: Enhancing External Trade, building and maintaining resilient infrastructure and promoting regional integration in African LDCs

Session 5 was held on 24 February 2021 and was moderated by Ms. Giovannie Biha, Deputy Special Representative for West Africa and the Sahel, UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS). The session featured presentations by Honorable Dr. Thabiso Paul Molapo, Minister of Trade and Industry, Lesotho; Ms. Isabelle Durant, Acting Secretary General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); Honorable Mr. Sosten Gwengwe, Minister of Trade, MP, Malawi; Mr. Ratnakar Adhikari, Executive Director for the Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF); Ms. Emily Mburu-Ndoria, Director of Trade in Services and IP, African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat (AfCFTA); Mr. Taufiqur Rahman, Head, LDC Unit, Development Division, World Trade Organisation (WTO); Ms. Louise Wigget, Chief Executive Officer, Global Trade Solution. An interactive discussion followed.

The Session discussed enhancing external trade for African LDCs, infrastructure development and the role of regional integration of the ARRM on the Implementation of the IPoA.

Panelists acknowledged the critical importance of international trade for LDCs to achieve the SDGs. It was also recognized that the share of LDCs in global trade had not seen any discernible improvement over the last decade - the share of LDCs in Africa in world merchandise exports had declined from 0.69 per cent in 2011 to 0.57 per cent in 2019. African LDCs represented half of commercial services exports of the LDC Group.

It was highlighted that trade agreements and arrangements had enabled African LDCs to participate in the global and regional value chains resulting in industrialization in certain economic sectors. Thousands of jobs had been created and maintained. The recently launched African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) provided additional market access opportunities. AfCFTA was expected to spur an accelerated industrialisation through diversified productive capacities in line with the attainment of broader Agenda 2063 goals. This would present significant opportunities for accelerated economic expansion that would yield real benefits to LDCs and would mobilise greater domestic and foreign investments.

Speakers also highlighted that COVID-19 restrictions and measures had slowed down economic activities and caused disruptions to production networks, supply chains and consumer spending. In addition, there were challenges pertaining to LDCs' undiversified export products and markets.

Participants acknowledged that infrastructure remained a key constraint and challenge for LDCs in Africa. Investment in infrastructure could serve as a foundation for economic development and growth. Building sustainable infrastructure would help ensure delivery of development benefits over a long term. It was

recommended that LDC governments develop policies geared towards diversification and build infrastructure that was required to support industrialisation, including agriculture, mainly focused on production of high value products and agro-processing, manufacturing, services (tourism, creative industries) and technology and innovation.

Participants shared that achieving regional integration for Africa required hard infrastructure (ports, roads, railways and telecommunications), soft infrastructure (regulations, customs, business environment) and increased breadth and depth of integration (market access, trade and integration beyond trade). The role of the private sector in mobilising resources for infrastructure development was emphasised. There was a need to empower Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to increase their share of trade as LDCs strive to penetrate the African market by supplying goods and services to the rest of the continent.

It was suggested that greater gains would also be realized through trade facilitation instruments, by reducing nontariff barriers and improving hard and soft infrastructure at the borders. These measures would reduce red tape, lower compliance costs for traders, and ultimately make it easier for African businesses to create regional value chains and integrate into global supply chains.

To ensure that Aid for Trade flows had a more impactful role, sectors and value chains with the greatest potential for poverty reduction and inclusiveness needed to be strengthened, including greater streamlining of the gender dimension in Aid for Trade support. Donor coordination, through mechanisms such as the EIF, should be further exploited for targeted assistance and resource mobilization towards common priorities in the LDCs.

VII. Session 6: Social and human development in the African LDCs: reducing inequality and advancing wellbeing and opportunities – organized in cooperation with UNDP

Session 6 was held on 25 February 2021 and was moderated by Mr. Mansour Ndiaye, Head of Inclusive Growth, UNDP. The session featured an opening statement by Honourable Ms. Patricia Kaliati, Minister of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare of Malawi and presentations by H.E. Ms. Paula Ingabire, Minister of Information and Communications Technology of Rwanda, H.E. Mr. Alexander Chiteme, Minister of National Development and Planning of Zambia, Mr. Raymond Gilpin, Chief, Strategy Analysis and Research Team, UNDP Africa Bureau, Mr. Joël Anani, Regional Director for Africa, International Federation of Medical Students' Associations (IFMSA) and Mr. Haroon Bhorat, Director of Development Policy Research Unit, University of Cape Town, South Africa. An interactive discussion followed.

Participants acknowledged the backsliding of millions in Africa into extreme poverty, due to the direct - and especially indirect - effects of COVID-19. Poverty had risen for the first time in 20 years, and 100 million Africans who could previously afford energy were no longer able to. The impact had been felt especially by women and girls, who had lost jobs and left school at very high rates. Gender-based violence, rape and marriage and pregnancy rates for girls under the age of 18 had risen during the pandemic, stressing the importance of measures towards eliminating violence against women, ensuring sexual and reproductive health and promote human rights and gender equality.

A key theme raised by the participants included social protection, safety nets and other support measures to provide people (especially youth, women, and girls) with the appropriate training and opportunities for innovation that could help individuals and communities develop. Despite the positive examples of expansion of cash transfer programs in African LDCs, participants agreed that much remained to be done. This combined with the bleak employment outlook across Sub-Saharan Africa by 2100 (35 percent of all individuals of working age globally will be in Sub-Saharan Africa), demonstrated the need to find more integrated solutions for employment creation.

Participants highlighted the importance of digital connectivity to everything from supporting youth innovation and service provision, to financial inclusion and blended learning (while recognizing that some students had not had access to even radio broadcast learning during COVID-19 lockdowns). Rwanda reported using robots for disinfecting spaces in airports, taking 30 minutes compared to 6 hours required by humans, showing how much more time health professionals could spend on their patients with the appropriate technology to support them. However, there was much work to be done as the largest proportion of unconnected people globally lived in Sub-Saharan Africa. Investments in digital connectivity and its supporting infrastructure were necessary to make progress in these areas.

Structural transformation that addressed human, natural, and financial capital in an integrated manner was key to building back better after COVID-19. In moving from agriculture to production, countries should examine their capabilities and build from there as for example with growing cocoa and expanding to processing chocolate. Projects like the Observatory of Economic Complexity⁴, which analysed international trade data to advise countries on where to focus their efforts, could be an innovative approach to supporting LDCs planning and trading systems. Participants concluded that investments in human capital, especially in women and youth were key to tackling the inequalities that limited access to justice, financial services and social services required to move out of poverty.

VIII. Session 7: Building sustainable, inclusive and resilient food systems in African LDCs – organized in cooperation with FAO

Session 7 was held on 24 February 2021 and was moderated by Mr. Abebe Haile-Gabriele, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN (FAO). A keynote address was delivered by Dr. Máximo Torero, FAO Chief Economist. It featured presentations by H.E. Ato Oumer Hussein, Minister of Agriculture of Ethiopia; H.E. Lobin Lowe, Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Development of Malawi; H.E. Vincent Bamulangaki Ssempijja, Minister of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries of Uganda; Ms. Sara Mbago-Bhunu, Director, East and Southern Africa Division, International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), Ms. Elizabeth Nsimadala, President, Pan Africa Farmers Organization (PAFO). An interactive discussion followed. Ms. Agnes Kalibata, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for 2021 Food Systems Summit, provided concluding remarks.

⁴ See www.oec.world

Participants shared the unique challenges and opportunities, in light of COVID-19, which exacerbated food insecurity in many LDCs, citing multiple factors such as climate change, conflict and economic downturns. Africa was off track to achieve the goal of ending hunger by 2025 and by 2030 as stipulated in the African Union (AU) Malabo Declaration and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The prevalence of undernourishment (PoU) in Sub-Saharan Africa has been on the rise in the past 5 years, reaching 22.0 percent in 2019 (up from 21.2 percent in 2015). There were 235 million undernourished people in Sub-Saharan Africa in 2019, an increase of 15.6 percent compared to 2015.

Priority areas for the response to and recovery from COVID-19 discussed included reliable data that allowed for a better understanding of vulnerability, for targeted interventions and decision making, the development and implementation of trade and food safety standards, boosting smallholder resilience for recovery and the prevention of the next zoonotic pandemic.

Participants called upon stakeholders to work together to promote sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food systems that could transform food supply in African LDCs by providing equal access to land, markets, financial services, technology, education, training and information, and infrastructure. At the global level, large-scale investments in research, innovation, technology, and infrastructure were required. Inclusive food systems had to be shaped by local contexts by including the status of specific populations, economic structures, cultural norms and tailored food system policies that could create opportunities for marginalized people, giving them a voice in research and policy- and program-design processes.

Participants stressed the need for infrastructure investments along the entire food value chain such as in improved food storage and preservation capacities, improved processing technologies and agricultural production and markets. Territorial approaches, such as agro-industry parks and incubators could, for example cost-efficiently provide rural areas with services and support development of the middle segments of the agri-food value chain.

An inclusive, sustainable, and resilient agri-food system approach needed to encompass a wide range of public and private actors, as their interdependent activities and institutions were all responsible for success. The ultimate objective was a contribution to a broad-based improvement of welfare for a society, for both current and future generations and with less adverse impacts on the environment.

Participants shared best practices and success stories in producing surplus despite all the challenges, which include but not limited to, empowerment and financial inclusion of smallholder producers, family farmers, youth and women as well as small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs), promotion of investment, digital innovation value chain development and value addition, strengthening the governance or land tenure.

For countries to take advantage of the growing market opportunities through the African Continental Free Trade Area, participants encouraged countries to further share challenges and solutions through the national dialogues organized in preparation for the United Nations Food Systems Summit to be held September 2021.

IX. Session 8: Building climate resilience and accelerating the energy transition in African LDCs

Session 8 was held on Friday, 26 February 2021, and was moderated by Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, UN-OHRLLS. The session featured presentations by the Honourable Newton Kambala, Minister of Energy, Government of Malawi; Mr. Francesco La Camera, Director-General, The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA); Mr. Mustapha Bakkoury, President & CEO of the Moroccan Agency for Sustainable Energy (MASEN), Co-lead for Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access; Ms. Cecilia Njenga, Head South Africa Office, UNEP; Mr. Eric Wanless, Project Manager, Green and Inclusive Energy, Rockefeller Foundation; and Mr. Amjad Abbashar, Head of UNDDR's Regional Office for Africa. Honourable Jean Kapata, MP, Minister of Lands and Natural Resources, Republic of Zambia, Honourable Mohapi Mohapinyane, Minister of Energy and Meteorology, Kingdom of Lesotho, The Honourable Nancy Tembo, M.P., Minister of Forest and Natural Resources, Malawi and Mr. Brian Dean, Sustainable Energy for All (SEforAll) acted as lead discussants. An interactive discussion followed.

Participants discussed the high degree of vulnerability facing African LDCs and concrete recommendations were put forward by speakers to support LDCs to build resilience to climate change, natural disasters and support the energy transition.

All LDCs had been putting in place their first National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to pave the way for tackling medium- and long-term adaptation needs. In this context, strengthening the ability of LDCs to access climate finance was of key importance. The international community should scale up support towards improving coordination and simplifying modalities for accessing climate finance and requisite conditionalities to meaningfully implement NAPs.

Actions to drive the green pandemic recovery required the mobilisation of the informal sector which constituted 80 percent of the labour market in Africa. This required developing NDC implementing investment tools by integrating communal cooperatives as a critical financial instrument for climate action to ensure informal sector financing instruments could be leveraged to drive the green pandemic recovery.

LDCs should prioritize human capital youth-investment and structurally guide youth to continually improve, refine and adapt their skills, talents, energy, and creativity towards finding purpose in enterprises that upscale a circular/green economy and nature-based solutions. LDCs must ensure national and international climate finances reach down to local communities and involve them in planning and implementing for building climate resilience at the local level where climate impacts were most felt. Establishing strong meaningful local, bilateral and multi-lateral partnerships for finance and technology transfer and actively engaging the local communities in the planning and implementation of the adaptive capacities were key.

The discussion noted the need for direct access to climate finance by LDCs, mainstreamed into the global financial system. Local Climate Adaptive Living Facilities led by the LDCs could be part of the way forward to secure funding by the Green Climate Fund and other sources that could be delivered through national systems but report globally. The newly established International Municipal Investment Fund, which was a private sector fund devoted to investing in developing country cities, to provide long-term infrastructure

finance to free up some of the sub-sovereign space, would also contribute to creating the investment ecosystem needed in LDCs.

Efforts must be enhanced to support all African LDCs to build human assets, diversify their economies, build resilience to present and future shocks, and to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda as well as the Africa Agenda 2063.

The United Nations system should support enhanced policy coherence on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) in African LDCs. Many stakeholders did not grasp the DRR concept even though DRR related projects and activities were implemented. This highlights the need for sector-wide awareness of DRR, as well as identification of DRR activities within ministerial budgets. National Statistics Offices (NSO) should support planning the production and centralization of data and information related to risk assessments and indicators.

Participants shared how increased energy access can be achieved by using renewable energy. Africa was endowed with renewable energy resources and could meet nearly a quarter of its energy needs from indigenous and clean resources. Renewable energy could be a game-changer in Africa's development path. African LDCs could not achieve this transformation on their own. Coordinated efforts from the global community would need to underpin efforts to close the access gap. IRENA's Climate Investment Platform was facilitating the creation of a pipeline of bankable projects and implemented 97 projects worth over 38 billion in Africa to date.

Participants noted while there was some progress towards improving energy efficiency and expanding access to electricity globally, significant deficits were increasingly concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa. Climate change had impacted energy security in countries which relied heavily on hydro power generated electricity due to reduced water levels in reservoirs resulting in rationing power supply to communities. Speakers shared examples of energy efficiency solutions including nature-based solutions that were critical to both improving energy access and energy transition.

There was a call for a unified UN led support system with special programmes for regions to support the LDCs in addressing climate change and energy shortages. Speakers also recognised the important role the Technology Bank for LDCs could play in facilitating the transfer of technology.

The Coalition for Sustainable Energy Access for LDCs and Other Developing Countries, announced at the last UN Climate Action Summit, intended to facilitate the linkages between existing initiatives and institutions and beneficiary countries to support and mobilize partner institutions and accelerate the implementation of energy access projects including in the LDCs.

It was recommended that climate adaptation and sustainable energy should therefore be one of the central thematic topics of the new 10-year programme of action for the LDCs to be adopted at LDC5.

X. High-level Closing Session

The closing session was held on Friday 26 February. It was chaired by the Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi and Minister of Economic Planning and

Development and Public Sector Reforms. The outcome document of the Africa Regional Review was adopted. Presentations of the main conclusions and recommendations from the side events held during the week were made.

The Hon. Ulemu Msungama, Minister of Youth of Malawi summarized the highlights from the side event on Youth SDG Accelerators in Least Developed Countries, which was co-organized by the Government of Malawi with the United Nations in Malawi and included an exhibition. Key messages included the need for Governments to meaningfully engage and empower young people and provide a conducive environment for the youth to participate at all levels of decision making, including through platforms that help strengthen and maintain engagement, social contact and trust with young people. He also stressed the need to prepare young people for the digital age, and awareness on the importance of preserving the environment and climate change challenges was identified. Governments and international agencies should take into consideration youth employment the development of skills and gender empowerment, in regional and international development agendas.

Mr. Joshua Setipa, Managing Director, UN Technology Bank for the LDCs flagged the lessons learned from a side event on Empowering LDCs through science, technology and innovation. The key policy messages expressed by the panelists included the need to enhance research and development capacity in LDCs to facilitate the commercialization of innovations. It was also flagged that STI should be integrated into national development plans and that partnerships and coordination across the ecosystem were crucial. It was also mentioned that digital transformation and ICT connectivity were critical to stimulate competitiveness and facilitate the export of value-added products from LDCs. It was recommended to increase investment in STI and R&D through collaboration between the private sector and academia to enhance innovation and competitiveness, to facilitate technology transfer to LDCs and promote awareness of intellectual property rights to protect innovations from LDCs and to provide financial and in-kind resources to the Technology Bank to continue supporting LDCs to enhance science, technology and innovation capacity.

Ms. Preeti Sinha, Executive Secretary, UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) reported on the solutions suggested during a side event on the Impacts of COVID-19 on SMEs in LDCs and the role of blended finance in supporting a resilient recovery. It was recommended to invest in people and organizations with relevant knowledge, who could find investment opportunities and understand the world of SMEs and to bundle the capital solution with capacity building and business development services, as SMEs needed assistance with skills such as accounting and uptake of digital tools. The importance of the development of vibrant domestic capital markets and financial intermediaries, that could help reduce risks and facilitate access to credit for SMEs was also highlighted. Think holistically and focus on aggregation. In times of crisis there was a need to move quickly –look at what was out there and put money into those existing vehicles or initiatives that aimed to scale blended finance for LDCs. Furthermore, it was suggested to foster competition in the financial market to drive more capital to SMEs and to remove capital constraints for international investors, including fintech companies and other innovative private sector enterprises.

In her Closing Remarks, Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island

Developing States, Secretary-General of the LDC5 Conference highlighted the need to transform the digital divide into a digital bridge and to make sure an ecosystem for digital transformation was in place, that went beyond improving productive capacity and could give a voice to people and create an innovative partnership. She also flagged the great untapped potential in e-commerce and opportunities for LDCs to integrate into regional and global value chains.

Furthermore, she stressed that mitigation and adaptation to climate change needed to be taken more seriously by all actors and that LDCs needed to put their resources into action and prioritize inclusive and sustainable development for all their citizens. She called for better access to external finance for LDCs, including ODA but also innovative finance, and the need for long-term solutions to unsustainable debt levels; as well as the need to work more closely with the private sector, through channeling private finance into sustainable development action that contributes to job creation. She called for enhanced attention to enterprises run by women and the inclusion of youth in the preparatory process for LDC 5.

Hon. Mohapi Mohapinyane, Minister of Energy and Meteorology of Lesotho delivered a Vote of Thanks to the government of Malawi, OHRLLS and ECA for the excellent preparations for the meeting. He mentioned that the meeting indicated the keen interest in LDC issues and wide efforts being made to find solutions to LDCs challenges in pursuit of a dynamic, action-oriented and transformative new programme of action.

The Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi and Minister of Economic Planning and Development and Public Sector Reforms in his closing remarks flagged that COVID-19 had worsened LDCs vulnerabilities, including those from climate change, which may prolong their recovery and amplified the need to find innovative ways to *build back better, cleaner and stronger*. He also highlighted that strong institutions and systems including rule of law, human rights and justice were fundamental pillars of sustainable development.

He flagged the importance of enhancing intra-African trade through the African Continental Free Trade Agreement and efforts of integrating LDCs into the multilateral trade system through enhanced transport infrastructure networks and improved productive capacity of LDCs economies, supported by initiatives under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Aid for Trade, among others. He also stressed that it was not only important to expand external resources but that it was essential to lower the cost of remittances and to allow for an expansion in domestic resource mobilization by diversifying the resource pool to private financing.

He concluded by looking forward to an ambitious outcome of the Fifth United Nations Conference on LDCs, in Doha, Qatar, in January 2022 and expressing his expectation that a new *Programme of Action* would provide concrete guidance on how to achieve truly sustainable development and a better future for the people of LDCs.

XI. Side Events

A. “Youth are SDG Accelerators in Least Developed Countries” organized by the Government of Malawi with support of UN Malawi

The side event themed “Youth are Suitable Development Goals Accelerators in Least Developed Countries” was co-hosted by the Government of Malawi and the United Nations in Malawi, on Tuesday, 23 February 2021 with the main objective to showcase inspiring and innovative initiatives presently championed by the youth in Malawi. The event showed how they were helping to transform communities and provided a platform for sharing ideas on how to achieve sustainable development in LDCs by 2030. The Side Event also intended to influence policy makers participating in the African Regional Review Meeting to focus their attention on youth as SDG accelerators in their preparation for the LDC5 Conference.

The key messages that the youth themselves had delivered for the LDC Governments’ attention and consideration, included the following:

- i. LDCs were not going to achieve sustainable development if the majority of their population, including the youth, were left out of national development processes.
- ii. Governments should meaningfully engage young people and provide a conducive environment for the youth to participate at all levels of decision making.
- iii. Governments should put in place deliberate systems and platforms that help strengthen and maintain engagement, social contact, dialogue and trust with young people. This should include treating the youth not only as beneficiaries but key partners in development by taking on board their ideas on matters concerning socio-economic development.
- iv. There should be provision for enough opportunities and the necessary incentives to effectively develop the potential of the youth through capital financing, linkages to markets both locally and internationally, and exposing the youth to fully exploit their potential.
- v. The need for LDCs to reform education systems to allow for the development of skills and talents that are consistent with the demands of the job market. That should include preparing the young people for the digital age; and awareness on the importance of conserving the environment as we fight against climate change challenges.

Honorable Ulemu Msungama, M.P., Minister of Youth and Sports of Malawi, underscored that in the face of no action, LDCs risked a broken social fabric and an exodus of youth elsewhere in search of opportunities. He stressed the crucial importance of Governments’ strategic partnership with the youth in leveraging their innovation, creative ideas, and resourcefulness. He called on African LDC governments and international development agencies to take into consideration youth employment, skills development, and gender empowerment as top priorities in all national, regional and international development agenda.

B. “Empowering LDCs through Science, Technology and Innovation – Lessons Learned” organized by the UN Technology Bank

On 24 February 2021, a side event was held organized by the Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries in collaboration the Government of Malawi, Government of Turkey and the UN Economic Commission for Africa. ⁵Around 100 participants attended the event meeting via Zoom.

In his opening remarks H.E. Mr. Gospel Kazako, Minister of Information, Malawi highlighted the contribution of Information Technology and Communication (ICT) as an important tool for integration and full participation in the more modern global economy for development and to the attainment of the sustainable development goals (SDGs). He noted that LDCs could not afford to miss the numerous advantages of ICT. He also outlined how Malawi had incorporated ICT development in the National development frameworks including the Malawi 2063 plan to improve competitiveness to access markets and the Malawi Medium Term Strategy - Malawi Growth and Development Strategies (MDGS3) where transport and ICT infrastructure were prioritized as enablers for achieving SDGs. Minister noted that COVID19 has demonstrated the importance of ICT through online education and eCommerce including spill-over effects in other sectors such as transportation, manufacturing and services that have socio-economic impact on Malawi. Minister also highlighted the progress of Malawi on ICT development including, the digital migration project, operationalization of access to information Act of 2016, the national broadband fibre project and rural connectivity project to name a few.

Mr. Setipa, Managing Director of the United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries provided an overview of the activities of the Technology Bank since 2018 and lessons learned. He noted that the core driving principle of the Technology Bank was to design programmes that compliment rather than duplicate, that leveraged existing initiatives of partners within and outside the UN system and listen to governments and other stakeholders and reflecting their national priorities. Some of the activities included conducting Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs); enhancing research capacity in utilisation of satellite technologies for climate change mitigation and disaster management; biotechnology and industrial design in LDCs. Mr Setipa also outlined how the Bank supported LDCs in the establishment and strengthening of Academies of science which played a very critical role of advising governments on STI policy development and implementation. In responding to COVID-19, the Technology Bank together with the UNDP, UNCTAD and WHO launched the Tech Access Partnership (TAP), to strengthen developing and least developed countries’ manufacturing capacities of essential COVID-19 related equipment, medical diagnostic kits, and medical devices. Mr. Setipa highlighted that the Technology Bank relied 100% on extra budgetary sources and is not part of the UN regular budget, therefore, appealed to member States and development partners to provide resources to the Technology Bank to continue contributing to the enhancement of Science, Technology and Innovation in LDCs.

⁵ The featured speakers and background documents can be found at the following link: <https://www.un.org/technologybank/events/empowering-lDCs-through-science-technology-and-innovation>.

Prof. Hasan Mandal, President of The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey, on behalf of the government of Turkey noted that priority in international development and cooperation should be given to LDCs through empowerment based on research and development (R&D) and innovation. He further noted that the impact of COVID-19 pandemic would require stronger support from science, technology and innovation through technology-based collaboration and co-production for sustainable and inclusive clean and renewable solutions. Prof Mandal noted that Turkey increased support to LDCs during the COVID-19 pandemic with bilateral scientific and technological cooperation with Afghanistan, Burundi, Ethiopia, Sudan and Sierra Leone. He highlighted the importance of enhancing research and development eco-system to attain sustainable development. He further noted that Turkey provided financial support to the Technology Bank in the amount of USD 2 million annually.

H.E. Dr. Elioda Tumwesigye, Minister of Science, Technology, and Innovation, Uganda noted the contribution of digital transform and needed to embrace local and indigenous technologies for sustainable development. He outlined the activities undertaken with support from the Technology Bank that included, a workshop on strengthening National Academies of Science in Least Developed Countries; conducting a Technology Needs Assessment (TNA) in collaboration with UNCTAD; a training in climate change risk management and mitigation in collaboration with UNITAR; the establishment of Innovation Hub in partnership with UNDP, Private Sector, Academia and Civil Society; lastly, the SDG Impact Accelerator (SDGiA), a global accelerator launched by Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP for impact entrepreneurs to find innovative solutions in digital agriculture. The Minister underlined the support in response to the COVID-19 pandemic where the Technology Bank, through the Tech Access Partnership, assisted the Ministry of Health to develop their Country Roadmap, a guiding framework for the government and in-country partners to evaluate country needs and capacities, and designed a strategy to promote local production.

The Minister reflected on some key lesson learned that included, the role of the Technology Needs Assessment (TNA) report was informing the revision of the STI Policy and the Technology Action Plans (TAPs) and key interventions in the Agro-industrialisation programme. On the sustainability of the Technology Bank, the Minister called on member States and in particular development partners to provide in-kind and/or financial support to the Technology Bank as the focal point on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Least Developed Countries within the United Nations, towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dr. Solomon Benor, Director General for Science and Research Affairs Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MoSHe), Ethiopia highlighted the importance of access to knowledge, culture and research. He further noted that collaboration with the Technology Bank contributed to the review of the STI Policy in Ethiopia including engagement with the private sector. Dr Benor indicated that Ethiopia has prioritized agriculture, manufacturing and tourism towards the achievement of the national development goals in line with African Union Agenda 2063. He expressed appreciation for the role of Technology Bank in open science and supporting the Ethiopian Academy of Science. On key lessons he noted the importance of prioritizing integration of ICT in national development programme and increasing access to technologies.

Dr. Victor Konde, Scientific Affairs Officer, UN Economic Commission for Africa provided an overview of the role of partnerships and the role of STI in Agenda 2063 by transforming economies in manufacturing, industrialization, value addition and modern agriculture. Dr. Konde highlighted the need for increased investment in R&D and strengthening of intellectual property rights across the continent as knowledge is exported from Africa without protection. He noted that the COVID-19 pandemic amplified the role of science, technology and innovation and the importance of partnerships and collaboration between the centres of excellence across the African Continent. On the lesson learned, he emphasized that LDCs should focus on partnerships amongst countries and institutions such as academies of sciences to promote STI and be sustainable and resilient to inform policy formulation. In building forward LDCs must be supported in accessing and acquiring technologies including use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in nano and health technologies.

On the importance of access to knowledge, information, technology, and know-how and to support the LDCs in improving their scientific and innovative capacity needed for their structural transformation, Prof Mandal highlighted the importance of integrating stakeholder across competent research institutions and private sector in the ecosystem. The stakeholders would promote human resources development and knowledge and design new tools and technology-based solutions that have social, economic and environmental impact for sustainable development in LDCs.

In addressing the question on what strategy should be put in place to strengthen the link between academia (universities, research center) the private sector and governments in LDCs to help structural transformation, Mr. Setipa highlighted that innovation centers were established within academic institutions. He also highlighted that technology transfer offices were usually linked with academic research institutions where knowledge, skills, creativity and new concepts are developed. Therefore, an ecosystem must be developed that includes resources mobilization for the innovations that will drive transformational impact. To enable LDCs with limited resources, they could promote collaboration between private sector and academia to mobilise resources for R&D and innovations that will facilitate competitiveness of LDCs.

On the role of cooperation and collaboration between research institutions and the private sector, to promote research and development and innovation in the field of science and technology, Dr. Benor noted that it was crucial to strengthen collaborations among Research institutions, Universities, and the Academic ecosystem. Moreover, he emphasized that access to open science and e-journals were critical to enhance the quality and visibility of local journals to be included in scientific indexing databases.

On the impact of COVID-19 to the African Continent and what should be priorities for Building Back Better for LDCs by leveraging on Science, Technology and Innovation, Dr. Konde noted two major lessons, investment in science technology and innovation research increased and mobilization of local institutions to provide testing centers across the continent increased. On the negative, the spill over effects have been on the closure of borders, industries, schools, and tourism sector resulting in job losses. To build back better forward and greener, he stressed that local institutions must build capacity to anticipate future problems such mobilizing resources for climate change action and adaptation by using STI to enable economies to build back better.

In responding to what is the role of STI in stimulating exports from LDCs, Mr. Setipa highlighted that technology is critical to enhancing export competitiveness. The African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) was cited that has included technology as an enabler for trade such as in Trade Facilitation. He reminded participants that during COVID-19, traditional supply chains were disrupted, and trade was facilitated through online platforms, from large suppliers to small, medium size business, to access export markets.

In their closing remarks, panelists emphasized the importance of science technology and innovation to development in building productive capacities and promoting structural transformation. They also affirmed the importance of collaboration between scientific research institutions, private sector and academia to cultivate innovation and enhance sustainable capacity development. To build back better the panelists stressed the importance of investing in R&D and innovation to prepare for future pandemics. Panelists also concurred that STI and ICT infrastructure was insufficient for LDCs to meet the SDGs and the impact of COVID-19 has reversed the gains that LDCs had made toward graduating from LDC status and achieving the SDGs. They also concluded that support to the Technology Bank is critical to empower LDCs through science, technology and innovation and called on member States and development partner to provide financial and in-kind support to the Technology Bank.

The main policy messages emerging from the side event included the following:

- i. Science Technology and Innovation is critical for development and achievement of sustainable development
- ii. Capacity development is critical for building productive capacities and structural transformation
- iii. Enhance research and development capacity in LDCs to facilitate commercialization of innovations
- iv. STI should be integrated in national development plans and through partnerships and coordination across the ecosystem.
- v. Sustainable development requires R&D and innovation from basic sciences to engineering as well as in the social sciences and humanities.
- vi. Digital transformation and ICT connectivity are critical to stimulate competitiveness and facilitate export of value-added products from LDCs.
- vii. Increase investment in STI and R&D through collaboration between private sector and academia to enhance innovation and competitiveness.
- viii. Facilitate technology transfer to LDCs and promote awareness of intellectual property rights for protection of innovations from LDCs.

C. “Impacts of COVID-19 on SMEs in LDCs and the role of blended finance in supporting a resilient recovery” organized by UNCDF

On February 24, the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) hosted an event on the “Impacts of COVID-19 on SMEs in LDCs and the role of blended finance in supporting a resilient recovery”. During her keynote address, **Preeti Sinha, Executive Secretary, UNCDF**, described that aspirations were for the ‘C’ – the Capital at UNCDF – to be highly catalytic in mobilizing public and private finance to deliver scalable

development impact for the LDCs. With its focus on innovation and testing new approaches to bring capital to the last mile, UNCDF wanted to push the boundaries in engaging capital markets and mobilizing international and domestic private capital to sustainable investment opportunities in the world's frontier and pre-frontier markets. Moreover, Ms. Sinha called for concrete solutions that make finance work better for the LDCs to leave no one behind, including a commitment by global stakeholders to establishing a dedicated blended finance de-risking facility focused on providing catalytic capital to SMEs and small investment projects that help unlock further commercial and semi-commercial investment.

The event provided insights from [UNCDF's Blended Finance in the Least Developed Countries 2020: Supporting a Resilient Covid-19 Recovery report](#), including an update on the deployment of blended finance in LDCs with a particular focus on Africa, as well as an analysis of its potential role in helping LDCs recover from the COVID-19 crisis. UNCDF presented an Action Agenda for unlocking capital during the next programme of action for LDCs, including with a special focus on SME finance.

The session also highlighted impacts of COVID-19 on SMEs and the need for additional SME finance. Evidence was presented from the UNCDF LDC SME pulse survey,⁶ which encompassed more than 20 business sectors, featuring over 2,300 SMEs, spanning all 46 LDCs. The survey data was being used to identify specific policy recommendations and provided a platform for small business leaders in last mile markets to have a voice.

The two presentations were followed by a panel of experts who discussed how blended finance could contribute to enhancing access to capital for SMEs in African LDCs. The discussion highlighted challenges, solutions and concrete recommendations for blended finance and SME finance in LDCs.

Joan Larrea (Chief Executive Officer, Convergence Blended Finance) explained that blended finance was happening more frequently in other places than LDCs as it was very hard to attract private sector investments in LDCs. There was a problem of scale, as LDC investments were generally small ticket sizes, whereas many investors are looking for large investments.

Idrissa Diabira (Directeur général, L'Agence de Développement et d'Encadrement des Petites et Moyennes Entreprises (ADEPME), Sénégal) highlighted the lack of knowledge among investors about these economies amidst insufficient local presence. Lack of formalization of SMEs also prevents access to finance.

Jean-Philippe de Schrevel (Founder and Managing Partner, Bamboo Capital Partners) discussed risks, arguing that in many circumstances there were real and perceived risks, but there was also a use of outdated risk and financial data, due to lack of availability of information. He also shared insights that private investors and governments often suffered from siloed thinking about one geography or one sector, instead of looking for aggregated opportunities, for example through a fund or other portfolio approaches, that could help to alleviate some of the existing risks.

⁶ See ["The State of Small Businesses in the LDCs: Taking the Pulse of SMEs in the LDC Markets During COVID-19"](#)

Fabrizio Cometto (Deputy Head, Least Developed Country Investment Platform, UNCDF) shared insights around the need for better information to increase SME finance to determine the risk profile of SMEs. Moreover, domestic banks resist investing in SMEs as they preferred putting their capital into low-risk loans, often for larger enterprises and projects, and into very low-risk T-bills.

Stephen Obiro (Head of Advocacy, Communications & Partnerships, Federation of Kenya Employers, Business Africa representative) highlighted the need for more policy dialogue to look at policy and regulatory constraints for private sector investments to give more confidence to investors.

The panellists discussed a combination of solutions to address these challenges:

- Use ODA strategically to catalyze additional resources through demonstration effects and blended finance structures.
- Aggregate investments using fund structures, adopting a portfolio approach and bond issuance.
- Invest in people and organizations that know this space and are present on the ground, who can find investment opportunities and understand the world of SMEs.
- Use an investment continuum approach: find promising businesses that need capital to grow and use a combination of instruments, including grants, technical assistance (TA), catalytic risk capital, and blended finance depending on the maturity level of SMEs. For example, mechanisms such as UNCDF's BRIDGE Facility which provides early-stage catalytic risk capital for SMEs and small projects, and the blended finance BUILD Fund managed by Bamboo Capital Partners, which provides capital for LDC-based SMEs, could be further scaled up to meet LDC demand.
- Bundle the capital solution with capacity development and business development services. SMEs need assistance with skills such as accounting and uptake of digital tools.
- Support the development of vibrant domestic capital markets and financial intermediaries. This can help reduce risks and facilitate access to credit for SMEs.

Finally, the session led to the proposal of several concrete recommendations:

- Organize a global roadshow to introduce LDCs and investment opportunities to global capital markets. LDC Ministers can be champions in discussing how to turn the blended finance component into reality.
- Increase information and transparency about blended finance and SME finance. The more information available, the better able investors are to price the deals, and the less blending is needed. Increased transparency will also provide additional important information on impact to drive more interest across stakeholders.
- Walk the talk on blended finance – there is need for more patient risk tolerant capital. For example, donor ODA contributions can often not be used in a revolving manner – however, if donors were able to change their regulations so that grants can become revolving instruments, this can lead to multiplier effects and more efficient and better use of scarce ODA resources.

- Think holistically and focus on aggregation. In times of crisis, there is an urgent need to move quickly, look at what already exists and invest in these existing vehicles or initiatives that aim to scale blended finance for LDCs.
- Foster competition in the financial market to drive more capital to SMEs - remove capital constraints for international investors and support innovative investors outside of banks, including fintech companies and other innovative private sector enterprises.
- Support formalization of small businesses by making formalization less costly and complex and create incentives for formalization.

UNCDF stands ready to be a champion for LDCs in turning these recommendations into reality and looks forward to working with partners and stakeholders in all sectors to take this agenda forward.

XII. ANNEX I: Political Declaration

A. Introduction

1. We, Ministers and representatives of the African least developed countries (LDCs) and Haiti participating in the Africa Regional Review Meeting in preparation of the Fifth United Nations Conference on LDCs (LDC5), are gathered in Lilongwe, Malawi from 22-26 February 2021 to undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action by the least developed countries and their development partners, share best practices and lessons learned and identify obstacles and constraints encountered as well as actions and initiatives needed to overcome them; to identify effective international and domestic policies in the light of the outcome of the appraisal as well as new and emerging challenges and opportunities and the means to address them; to reaffirm the global commitment to addressing the special needs of the LDCs made at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework; and to mobilize additional international support measures and action, in addition to domestic resources, in favour of the LDCs and, in this regard, to formulate and adopt a renewed partnership between the LDCs and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society and governments at all levels. In the context of Africa, we reaffirm our commitment to the goals and aspirations of the African Union Agenda 2063.

2. We welcome the participation at this meeting of a number of development partners and while appreciating their ongoing support, strongly call upon them for renewed and strengthened global partnerships for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in African LDCs and Haiti. We collectively committed ourselves to finding lasting solutions to the complex and mutually exacerbating structural challenges and problems faced by LDCs, who constitute the poorest and most vulnerable countries of the world.

3. We are concerned that the impact of COVID-19 has further jeopardized the limited progress towards achieving the goals of the IPoA as outlined in the 2020 report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the IPoA and the ECA report on the implementation of the IPoA in African LDCs. COVID-19 has made the vulnerabilities of African LDCs and Haiti, including their structural challenges more pronounced, and it is expected that they will be further impacted in the long-term owing to the fragility of their health-care systems, limited coverage of their social protection systems, limited financial and other resources and high levels of debt and illicit financial flows and vulnerability to external shocks. Besides slower growth, the pandemic is expected to reverse gains achieved in African LDCs and Haiti in recent years particularly in areas of gender equality, poverty eradication and reductions in income inequality, education, and employment, thereby jeopardizing prospects for the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. We recognize that African LDCs and Haiti have made good progress in raising per capita spending on primary education which has contributed to increased primary enrolment and completion rates and improved gender parity in primary and secondary schools. Furthermore, they have been notably successful in politically empowering women through increased representation in national parliaments and local government, as appropriate. They have also reduced export concentration by diversifying their primary commodity exports.

4. While half of the 6 LDCs that have graduated from the category so far are from Africa, namely Botswana, Cabo Verde and Equatorial Guinea, we are concerned that the slow and uneven development in African LDCs and Haiti results in limited progress to meet the graduation criteria, against the target of

the Istanbul Programme of Action, which specified that half the number of LDCs should qualify for graduation.

5. We recognize that African LDCs and Haiti represent an enormous human and natural resource potential, with its population structure and youth optimism; coupled with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), provides opportunities for LDCs to participate in world economic growth, welfare, prosperity and food and energy security, and that they have made considerable efforts in implementing the commitments of the IPoA. Therefore, a successful, renewed and strengthened global partnership that effectively addresses the special needs of African LDCs and Haiti will contribute to peace, prosperity and sustainable development for all. Further strengthening of our collective actions towards enabling LDCs' young populations and women will more effectively contribute to equitable and inclusive development, poverty eradication, job creation and social justice. We recognize that Youth from African LDCs and Haiti constitute an essential partner and resource for the achievement of the goals of the IPoA. We recommend the meaningful inclusion of youth's voices at all levels of the preparatory process, aiming at the inclusion of the challenges impacting young people, as well as their innovative solutions for a strengthened inter-generational partnership.

6. We therefore underline the need for revisiting the current system of support for the LDCs in the lead-up to the Fifth United Nations Conference on LDCs, 23-27 January 2022 in Doha with a view to ensuring that the international support measures provide the levels of assistance necessary for the African LDCs and Haiti to address the structural barriers to development that they face and overcome their vulnerabilities. It is thus crucial that a new Programme of Action will not only support the required acceleration of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as the Agenda 2063, but also, strengthen African LDCs and Haiti's systems and policy frameworks to more effectively integrate and fairly compete in the global economy and eventually move towards convergence with other more developed economies.

B. Call for Action

7. We call upon our development partners to provide enhanced support to LDCs to achieve the overarching goal, set out in the Istanbul Programme of Action, of enabling half of them to meet the criteria for graduation by removing structural constraints through eradication of poverty and the achievement of accelerated, sustained, inclusive and equitable growth and sustainable development. Especially with the setbacks in development progress through COVID-19, this requires effective and sound national government policies and commitments, enhanced global support and appropriate mechanisms at all levels. We also call for genuine solidarity with the aspirations expressed by LDCs during this meeting with a view to fostering and strengthening new partnerships for achieving SDGs and Agenda 2063 in LDCs.

7bis. We recognize that, the principle of country ownership and leadership remains crucial in order to accelerate progress towards sustainable development, and we recommit to take the lead in formulating, implementing, following up and reviewing our own coherent economic and development policies, strategies and plans. We call upon the international community to fulfil its commitment to give special attention to the least developed countries in the implementation of the next programme of action.

8. We recall the "Statement dated 28 April 2020 of the Group of LDCs on the coronavirus disease (COVID-19): burgeoning challenges and a global stimulus package for the least developed countries" contained in document A/74/843. We reiterate our call for a global stimulus package for the least developed countries to be funded and implemented with immediate effect to address the impacts of COVID-19 which includes, among others, emergency public health package including PPEs, ventilators, tele-health and telemedicine facilities; support for social protection systems; development and

dissemination of robust information, education and communication campaigns to demystify myths and fears surrounding COVID-19 vaccines; education support for students in the form of digital equipment, as well as educational radio and television programmes; fulfilment of ODA commitments of 0.15-0.20 per cent at the earliest with grants-based ODA; full debt cancellation of all multilateral, bilateral and commercial debts owed by LDCs and the debt standstill with immediate effect until the decision of the debt cancellation; richer countries could apportion some of their SDRs to multilateral institutions to pay for debt payment cancellation for LDCs; lifting trade barriers and scaling up aid for trade; and additional allocations, including increased special drawing right allocations for LDCs to the tune of \$50 billion.

9. Furthermore, in the medium- to long-term, the stimulus package includes ensuring an adequate, affordable and rapid supply of vaccines/immunization and antiviral drugs related to COVID-19; providing technology, technical know-how and free license to manufacture antiviral drugs and vaccines; launching stimulus packages to stabilize the agricultural sector with seed distribution and fertilizer programmes and subsidies; taking into account structural constraints and longer-term investment requirements for the implementation of the SDGs in the debt sustainability framework for LDCs; launching a renewed and revitalized equitable global trade framework to promote export earnings of LDCs; promoting the use of digital transfers of remittances and reduce remittance transaction fees; enhancing the quality, availability and affordability of the Internet and other online-related facilities, especially in rural areas; and providing countries graduating from the LDC category with continued and scaled up international assistance to support export sectors in order to avoid the reversal of development gains.

10. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthen our healthcare systems by meeting the African Union Abuja Declaration of 2001 target of allocating at least 15% of our annual budget and urge development partners to scale up support in this sector. Specifically, we call the development partners to support access to equipment like Personal protective equipment (PPE), sanitization and other protective measures for frontline workers, provide sufficient number of ventilators, and other supplementary equipment as well as an uninterrupted supply of essential medicines and equitable and affordable access to vaccines and medication.

11. We reaffirm that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of the human rights of all people are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. We reiterate the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental, and social policies. We also recognize the need of ensuring full, equal, and meaningful participation in decision-making as well as equal access to leadership and representation for all women at all levels and in all spheres of society, as well as strengthening their voice, while ensuring a safe and enabling environment for them and taking action to eliminate any barriers in this regard.

12. We recognize the importance of building productive capacity as a critical enabler for the development and graduation of the LDCs and reducing the dependence on exports of few and primarily raw commodities. We emphasize that the development of physical infrastructure is an important prerequisite to reach the IPoA target and SDG 8.1 of 7 per cent economic growth and sustainable development, and that significant amounts of investment and technology are essential, including through public-private partnerships, innovative financing, regional integration and appropriate institutions and regulation, to bridge the existing savings-investment gap in the LDCs. In this regard, we will strengthen the underlying investment climate, with enhanced support provided by the development partners and international financial institutions, including by improving predictability, governance, and transparency, as well as in procurement practices and policies.

13. We recognize that LDCs face key challenges with respect to their economic structure. We will therefore further strengthen our efforts to accelerate capital accumulation, knowledge development, technology acquisition, and employment creation, including for low-skilled labor, especially women, for the expansion of higher-value-addition and competitiveness, including in high-productivity services, like ICTs, tourism and financial services. In this regard, we commit to spending at least 1 per cent of GDP on Research and Development, as called for during the 2006 Khartoum Decision of the Executive Council of the African Union and to implement the AU Science, Technology, and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA-2024).

14. We recognise the need to provide the rapidly growing youth population in LDCs with education, training, job opportunities and prospects for a decent life. Addressing the increased challenges from the COVID-19 crisis for young women and men in LDCs will require expanding existing cash transfers schemes, in-kind support and other transfers to vulnerable households and workers including in the informal economy; developing comprehensive national plans for a job-rich recovery, with close coordination across government agencies, reliable labour market information to facilitate monitoring of progress, and social dialogue to ensure accountability; reshaping skills development systems and addressing key skills gaps due to changes in demand and the digital revolution and capacity development for youth to develop and implement sustainable business.

15. We recognize that technology plays a crucial role in the promotion of inclusive development and the achievement of the SDGs as well as Agenda 2063 for the African LDCs and Haiti. The critical importance of technology for development has been made even clearer by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has further amplified the need to address and close the digital and technological divide. We call upon the international community to come up with specific measures which support the transfer of technology to enable LDCs to reap the benefits of frontier technologies for achieving SDGs, including through access to and adapting modern technologies, technological know-how, infrastructure, and necessary logistics. We call on the development partners to consider the provision of concessional start-up finance for least developed countries' businesses, which invest in new technologies.

16. We welcome the new targets adopted by the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development in 2018, in support of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, within the context of the new challenges of a digital world. The Commission called for, inter alia, by 2025, Broadband-Internet user penetration should reach 35% in LDCs; all countries should have a funded national broadband plan or strategy, or include broadband in their universal access and services definition; entry-level broadband services should be made affordable in developing countries, at less than 2% of monthly gross national income per capita; 60% of youth and adults should have achieved at least a minimum level of proficiency in sustainable digital skills; and, 40% of the world's population should be using digital financial services. We call upon the development partners, the private sector, international organisations, and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to the achievement of these targets as well as those of the Secretary General roadmap for digital cooperation and those of the Smart Africa Alliance, especially since digital technology has become a necessity in all socio-economic sectors, including remote learning, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

17. We note that while access to electricity in African LDCs and Haiti increased significantly wide disparities persist across countries. We express our concern that that without urgent and enhanced action, LDCs will not be able to reach the international target on energy. Closing the energy gap will require increased investment in off-grid, mini-grid, decentralized grid-connected solutions to reach remote populations, fostering investments for renewables and clean cooking fuels, climate-proofing existing hydro generation systems and rehabilitation of degraded watershed areas, improving technology

transfer, using new business models such as pay-as-you-go and, enhancing regional integration. We call upon development partners to enhance financial and technical cooperation and assistance for generation and distribution of sustainable energy as well as enhancing energy efficiency. We welcome the launch of the Coalition on Sustainable Energy Access for the Least Developed Countries at the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, led by Morocco and Ethiopia, aiming at responding to the vital needs of the global population, particularly those located in remote areas of the LDCs, in terms of electricity access, clean cooking, clean water supply, irrigation, cooling and heating with the ambition of "leaving no one behind". We call upon development partners to provide necessary support to this coalition and request the Secretary-General to undertake necessary measures for the implementation of the Coalition and the LDC REEEI (the LDCs Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Initiative for Sustainable Development).

18. We welcome the specific initiatives presented under the nine action areas at the Climate Action Summit, which have high potentials to curb greenhouse gas emissions and increased global action on adaptation and resilience. We reaffirm our commitment to address climate change in accordance with our capabilities and national circumstances. We recall the LDC Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR), which steps up the climate ambition of LDCs with its vision to deliver climate-resilient development pathways by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050, which complements the LDC work programme under the UNFCCC in providing strategic direction for supporting the LDCs in addressing climate change. We call for multi-stakeholder partnerships that will bring together government, private sector, civil society, academia and communities focusing on integrated adaptation, mitigation and resilience planning at national and local levels. We recognize the importance of youth-led initiatives to counterbalance the existing negative effects of climate change and the necessity to support such initiatives while establishing strong institutions and clear regulatory frameworks for environmental accountability.

19. We reiterate the critical role of the National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement in addressing adaptation needs in the LDCs and underscore the importance of supporting all LDCs in producing their first NAP by end of 2021; implementing their priority adaptation needs in the NAPs under the Green Climate Fund (GCF) as well as other sources; and developing indicators for measuring progress on adaptation on the ground in LDCs. The allocation of 50% of adaptation funding under the GCF to the LDCs, SIDS and vulnerable countries in Africa should be fully implemented, to supplement dedicated funds for addressing the climate crisis by LDCs, for example the LDC Fund established by the UNFCCC. The LDCs face great capacity constraints in accessing these funds. We call upon the developed countries to operationalize the Green Climate Fund fully and in a timely manner, with the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion per year by 2020, promoting and facilitating low carbon and resilient-building projects in the LDCs and addressing the needs of people adversely impacted by climate changes and extreme weather events.

20. We underline that given the impact of the food crisis on food security in African LDCs, there is a need for the international community to increase funding for short-term food emergencies. We call for accelerated and aligned actions including adequate investment in physical infrastructure, scientific and technological development, research and agricultural extension services in the LDCs, incorporation of producers from LDCs in regional and global value chains, supported by all stakeholders and countries, including more integrated support from the United Nations and the international community to free our world from poverty, inequalities, hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms. We recall the commitment made by African leaders to allocate at least 10 per cent of public expenditure to agriculture and to ensure its efficiency and effectiveness. We also call for establishing a regional and global system of food stockholding in dealing with humanitarian food emergencies in African LDCs.

21. We stress the urgency of facilitating access to credit, technology and skills to support agricultural development and building up inclusive value chains that support smallholder farmers and private sector development to create the synergies between nutrition, poverty reduction and the structural transformation of the economies of the African LDCs and Haiti.

22. We note with great concern that LDCs suffer disproportionately high human and economic losses owing to climate changes and disasters; acknowledge that the compounded impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on systems already stressed by the climate crisis demonstrate the complex and systemic nature of disaster risk and that hazards can combine with each other to cause cascading impacts. We recognise the urgency of implementing the Sendai Framework and the Paris Agreement as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda and that prevention, disaster risk reduction and resilience-building are central to a country's sustainable development strategies and investment, to reduce poverty and inequalities, and protect the human, economic and natural capital. We acknowledge that financing for disaster risk reduction presents a considerable challenge to the implementation of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies in the LDCs and call for all public and private, domestic and international investment, as well as bilateral and multilateral support, to be risk informed and aligned with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies. We further acknowledge that available climate finance under the GCF (and other funds) remains a major challenge for many LDCs to access efficiently and effectively owing to many capacity issues and complexity of access modalities and call for simplified access procedures and enhanced efforts to ensure LDCs are able to develop bankable projects that lead to measurable resilience on the ground.

23. In order to build back better and enhance preparedness for future disasters we reaffirm our invitation to the General Assembly (in A/RES/72/231) to decide on the establishment of a "comprehensive multi-stakeholder resilience-building mechanism for LDCs", leveraging the existing measures and initiatives. In this regard, we request the Secretary-General and the General Assembly of the United Nations to undertake necessary measures to improve resilience building for LDCs which would help them to build and strengthen their national adaptation and mitigation capacity, provide technical support to prepare project documents to access and utilize available climate funds and critical technologies; provide risk insurance and guarantees for weather insurance and derivatives; and draw together bilateral initiatives and support by multilateral institutions, private sector, NGOs and foundations, building on existing regional and international initiatives. We encourage investments and partnerships to strengthen understanding of climate risk and more broadly systemic risk and its application in decision-making in the LDCs, including through disaster risk reduction education, comprehensive risk management, building academic and scientific capacity, utilization of frontier technologies, and supporting traditional, indigenous and local knowledge and practices.

24. We are concerned that the LDCs are disproportionately affected by the collapse of value chains and declining commodity prices due to COVID-19, after their share in world merchandise exports deteriorated in five successive years. As the African LDCs and Haiti have highly concentrated exports with a heavy reliance on few products we will target diversification of our economies as a key part of our development strategies, including through the implementation of the AfCFTA. In this context, there is also need to step up investments in green recovery to enhance growth, create decent jobs and accelerate intra-regional trade through the effective implementation of the AfCFTA.

25. We reaffirm our determination to complete the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) and call upon the members of the World Trade Organization to strongly commit to addressing the marginalization of LDCs in international trade and to improve their effective and equitable participation in the multilateral trading system. We also call upon the members to fully and faithfully implement all the LDC-specific provisions contained in the World Trade Organization agreements, ministerial decisions and declarations,

including the LDC decisions taken in Bali and Nairobi Ministerial Conferences, as well as decisions adopted in the regular work of the WTO. We further call upon the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference to deliver concrete outcomes in favor of the LDCs. We invite the WTO secretariat to undertake a comprehensive study on the lack of progress in achieving SDG 17.11 and to make specific recommendations on the way forward to achieve this SDG by 2030.

26. We welcome the entry into force of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which will address high trade costs incurred by African LDCs and Haiti and facilitate the integration of these countries in regional and global value chains. We call upon the development and trading partners to provide targeted assistance and support to African LDCs and Haiti to help them build sustainable capacity to implement their commitments under the TFA, in accordance with Articles 13 and 21.

27. We also call on developed country Members to provide preferential market access and rules of origin to all business to consumer goods and services that are exported from LDCs with special preference to those using an e-commerce platform directly from suppliers in LDCs. In this regard, we look forward to intensified and concerted action of the G20 countries to enhance the ability of LDCs to more fully engage in digital trade, as committed in the G20 Summit in Germany in 2017 and further call on relevant organizations to enhance support including, capacity-building to assist LDCs to address gaps in legal and regulatory frameworks and develop digital skills.

28. We recognize that the operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement (AfCFTA), which started on 1 January 2021, is expected to boost intra-African trade expansion by 15-25 per cent by 2040, stimulate sustained economic growth (increasing GDP by 1-3 per cent) and foster inclusive development. The success of AfCFTA, however, hinges on improved financial integration, trade facilitation, conducive trade policies, regulations and mechanisms as well as reliable and responsive infrastructure.

29. We recognize that domestic resource mobilization is key for achieving the SDGs and Agenda 2063 but was seriously impacted by COVID-19. We commit to enhance efforts towards taxation, savings mobilization and financial inclusion, aiming at reducing inequalities. We stress the importance of conducive international regulatory frameworks and transparency as well as national and regional financial institutions, including development banks in this respect. We call for enhanced international tax cooperation to avoid base erosion and profit shifting and welcome support through initiatives including Tax inspectors without borders.

30. We are concerned about the decline in bilateral ODA to LDCs during 2020, when it is most needed. We reiterate our call upon donor countries to fulfill their ODA commitments in the Istanbul Programme of Action and strive to provide 0.25 per cent of their gross national income by 2030 or at least 50 per cent of net official development assistance to the LDCs. We also call upon them to ensure quality and effectiveness of aid, especially through predictability and accountability, use of recipient country's system and elimination of tied aid. We call upon the development partners to provide enhanced financial and technical support to the LDCs, in line with their priorities, including for project preparation and capacity building for project development.

31. We recognize that while official development assistance must remain central and play a catalytic role, there is a need to tap additional resources, including through innovative financing mechanisms which are based on new partnerships between countries at different levels of development as well as public and private actors, in line with the characteristics of each country and sector. We stress that the innovative sources of financing, including blended finance, should be additional, substantial, predictable, with preferential rates especially tailored to LDCs and disbursed in a manner that respects the priorities and

special needs of the LDCs and does not unduly burden them. We furthermore stress that it will be critical that blended finance approaches address currency exchange risks, ticket size and risk tolerance among others. Furthermore, we call for new financial instruments that harness the potential of digital innovations for the financing of the SDGs, including e.g. digital financing platforms, innovative digital services, Micro-Small and Medium- sized Enterprises (MSMEs) digitization and domestic resource mobilization. We also call for a dedicated financing mechanism that delivers catalytic investment capital for SMEs and small investment projects in African LDCs and Haiti to mobilize sustainable private investments that advance the SDGs and act as a crisis facility to mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

32. We are concerned about the high and rising levels of illicit financial flows from African LDCs, which are estimated to amount to more than USD 588 billion over the period 1980-2018 and commit to enhance efforts to curtail illicit financial flows at all levels, enhance disclosure practices and promote transparency in financial information. We commit to promote policies and programmes, including the involvement of civil society organizations to track and bring back any illicit capital outflows. This needs to be complimented by measures to prevent the transfer abroad of stolen assets and assistance in their recovery and return.

33. We commit to redouble efforts to substantially reduce illicit financial flows by 2030, with a view to eventually eliminating them, including by combating tax evasion and corruption through strengthened national regulation and increased international cooperation, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the strengthening of international cooperation to combat illicit financial flows. We encourage efforts to strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and the identification of good practices for the return of stolen assets in support of sustainable development.

34. We are concerned that since 2012 but exacerbated by COVID-19 the external debt stock and debt service of many African LDCs has drastically increased, resulting in 4 African LDCs being in debt distress as of November 2020 and additional 10 African LDCs and Haiti at high risk of debt distress. We acknowledge the efforts of the global community to deal with the financial impacts of the pandemic, including the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), which is open to LDCs, but recognise their limitations in terms of scope and participation of creditors as they do not cancel any debt. We call upon development partners to take effective measures to reduce unsustainable debt levels owed by LDCs, including through debt cancellation and restructuring of existing high debt. We call for improved debt management and responsible lending and borrowing, including by providing financing on more concessional terms by official creditors and ensuring that lending practices are fully in line with sustainable financing practices. We call on bilateral and multilateral development partners to use new instruments like debt swaps and state-contingent lending, taking into account risks beyond the control of government like natural disasters and climate risks. We also call for technical assistance and capacity building for LDCs to strengthen their debt management.

35. We call upon development partners, Multilateral Development Banks and the IMF to introduce new and comprehensive debt relief initiatives for African LDCs and Haiti in this respect. We also call upon creditors, both public and private, for additional effective measures to facilitate financing of our economic development, including access to grants and concessional resources for investment in critically needed infrastructure and development projects to avoid further indebtedness. The debt sustainability framework for LDCs should systematically take into account their structural constraints and longer-term investment requirements for the implementation of the SDGs.

36. We recognize the critical importance of the work of the Technology Bank for LDCs in improving LDCs' scientific research and innovation base, promote networking among researchers and research

institutions, help LDCs access and utilize critical technologies, and draw together bilateral initiatives and support by multilateral institutions and the private sector, and to implement projects contributing to the use of STI for economic development in LDCs. We take note with appreciation of the contributions made to the Bank by the host country Turkey and other countries and call upon all members, especially donor countries and other development partners to make substantive contributions to the Bank for its effective functioning. We also call upon member States to raise awareness on the activities of the Technology Bank in their countries and to collaborate with the Technology Bank to ensure that technology is used as a critical tool for development. We therefore support the UN Technology Bank as the focal point for LDCs to strengthen their science, technology and innovation capacity towards building sustainable productive capacities and promoting structural economic transformation.

37. We are concerned that COVID-19 accelerated the decline of FDI to African LDCs and Haiti, which remains heavily concentrated in the extractive industries. We underline the need for undertaking necessary measures to further accelerate FDI to LDCs in areas where it contributes to achieving the SDGs, including measures to reduce risks. We welcome the decision contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for LDCs and the offer to provide financial and technical support for project preparation and contract negotiation, advisory support in investment-related dispute resolution, access to information on investment facilities and risk insurance and guarantees, such as through the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency. In this regard, we take note with appreciation of the initiatives undertaken by UN-OHRLS aiming at providing legal and technical support to LDCs in investment-related negotiations and dispute settlement through the Investment Support Programme, implemented by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) and at improving the capacity of the investment promotion agencies of LDCs to attract, diversify and retain FDI and derive maximum benefit from it. We take note with appreciation of the Capacity Development Programme for the investment promotion agencies of LDCs, developed by UN-OHRLS jointly with UNCTAD, UNIDO, ILO, EIF and WAIPA; and call for financial support to this programme.

38. We recall the SDG target 17.5 which decides to “adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for LDCs” and express deep concern at the lack of progress in its implementation. We call upon Member States to establish “an international investment support center for the LDCs” under the auspices of the United Nations to provide a one-stop arrangement to help stimulate foreign direct investment in the least developed countries, which can make available the following interrelated and mutually reinforcing services, as already agreed upon in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda: (a) an information depository for investment facilities in the LDCs; (b) provision of technical support to assist the LDCs in preparing project documents and negotiating complex large-scale contracts; (c) provision of advisory support in dispute resolution; and (d) risk insurance and guarantees in close collaboration with the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

39. We call on the international community to support the adoption of sustainability reporting by companies from African LDCs and Haiti through capacity building so as to improve the private sector contribution to sustainable development, while enhancing firms’ competitiveness and their ability to participate in global value chains.

40. We recognize the contributions of migrants in mitigating the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in both their countries of origin and destination, and note with concern the significant socioeconomic consequences that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on migrant workers and refugees from least developed countries, including those in the low wage informal economy as well as the effects that the

projected significant decline in remittances will have on the millions of people that depend heavily on them, and strongly urge partner countries to start taking action, specifically with respect to reducing to less than 3 per cent the transaction costs of migrant remittances by 2030, and to facilitate the orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies.

41. We underline that North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation is vital to the LDCs, noting that South-South cooperation is not a substitute but a complement to North-South cooperation, particularly in regard to technical assistance, sharing of best practices in terms of their development, especially in areas of productive capacity-building, infrastructure, energy, science and technology, trade, investment and transit transport cooperation, we call upon the countries of the South to further strengthen their support provided to the LDCs in all these areas in a predictable manner along the lines of the outcome document of the Second High-Level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

42. We will implement our commitments under various regional and international conventions, especially the Agenda 2063 to improve governance, ensure human rights and promote peace and security. Strengthening the rule of law, enforcing property rights, combating corruption, building strong institutions, fostering social cohesion and enhancing accountability in public service delivery are all essential to improving governance and thereby sustainable development. We express deep concern that LDCs are hugely underrepresented in the decision-making processes of the global financial architecture. This needs to be addressed for the legitimacy and effectiveness of the global financial system. We call upon the international community to broadening and strengthening the voice and participation of LDCs in international economic decision-making and norm-setting and global economic governance.

43. We recognize that peace and security is a condition sine qua non for growth and sustainable development. Enhanced efforts are required to help build durable peace and sustainable development in LDCs. We call upon the international community, including the United Nations, to extend support of the international community, for strengthening national, sub-regional and continental efforts aimed at peace-building, including capacity for conflict mediation, resolution and management and post-conflict consolidation. We also recognize the importance of the participation of women and youth in the design, implementation and evaluation of peace-building processes. Special support should be provided to post-conflict countries to enable them to achieve a smooth transition from relief to development.

44. We acknowledge that ensuring equal access to vital services plays a crucial role in reducing disparities and promoting trust in public institutions and can therefore have significant implications for development, peace and security across the continent. In this regard, we reaffirm our commitment to place social inclusion and transparency in the use of public resources at the center of our agenda, particularly as we embark on building back better in the post-COVID-19 scenario. We appeal to on all actors to subscribe to the UN Secretary-General's call for a Global Ceasefire and we call upon the international community to support the implementation of the African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa in order to create enabling conditions for social and economic cohesion and resilience.

45. We recognize the importance of supporting Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan (2014–2023) and acknowledges the programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, both of which are integral to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and underscore in this regard the importance of a coherent and coordinated implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

46. We request the OHRLLS and UNECA to extend necessary support to the LDCs in the implementation and monitoring of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as the new programme of action through coordination with various United Nations entities, raising global awareness, mobilizing international support and resources in favor of the LDCs, building multi-stakeholder partnerships and reaching out to all stakeholders, including by establishing partnerships with civil society and the private sector, to enhance support for the three groups of countries. In this regard, we strongly urge the Secretary-General and the Member States to strengthen the OHRLLS to enable it to provide substantive support to LDCs in their pursuit to meaningfully engage in the intergovernmental discussions and implement the programme of action for LDCs and the 2030 Agenda.

C. Vote of thanks

47. We express our profound gratitude to the people and the Government of the Republic Malawi for organizing this meeting. We express our gratitude to the Governments of Turkey and Qatar for their generous contributions to the successful organization of the meeting. We note with appreciation the substantive support of the Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, the Office of the Resident Coordinator in Malawi, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). We also note with appreciation the active participation and substantive contributions of development partners and the UN system, as well as other international and regional organizations. We also express our thanks to parliamentarians as well as the representatives of the Private Sector, Civil Society, youth and other stakeholders.

XIII. Annex II: List of Participants

A. Member States

AFRICAN LDCs and Haiti

1. Malawi, Republic of (Host Country)

- His Excellency Dr. Lazarus Chakwera, President of Malawi
- Right Honourable Dr. Saulos Klaus Chilima, Vice President and Minister of Economic Planning and Development and Public Sector Reforms
- Honourable Mr. Lobin Lowe, Minister of Agriculture
- Honourable Mr. Felix Mlusu, Minister of Finance
- Honourable Mr. Eisenhower Mkaka, Minister of Foreign Affairs
- Honourable Ms. Patricia Kaliati, Minister of Gender Community Development and Social Welfare
- Honourable Ms Khumbize Kandodo Chiponda, Minister of Health
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- Ms. Christina Zakeyo, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Trade
- Mr. Peter Kelvin Simbani, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Industry
- Ms. Roselyn Makhumula, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare
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- Ms. Erica Maganga, Secretary for Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture
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- H.E. Mr. Perks Ligoya, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Malawi to the UN, New York
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- H.E. Mr. Agrina Mussa, High Commissioner, Malawi High Commission to Kenya
- H.E. Mr. Michael Kamphambe Nkhoma, Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Malawi to Germany
- H.E. Mr. Brian Bowler, Ambassador, Embassy of the Republic of Malawi to Brazil
- H.E. Mr. David Calude Pierre, Head of Mission, African Union Southern Africa Regional Office
- Mr. Jollam, Banda, Director of Planning, Ministry of Economic Planning and Development and Public Sector Reforms
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- Mr. Harvey Chiguluma, Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Francis Mphatso Mponda, Director of Americas, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Malawi
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- Ms. Kate Langwe, Director, Ministry of Health
- Mr. Clement Phangaphanga, Director, Ministry of Industry
- Mr. Wiskes Nkombezi, Director of SMEs and Cooperatives, Ministry of Industry
- Mr. Cassius Chiwambo, Director of Energy Affairs, Ministry of Energy
- Mr. Storn Kabuluza, Director of Preventive Health Services, Ministry of Health
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- Ms. Tawonga Mbale-Luka, Director, Ministry of Forestry and Natural Resources
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- Mr. Jerome Chim'gonda-Nkhoma (PhD), Director of Agriculture Extension Services, Ministry of Agriculture
- Ms. Dina Gumulira, Director, Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare
- Ms. Clotilda Sawasawa, Director, Ministry of Gender, Community Development and Social Welfare
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- Ms. Andreza Paulino, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Angola to the UN
- Dr. António Pombal, Director da Direcção Nacional para Integração, Cooperação e Negócios
- Dr. Luís Epalanga, Director da Director Nacional de Estudos e Planeamento
- Dr. Tombwele Pedro, Consultor do Gabinete do Secretario de Estado para o Planeamento
- Dra. Mara de Almeida, Consultora do Gabinete do Secretario de Estado para o Planeamento

3. Benin, Republic of

- Mr. Marc Hermanne Araba, Ambassadeur, Représentant Permanent, Mission Permanente du Benin aux UN
- Mr. Magloire Augustin Aguessy, Directeur Général de la Coordination et du Suivi des Objectifs de Développement Durable, Ministère du Plan et du Développement
- Mr. Cyriaque Edon, Directeur Général des Politiques de Développement, Ministère d'État du Plan et de Développement
- H.E. Mr. Nathanael Sokpoekpe, Député, Premier Rapporteur de la commission des affaires extérieures, de la coopération au développement, de la défense et de la sécurité, Assemblée Nationale
- Ms. Mireille Santos, Chef du Service des Partenariats Economiques, Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie du Benin
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- Ms. Djaoudath Alidou, Cadre, Ministere du Plan et du Développement
- Mr. Moussa Toko, Cadre, Ministere du Plan et du Développement
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- Mr. Bio Toro Orou Guiwa, Conseiller technique aux relations internationales du Président de l'Assemblée nationale du Bénin, Assemblée nationale du Bénin

4. Burkina Faso

- H.E. Mr. Eric Tiare, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Burkina Faso to the UN
- Mr. Mahamadou Bokoum, Deputy Director General of Economics and Planning, Economics and Planning Branch

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- Mr. Delphin Ndayemeye, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Burundi to the UN

6. Comoros

- H.E. Mr. Fouady Goulame, Commissaire général au plan, Commissariat Général au Plan
- Mr. Abdourazak Ibrahim Mohamed, Directeur Général de la Planification Stratégique et de la Population, Point Focal National PMA

7. Chad

- Mr. Hassan Abakar, Parlementaire, Président de la Commission Communication Nouvelles Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication, Droits Fondamentaux et Libertés de l'Assemblée Nationale du Tchad, Assemblée Nationale du Tchad
- Mr. Asnal Ngartolna, Economic Counselor, Permanent Mission of Chad to the UN

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- Mr. Nemariam, Mengistu, Senior Programme Officer, Ministry of Finance and National Development
- Ms. Nadja Micael, Advisor, Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the UN in New York

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- H.E. Mr. Ato Oumer Hussein, Minister of Agriculture
- H.E. Mr. Nemera Gebeyehu Mamo, State Minister, Planning and Development Commission
- H.E. Mr. Taye Made, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the UN
- Mr. Solomon Tesfasilassie Tegegne, Director General, Planning and Development Commission
- Mr. Dawit Yirga, Director General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Wegayehu Berga, Director Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Tedla Getiso, Economic Expert, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Anteneh Senbeta, Economic Expert
- Mr. Adisalem Teklu, Economic and Legal Expert, Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the UN

10. Gambia

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- H.E. Ms. Amie Fabureh, Minister of Agriculture
- H.E. Mr. James FP Gomez, Minister, Ministry of Fisheries and Water Resources
- Mr. Ousman Sillah, Parliamentarian, National Assembly of The Gambia

- Mr. Abdoulie Jallow, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- Mr. Alagie Fadera, Director of Development Planning, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- H.E. Mr. Lamin Faati, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission to the UN
- Ms. Isatou Badjie, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of The Gambia to the UN
- Mr. Omar Badjie, Principal Economist, Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment

11. Guinea

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- Ms. Linouse Vilmenay, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of Haïti to the UN

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- H.E. Mr. Thabiso Molapo, Minister of Trade and Industry, Ministry of Trade and Industry
- H.E. Mr. Mohapi, Mohapinyane, Minister, Ministry of Energy and Meteorology
- Hon. Ms. Ntsalla, Mafa, Member of Parliament, National Assembly of Lesotho
- Mr. Tseliso, Kalake, Member of Parliament, National Assembly of Lesotho
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14. Liberia

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- H.E. Mr. Prosper K Browne, Deputy Minister for Technical Services, Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications
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- Mr. Randall M. Dobayou, Deputy Executive Director, Environmental Protection Agency
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- H.E. Mr. Adekunle King, Ambassador of Sierra Leone to Ethiopia
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- Ms. Abie Elizabeth Kamara, Deputy Director, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
- Mr. Alan George, Minister Counsellor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- Mr. Momoh Sesay, Senior Manager, Central Bank of Sierra Leone

23. Somalia

- Mr. Mohamed Iman Bulle, Ministry of Fishery

24. South Sudan

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25. Sudan

- Ms. Hiba Auhaj, Third Secretary, Permanent Mission to the UN

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- Ms. Eva Anna Kafkova, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the UN

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- Ms. Astrid Melchior Olesen, Head of Section, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark
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- Mr. Abdallah Hosny, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Malawi

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- H.E. Ambassador Ms. Pirjo Suomela-Chowdhury, Ambassador of Finland in Malawi
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- Mr. Christoph Pohl, Advisor, German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)

Ghana

- Mr. Nashiru Abdulai, Permanent Representative, Embassy of the Republic of Ghana in Ethiopia
- Mr. Ismail Adam, Assistant Director, Bank of Ghana
- Mr. Kofi Andoh, Deputy Commissioner of Insurance, National Insurance Commission
- Mr. Prosper Diaba, Senior Economic Officer, Ministry of Finance
- Mr. Ben Afenyo Tsikudo, Senior Economics Officer, Ministry of Finance
- Mr. Roland Avenyo-Addico, Assistant Manager, Standards and Compliance, National Pensions Regulatory Authority, Ghana

Hungary

- Ms. Brigitta Szatmari, Third Secretary, Second Committee Officer, Permanent Mission of Hungary to the UN

India

- Ms. Vidisha Maitra, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of India to the UN
- Mr. Siddharth Malik, First Secretary, Permanent Mission of India to the UN

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- Mr. Muhamad Purnagunawan, Economic Policy Team Leader, The National Team for The Acceleration of Poverty Reduction (TNP2K)

Japan

- Ms. Yuko Hanada, Researcher in Economy and Development Cooperation Section, Embassy of Japan in Malawi

Kenya

- Mr. Willy Mbai, Project Facilitator, Ministry of Agriculture

Luxembourg

- Mr. Paul Weber, Desk Officer, Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes

Myanmar

- Mr. Htin Linn Maung, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Myanmar to the UN, New York

Nepal

- Ms. Prathma Uprety, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Nepal to the UN, New York

Nigeria

- Ms. Omobolanle Adebimp Magbagbeola, Assistant Director, Lagos State, Ministry of the Environment and Water resources
- Ms. Chinyere Edom, Diplomat, Embassy of Nigeria to Ethiopia

Norway

- H.E. Mr. Dag-Inge Ulstein, Minister of International Development
- H.E. Mr. Steinar Egil Hagen, Ambassador of Norway to Malawi
- Mr. Knut Berdal, Specialist Director, Ministry of Agriculture and Food
- Ms. Aida Ghebreselasie, Senior Advisor, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ms. Hege Fisknes, Senior Advisor, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Mr. Sascha Randal, Advisor, Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN

Paraguay

- Mr. David Martinez, Second Committee Expert, Permanent Mission of Paraguay to the United Nations

Portugal

- H.E. Mr. Francisco Andre, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
- Mr. João Lima, Advisor, Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations in New York

Qatar

- H.E. Soltan bin Saad Al-Muraikhi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar
- H.E. Ms. Alya Al-Thani, Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Qatar to the UN, NY
- Mr. Ahmad Saif Al-Kuwari, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Qatar to the UN, NY

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

- H.E. Mr. Ellsworth John, Ambassador to the Republic of Cuba, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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- Ms. Michelle Voon, Program Officer, Sweden
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Turkey

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- Ms. Nur Alkis, Head of Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Turkey
- Ms. Gülru Tetik, Second Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of The Republic of Turkey

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State of Palestine

- H.E. Ms. Hanan Jarrar, Ambassador, Embassy of the State of Palestine, South Africa

B. UN System, IFIs and other IGOs

United Nations -Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS (OHRLS, co-organizer)

- Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative, Secretary-General of the LDC5 Conference
- Ms. Heidi Schroderus-Fox, Director, Executive Secretary of the LDC5 Conference
- Mr Sandgadorj Erdenebileg, Chief, Deputy Executive Secretary of the LDC5 Conference
- Mr. Oumar Diallo, Special Assistant to UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative
- Ms. Susanna Wolf, Team Leader, Senior Programme Management Officer, LDC Unit
- Mr. Aniket Ghai, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, LDC Unit
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- Ms. Gladys Mutangadura, Senior Programme Officer, LLDC Unit
- Ms. Yuxin Ai, Senior Programme Management Officer, LDC Unit
- Mr. Conor O'Loughlin, Head of Advocacy
- Ms. Margherita Musollino, Economic Affairs Officer, LDC Unit
- Mr. Tomas Gonzalez, Programme Management Officer, LDC Unit
- Mr. Yeshey Dorji, Programme Management Officer, LDC Unit
- Ms. Nnana Mmanyabela Pheto, Economic Affairs Officer, LLDC Unit
- Ms. Miniva Chibuye, Economic Affairs Officer, LDC Unit
- Ms. Erica Carroll-Ogunka, Economic Affairs Officer, LDC Unit
- Ms. Anne Kersting, Associate Expert, LDC Unit
- Mr. Nicholas Ceolin, Associate Expert, Public Information
- Ms. Katariina Saikku, Public Information Intern
- Ms. Yashwinee Chooraman, Intern
- Ms. Marion Pacini, Intern
- Ms. Xuefei Liu, Intern

African Continental Free Trade Area Secretariat

- Ms. Emily Mburu-Ndoria, Director

African Development Bank

- Mr. Elhadj Bah, Chief Policy Economist

African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)

- Ms. Towela Nyirenda-Jere, Head, Economic Integration
- Mr. Younes Touitha, Expert Technique Infrastructure
- Mr. Vincent Moola, Senior Programme Officer - Trade and Markets Access
- Ms. Lovasoa Christine Razanamahandry, Continental Business Network Technical Coordinator

Arab Maghreb Union

- Mr. Imed Ben Hadj Hamouda, Chef de division, Morocco

Arab Organization for Agricultural Development

- Mr. Abdullahi Kelly, Head of Statistics Unit

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

- Mr. Alessandro Vittadini, Head of Unit

Enhanced Integrated Framework

- Mr. Ratnakar Adhikari, Executive Director
- Ms. Annette Ssemuwemba, Deputy Executive Director
- Mr. Simon Hess, Head, Monitoring and Evaluation
- Mr. Peter Donelan, EIF Coordinator
- Ms. Abha Calindi, Digital Communications Officer

European Investment Bank

- Mr. Carmelo Cocuzza, Head of Unit, Luxemburg

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

- Mr. QU Dongyu, Director-General
- Mr. Laurent Thomas, Deputy Director-General
- Ms. Maria Helena Semedo, Deputy Director-General
- Ms. Beth Bechdol, Deputy Director-General
- Mr. Maximo Torero, Chief Economist
- Ms. Ismahane Elouafi, Chief Scientist
- Mr. Godfrey Magwenzi, Directeur de Cabinet
- Mr. Abebe Haile Gabriel, Assistant Director-General/Regional Representative, Regional Office for Africa
- Ms. Angelica Jacome Daza, Director, Office for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs)
- Mr. Guangzhou Qu, Director, Liaison Office with the United Nations
- Mr. Hak-Fan Lau, Director, Office of Communications
- Mr. Jean Senahoun, Senior Economist
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- Mr. Lucas Tavares, Senior Liaison Officer
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- Mr. Etienne Peterschmitt, FAO Representative in Somalia
- Ms. Shibu Rampedi, FAO Representative in The Gambia
- Mr. Dademanao Pissang, FAO Representative
- Mr. Antonio Querido, Country Representative Uganda
- Mr. Gualbert Gbehounou, Country Representative
- Mr. Patrice Talla Takouka, FAO Sub-Regional Coordinator for Southern Africa
- Mr. Robert Guei, Sub-Regional coordinator
- Mr. David Phiri, Sub-Regional Coordinator
- Ms. Jocelyn Brown Hall, Deputy Regional Representative
- Mr. James Okoth, Deputy FAO Representative in Malawi
- Ms. Jiani Tian, Coordinator, Office of the Director-General
- Mr. Khaled Eltaweel, Coordinator, Cabinet of the Director General
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- Mr. Jacques Conforti, Programme Officer
- Ms. Solandy Rakotondramanga, Programme Officer
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- Mr. Andrew Taylor, Communications Specialist
- Ms. Melina Dzowela, Nutrition Specialist
- Mr. Joseph Catanzano, Blue Economist Specialist
- Mr. Tony Nsanganira, Youth Employment in Agri-food Systems Specialist

- Mr. Solomon Gelalcha Woyessa, Crop Production Specialist
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International Monetary Fund

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International Organization for Migration

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Inter-Parliamentary Union

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International Renewable Energy Agency

- Mr. Francesco La Camera, Director-General
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Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

- Ms. Susanna Moorehead, DAC Chair
- Mr. Mario Pezzini, Director, Development Centre
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Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States

- Mr. Riccardo Magini, Senior Programme Officer, Belgium

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

- Mr. Nuha Ceesay, Country Director UNAIDS Malawi

United Nations Capital Development Fund

- Ms. Preeti Sinha, Executive Secretary
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- Mr. David Jackson, Director, Local Development Finance
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- Mr. Casper Sonesson, Policy Advisor
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- Ms. Nan Zhang, Programm Analyst

- Mr. Paul Martin, RTA ASEAN Pacific
- Ms. Charulata Singal, Investment Specialist
- Mr. David Mikhail, Communications Specialist
- Mr. Warut Promboon, International Consultant, Thailand
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United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

- Ms. Isabelle Durant, Acting Secretary-General
- Mr. Paul Akiwumi, Director
- Mr. Rolf Traeger, Chief, LDC Section
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- Mr. Junior Davis, Head, PARB-ALDC
- Ms. Lisa Borgatti, Economist
- Mr. Giovanni Valensisi, Economist
- Mr. Bruno Antunes, Economic Affairs Officer
- Ms. Matfobhi Riba, Economic Affairs Officer
- Mr. Benjamin Banda, Economic Affairs Officer
- Mr. Raymond Landveld, Economic Affairs Officer
- Ms. Coumba Coulibaly, Programme Management Associate

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

- Ms. Xiaoxia Jia, Programme Officer
- Mr. James Bigila, External Relations Officer

United Nation Development Programme

- Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator
- Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa, UN Assistant Secretary-General
- Mr. Haoliang Xu, UN Assistant Secretary-General
- Ms. Faten Bokri, Special Assistant to the Administrator
- Mr. Mansour Ndiaye, Head of Poverty, Inclusive Growth
- Mr. Raymond Gilpin, Chief Economist and Head of Strategy, Regional Bureau for Africa
- Ms. Eunice Kamwendo, Strategic Advisor, Regional Bureau for Africa
- Mr. Shigeki Komatsubara, Resident Representative, Malawi
- Mr. James Wakiaga, Resident Representative, Eritrea
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- Mr. Luca Monge Roffarello, Senior Economist, Sao Tome e Principe
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- Mr. Ahmad Jamshed Khoshbeen, Programme Analyst, Afghanistan
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- Mr. Fawaz Sabri, SDG Finance Expert
- Ms. Mihret Alemu, Economic Analyst

- Ms. Herte Gabretsadik, Partnerships
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- Ms. Atupele Mataula, Data Associate
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- Mr. Ruhimat Soerakoesoemah, Head, SRO, SEA

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

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United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

- Ms. Phumzile Hlophe, Secretary General, Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO
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United Nation Environment Programme

- Ms. Cecilia Njenga, Head UNEP Office in South Africa
- Mr. Stephen Ndeti, Financial Management Officer
- Ms. Grace Mburu, Administrative Assistant

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

- Mr. Paul Desanker, Manager
- Mr. Motsomi Maletjane, Team Lead, LEG&NAP Unit, Adaptation Division, UNFCCC Secretariat

United Nations Food Systems Summit

- H.E. Ms. Agnes Kalibata, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the 2021 Food Systems Summit, Kenya
- H.E. Mr. Martin Frick, Deputy of the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Food System Summit 2021
- Mr. Adam Gerstenmier, Chief of Staff
- Ms. Catherine Kamau, Special Assistant

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

- Mr. Bernardo Calzadilla, Director of Trade, Investment and Innovation Department
- Mr. Victor Djemba, Chief Africa Regional Division
- Ms. Aurelia Patrizia Calabro, UNIDO Representative and Regional Director, Ethiopia
- Mr. Khaled El Mekwad, Regional Representative, South Africa
- Mr. Raymond Tavares, Representative in Cameroon and Central Africa
- Ms. Volatiana Rakotondrazafy, Country Representative
- Ms. Haby Sow Traoré, Country Representative
- Mr. Fakhruddi Azizi, Representative
- Mr. Jean-Claude Plana, Senior Coordinator
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United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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- Ms. Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Disaster Risk Reduction
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- Mr. Zlatan Milisic, Resident Coordinator, UN United Republic of Tanzania
- Ms. Coumba Mar Gadio, Resident Coordinator, UN Zambia
- Mr. Coulibaly Siaka, Coordonateur Resident, UN Senegal
- Mr. Francois Batalingaya, Resident Coordinator, UN Comoros
- Ms. Louise Aubin, Resident Coordinator, UN Niger
- Ms. Seraphine Wakana, Resident Coordinator, UN, Gambia
- Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Resident Coordinator, Morocco
- Mr. Charles Abani, Resident Coordinator, Ghana
- Mr. Fode Ndiaye, Resident Coordinator, Rwanda
- Ms. Nathalie Ndongo-Seh, Resident Coordinator, UN Kingdom of Eswatini
- Ms. Sylvia Lopez-Ekra, Resident Coordinator, Morocco
- Mr. Bruno Lemarquis, Deputy Special Representative of the SG, Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator, Integrated Office of the UN Haiti
- Mr. Nicolas Martin, RCO Bureau Chief, UN Morocco
- Ms. Pauline Magawi, Programme Officer, UN Ethiopia
- Mr. Phillip Pemba, Communications Officer, UN Malawi
- Mr. Chimwemwe Msowoya, Partnerships and Development Finance Officer, UNRCO Malawi
- Mr. Andrea Antonelli, Economist, UN Angola
- Mr. Zinabu Samaro Rekiso, Economist, UN Ethiopia
- Mr. Santiago Goicoechea, Economist
- Ms. Berith Karasch, Peacebuilding Officer, UN Gabon
- Ms. Paul Chitengi, Development Coordination Officer, UN Zambia

United Nations Secretariat - Department of Global Communication

- Ms. Sandra Macharia, Chief of Africa Section, Department of Global Communication

United Nations Secretariat - Office of the President of the General Assembly

- Mr. Volkan Bozkır, President of the General Assembly
- Ms. Sara Al Ahmad, Advisor

United Nations Secretariat - Peacebuilding Support Office

- Ms. Aanchal Bhatia, Innovative Finance Specialist

United Nations Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries

- Mr. Joshua Setipa, Managing Director
- Ms. Yesim Baykal, Programme Management Officer
- Mr. Moshe Kao, Programme Management Consultant
- Ms. Malwina Buldys, Digital Communications Specialist
- Ms. Federica Irene Falomi, Associate Programme Management Officer
- Ms. Gülizar Sabuncu, Programme Assistant
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UN-Women

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- Ms. Clara Anyangwe, Country Representative in Malawi
- Ms. Nnenna Dufils, Programme Specialist
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- Ms. Clara Nanchinga, Gender in Humanitarian Action Consultant
- Ms. Modesta Emma, Simango, Program Support Consultant

World Bank Group

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- Ms. Joelle El Sawalhi, Research Analyst, WB
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World Food Programme

- Ms. Christa Raeder, Representative, Indonesia
- Ms. Masayo Nakamore Rossignoli, Nutrition Analyst
- Mr. Daniel Demissie, Junior Research Assistant

World Health Organization

- Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General
- Mr. Werner Obermeyer, Director
- Ms. Tin Tin Sint, Public Health Officer, Office of Director-General
- Mr. Humphrey Karamagi, Senior Technical Officer, Regional Office for Africa
- Ms. Taylor Winkleman, Fellow

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- Mr. Hasan Kleib, Deputy Director General, Regional and National Development Sector
- Mr. Marc Séry-Koré, Director, Department for Africa and Least Developed Countries
- Mr. Duong Chi Dung, Director
- Mr. Purejdorj Vaanchig, Senior Counsellor, Division for Least-Developed Countries

World Trade Organization

- Mr. Taufiqur Rahman, Head LDC Unit, Development Division
- Mr. Rainer Lanz, Economic Affairs Officer
- Ms. Daria Shatskova, Legal and Economic Affairs Officer

- Mr. Wase Musonge-Ediage, Legal and Economic Affairs Officer

C. Civil Society, Private Sector, Other non-governmental representatives

ACCORD

- Ms. Pravina Makan-Lakha, Chief Operations Officer, South Africa

ACDIEF

- Mr. Koudjovi GADJE, Directeur exécutif

Action for Children in Conflict UK in Kenya

- Mr. John Muiruri Makuno, Executive Director

ADA

- Ms. Laura Foschi, CEO

ADVANS MICROFINANCE NETWORK

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- Ms. Rebecca Mukwaya, Research Associate

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- Mr. Jason Rosario Braganza, Executive Director
- Mr. Rangarirai Chikova, Policy Officer
- Mr. Adrian Chikowore, Policy Analyst

APALAC COALITION

- Mr. Jean Claude Kalinganire, Président coordinator

Asia-Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA)

- Mr. Prasun Kumar Das, Secretary General, Thailand

Association Nigérienne des Scouts de l'Environnement

- -Ms. Fatchima Djibrilla Mme Noura, Présidente

Atlas for Development

- Mr. Hatim El Otmani, President

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- Mr. Angus O'Shea, Founder, USA

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- Mr. John Larkin, Head of Impact Investments PM

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- Mr. Ziad Hamoui, National President Ghana

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- Ms. Zahra Khan, Investment Executive
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Center for Financial Inclusion

- Ms. Deborah Drake, Vice President, Investor Engagement and Research

Center For Global Development

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