

Doha Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries

Introduction -- ‘From Istanbul Priorities to Doha Commitments’

1. Forty years ago in September 1981, the international community met in Paris, France for the First United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and launched the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (SNPA) for the 1980s with an ambitious objective of transforming the economies of the least developed countries (LDCs) toward self-sustained development and enabling them to provide at least internationally accepted minimum standards of nutrition, health, transport, communication, housing and education as well as job opportunities to their citizens, particularly to the rural and urban poor.

2. Now, we are meeting for the fifth time, in the most unprecedented of circumstances, in which a health and socio-economic crisis has shaken everyone, individually and collectively. The world is plagued by growing poverty, inequality, digital divide, vaccine divide, complex conflicts, insecurity, climate change and pandemics. Of greatest concern is that one in every three people in LDCs still live in extreme poverty and the pandemic has caused this figure to rise further. We call for greater action and extraordinary measures by all countries, and strengthened international cooperation, to address these challenges affecting LDCs.

3. We have entered the Decade of Action the most critical time of our generation-to realize our collective ambitions of building back better from COVID-19 and leaving no one behind. We reaffirm our commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and full realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in LDCs. We commit to taking more tangible steps to support the LDCs and to reach the furthest behind first.

4. The LDCs saw their economies significantly shrink in 2020, amidst a severe global recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic; external debt burden and debt service obligations are rising exponentially, gains made over the last decade in poverty reduction were wiped out; and already fragile health systems saw resources shifted away from maternal health and other life-saving treatments. Global inequalities are growing as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. While advanced economies deployed massive fiscal stimulus to cushion the pandemic’s impact, and have seen successful mass vaccinations, the policy response in LDCs was much more limited, due to weak fiscal conditions, major logistical challenges, poor resilience capacity and dwindling global support. For them, adequate access to vaccines remains many months, if not years away, casting shadow over their urgent and much-needed growth and development prospects.

5. The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to not only reverse some progress made during the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) but also exacerbate persistent challenges in LDCs. Due to some dismal pre-existing conditions, namely the chronic underinvestment in health systems, weak social protection systems, high levels of vulnerability to external shocks and dominant employment in the informal sectors, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused serious negative effects on all priority areas of the IPoA which will be felt for years to

come. Ultimately, this seriously compromises the ability of countries to graduate from the LDC category.

6. We recognize that the LDCs, currently consisting of 46 members and comprising about 14 per cent of the global population, are some of the poorest and most vulnerable in the world, accounting for only 1.3 per cent of global gross domestic product, 1.4 per cent of global foreign direct investment and just under 1 per cent of global merchandising exports.

7. We recognize that, despite many challenges and constraints, the LDCs represent an enormous human and natural resource potential for world economic growth, welfare, prosperity and food and energy security. Millions of their burgeoning youth and growing working age population offer extraordinary opportunities to become development leaders and the drivers of transformative change. It is imperative that actions for the LDC by all stakeholders aim at addressing the challenges in a sustainable manner and leverage the opportunities offered by new and emergent technologies-based tools and solutions to catalyze the greatest multiplier effects on growth and development. Therefore, a strengthened global partnership that effectively addresses the special needs of the LDCs, will contribute to the cause of peace, prosperity, poverty eradication and sustainable development for all.

8. We also recognize that many LDCs continue to face multiple structural challenges and constraints, including narrow production and export bases, stagnant trade and investment flows, diminishing productivity growth, smallness, isolation and remoteness from major markets with almost half being landlocked and small island countries, weak land and natural resource base, and widespread poverty, hunger and malnutrition. These long-standing challenges are compounded by new and emerging challenges, such as climate change, increased incidences of natural disasters and public health emergencies, conflicts, fluctuating commodity prices and rising capital outflows. Without a structural transformation that tackles institutional and capacity constraints, the least developed countries will remain vulnerable to various socio-economic, health and environmental shocks.

9. We recognize that progress has been made against the IPoA in areas such as access to electricity, access to mobile telephony and mobile internet, increased enrolment in primary education, increased access to modern family planning for women and girls and reforms that have made it easier to start and register businesses.

10. We also recognize that tangible progress has been made towards graduation. The IPoA set the goal of half of the LDCs (24 at the time) meeting graduation criteria by 2020, and so far, four have graduated and 16 are at different stages of graduation.

11. We note with concern that progress fell short of the goals and targets set out in the IPoA, including achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth at 7 per cent rate; poverty eradication, achieving structural transformation; building productive capacity; reducing the share of girls out of school in primary and secondary education, which is still at least double the world average; manufacturing and trade gains, which were minimal and concentrated

in only a handful of countries; tax to gross domestic product ratios that increased very slowly; and the national adaptation plans that hardly meet the requirements of the Sendai Framework.

12. We further note with concern that progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in the LDCs has been uneven and is not on pace to achieve the goals and targets by 2030. The number of people living in extreme poverty remained at around 32 percent and those suffering from hunger is on the rise; the inequalities between LDCs and the rest of the world as well as within LDCs are rising; infant and maternal mortality is exorbitantly high; access to energy and broadband connectivity is moving at a slower pace; structural transformation is not taking hold; infrastructure building is lagging far behind the actual needs; productive capacity and export competitiveness are weak; climate change is occurring much faster than anticipated, as evidenced by, inter alia, the devastating impacts on oceans and seas, the loss of vulnerable ecosystems, land degradation, the retreat of mountain glaciers and continued rise in global temperature. Biodiversity loss, deforestation, water stress, as well as global pollution from chemicals and waste, remain major global challenges, while desertification and coastal erosion continues to increase.

13. The Programme of Action for the decade 2022-2031 is a new generation of renewed and strengthened commitments by the LDCs and their development partners grounded on the overarching goals of achieving rapid recovery from the pandemic, building resilience against future shocks, eradicating extreme poverty, enabling graduation from the LDC category, addressing inequalities within and among countries, leveraging the power of science, technology and innovation (STI) integrated with local knowledges of LDC communities, bringing structural transformation and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), through a reinvigorated global partnerships for sustainable development based on scaled up and ambitious means of implementation and diverse support to the LDCs forging the widest possible coalition of multi-stakeholder partnerships. This partnership needs to create a global LDC knowledge repository, a portal to capture, process, analyze and present for a structured framework to support for climate and other LDC priorities.

14. The Programme of Action will be guided by the principles of shared responsibility, ownership and leadership of the LDCs; an integrated and comprehensive approach; resilience building; genuine and reinvigorated partnerships; result orientation; peace, security, development and human rights; equity; voice and representation and balance role of the state and market considerations as reflected in the IPOA.

15. The Programme of Action for the decade 2022 to 2031 represents the enhanced commitments of the LDCs, which have the ownership of and primary responsibility for their own development, and their development partners to a renewed and strengthened global partnership.

16. This partnership also includes the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, other multilateral institutions and regional development banks, within their respective mandates.

17. Guided by the spirit of solidarity with LDCs, developing countries, consistent with their capabilities, will provide support for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action in mutually agreed areas of cooperation within the framework of South-South cooperation, which is a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation.

The private sector, civil society and foundations will be encouraged to contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action in their respective areas of competence in line with LDCs national priorities and in collaboration with relevant national government institutions.

19. The COVID-19 pandemic, the Ebola crisis, the financial crisis and climate change have demonstrated that we live in a highly globalized and interconnected world, where a crisis or a virus in a small city of a country can spread to the whole world in a shortest span of time and have devastating impacts globally. Looking beyond crises and bearing in mind the core principles of the 2030 Agenda, it is our shared responsibility to ensure that no country or person is left behind and reach the furthest behind first.

20. We will undertake actions to leverage the opportunities offered by the 226 million youth population in LDCs, who can be a real agent of change for structural transformation through productive capacity building in agricultural, manufacturing and services sectors; building and maintaining resilient infrastructure to improve movement of goods and services; expanding energy access and broadband connectivity; tapping into emerging technologies (bridge the gap with technological equalities, specifically using hands-on training, and capacity development); harnessing the economic and health gains that come with educating and employing girls and women at levels equal to boys and men; and setting up social care systems that relieve women of the unpaid care work burden.

21. We are committed to building a stronger and multifaceted resilience system in the LDCs. With the support of the international community, LDCs need to design systems, including infrastructure in transportation and communications, energy and ICT, supply chains, economic, financial and public health systems, that are dynamic, smart and resilient. Such actions have the potential to make the national economic system stronger and more resilient against any future shocks and ensure sustainable and irreversible graduation as well as achievement of the SDGs.

22. We affirm that the multidimensional nature of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals requires the involvement of all stakeholders at all levels – local, national, international – with solutions that are context-appropriate, respond to the needs and rights of populations, in particular those furthest behind, and tap into the full diversity of existing knowledge and experience. It is, in fact, encouraging that national and local governments, civil society, academia and other stakeholders have engaged with the Sustainable Development Goals process and are developing innovative approaches and practices. International financial institutions and several central and national development banks have started to better reflect the Goals as a whole in their strategies and policies.

23. We note with concern that the International Support Measures that have been put in place are not sufficient to address the wide range of needs that exist in the LDCs including the new and emerging ones, and we urge the international community to fulfil their existing commitments and push beyond ‘business as usual’ to agree on innovative and effective support measures for the LDCs that are new and additional to meet their huge funding gaps in meeting the SDGs.

24. We reaffirm our commitment to a comprehensive, result-oriented, enhanced, quantifiable, forward looking and coherent renewed and strengthened global partnership for LDCs. We also reaffirm our commitments to support the LDCs through, inter alia, fulfilling all internationally agreed goals and targets related to official development assistance, market access, debt relief, technology transfer, technical assistance and capacity-building. These commitments must be met, and action must be taken beyond existing commitments to bring about transformational change in LDCs. The United Nations system, including its specialized agencies as well as the

World Bank Group and IMF, provide technical support, assistance and policy advice to all priority areas for the LDCs, and this support will be improved including through additional concessional finance and the coordination between agencies and departments, using approaches such as the Integrated National Financing Frameworks.

25. We affirm that the national and local governments play a very important role in articulating and implementing the policies and programmes that will support a sustainable future that leaves no one behind. National parliaments will have a great role to play in enacting legislation and allocating funds that serve all to leave no one behind, as well as holding governments to account for the commitments they have made.

26. The Program of Action will have six key focus areas for Action as follows:

- I. Investing in people in LDCs: Eradicating poverty and building capacity to leave no one behind
- II. Leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation to fight against multidimensional vulnerabilities and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals
- III. Structural transformation as a driver of prosperity
- IV. Enhancing International trade of least developed countries and regional integration
- V. Addressing climate change, recovering from COVID-19 pandemic, and building resilience against future shocks
- VI. Mobilizing international solidarity, reinvigorated global partnerships and innovative tools for risk-informed sustainable development - A march towards sustainable graduation.

I. Investing in people in LDCs: Eradicating poverty and building capacity to leave no one behind

27. We recognize that the large youth and working age population of LDCs, is the most important asset for their development. It is estimated that between 2020 and 2030, the population of the LDCs will increase by 256 million reaching it to 1.3 billion people.

28. We are concerned that poverty remains a key challenge for LDCs and even before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was estimated that nearly 30 per cent of the population in LDCs would remain in extreme poverty by 2030. The compounding negative impact of the crisis caused by COVID19 in LDCs suggests an upward trend in extreme poverty.

29. In addition to having a low income, people living in poverty in LDCs experience higher mortality rates, undernourishment, and malnutrition, limited or no access to education, and lack of access to opportunities to gain income through decent employment. Poor people in the LDCs live in underserved areas with poor infrastructure and limited access to water and sanitation and have limited access to social safety nets.

30. We are guided by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and will ensure everyone's human rights and fundamental freedoms. We recognize that good governance at all levels, strong institutions, democracy, the rule of law, transparency and accountability along with a healthy and

well-educated population, with the knowledge and skills needed for productive capacity building and full participation in the decision making process are crucial to achieving sustainable development. However, LDCs still face challenges in ensuring universal access to quality education and health care and their vulnerabilities and limited capacities exacerbate the impact of external shocks such as COVID-19, natural disasters and the impacts of climate change.

31. We aim to eliminate poverty, hunger and malnutrition in all its forms and dimensions, to advance human development for all in the LDCs by the end of the decade and to provide opportunities for all, with special attention to the poorest and marginalized groups..

Key Action Areas:

Social protection systems for inclusive economic growth and resilience against shocks

32. Limited social protection exacerbates vulnerabilities across all dimensions of human development in LDCs, which constitute a major obstacle to economic and social development. Notwithstanding the commitment by many LDCs and their development partners, lack of capacities and limited resources in LDCs are major constraints to providing adequate social protection.

33. **Target:** Achieve quality social protection coverage for all in the LDCs including through dedicated, predictable, and sustained funding.

- Ensure access to safe food and emergency food assistance in all LDCs

We agree to take the following actions:

34. We will reinforce social protection policies and programmes that are risk-informed, gender sensitive and contribute to strengthening the ability of communities and people, particularly the most vulnerable ones, to withstand shocks and crises, expand their productivity, invest in their health and education and protect their aging populations.

35. We commit to ensuring the predictability of resources to maintain social protection through increased and predictable official development assistance and through tax and public transfer reforms and schemes, where appropriate.

36. We commit to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector in delivering social protection programmes, including by expanding the digital infrastructure and information and communication technology capabilities of the public administration, by establishing safe data collection practices to support national registry systems, enhancing cash transfers and payment of entitlements, and by increasing transparency and access to information.

37. We will establish a system of stockholding for LDCs at regional and subregional basis in dealing with humanitarian food emergencies or as a means to limit price volatility. In this regard, we invite the Secretary-General to explore the feasibility, effectiveness and administrative modalities of such stockholding and report to the General Assembly at its 77th session for its consideration.

Achieving universal access to quality education

38. Despite progress in increasing enrolment rates for primary education, 16.2 per cent of children in primary school age were out of school in LDCs in 2019 and almost half of children out of school in the world are in LDCs.

39. Enrolment and completion rates for tertiary education remain low, which has far-reaching implications for the structural transformation agenda of the LDCs. Most of them depend on aid for their education budgets. At the secondary and tertiary levels, disparities exist for girls and marginalized groups. Lack of economic opportunities along with poor basic facilities and infrastructure, such as the lack of computers and access to safe drinking water or electricity, along with insufficient trained teachers and the limited or lack of adequate learning and teaching materials, seriously affect the quality of education in LDCs.

40. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on schooling is a generational catastrophe. School closures brought by the pandemic have had devastating consequences for children's learning and wellbeing. Millions of children and youth are falling behind in their learning, which will have long-term impacts. More than a year and a half into the COVID-19 crisis, almost all students in LDCs are affected by full school closures. Unable to access remote learning, these students are at an increased risk of never returning to school, and even being forced into child marriage or child labor and young girls experiencing early pregnancies.

41. **Target:** Achieve universal access to education, eliminate the gender gap in enrolment and increase the quality of education for all in LDCs

- Substantially expand globally the scholarships for students of LDCs in the higher education institutes of developed and developing countries,
- Achieve 100 per cent access to internet, electricity and gender sensitive sanitation facilities in all primary, secondary and tertiary schools in LDCs by 2030
- Establish an online university for LDCs

We agree to take the following actions:

42. We commit to supporting LDCs in strengthening national education systems, including through better curricula that respond to the dynamic nature of education and training, financing, teacher development, retention and deployment, especially in rural areas and improvement in basic infrastructure and providing adequate supplies.

43. We also commit to supporting LDCs in increasing enrolment and decreasing dropout rates through measures such as abolishing school fees and providing school meals. We commit to eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situation.

44. We commit to ensuring 100 per cent access to internet, electricity and gender sensitive sanitation facilities in all academic institutions in LDCs and providing ICT-based lifelong and dynamic learning systems and human capital development by 2030.

45. We commit to supporting the LDCs to access digital equipment, including low-cost laptops or other devices, as well as educational radio and television programmes and the distribution of equipment such as radios and textbooks to the poorest and marginalized households, especially for girls. We further commit to supporting large-scale national efforts to utilize technology in support of remote learning and online education.

46. We will enhance interaction, collaboration and exchange programmes of students as well as share scientific studies and research papers between academic institutions of LDCs and the rest of the world. We will significantly increase the number of scholarships to LDCs and invite, higher education institutes to allocate places and scholarships for students and trainees from LDCs, in particular in the fields of science, technology, engineering, medicines and business administration in developed countries and other developing countries.

47. We will establish an online university for LDCs with high academic excellence and international standard and global recognition of its certification, primarily dedicated to teaching graduate and post-graduate studies on STEM for citizens of LDCs and graduated countries. In this regard, we invite the development partners to host this university and provide predictable financing to fully cover tuition fees and other expenses of the students related to their digital access and reading materials ensuring 50-50 gender balance and we request the Secretary-General to submit a report in full consultation with LDCs and their development partners as well relevant UN entities to the General-Assembly for its consideration at its 77th Session in outlining the modalities, terms of references and its sustainable funding sources.

Empowerment of women, girls and youth to address inequality and drive economic growth

48. Women and girls continue to face barriers such as lack of access to education, particularly at secondary and tertiary levels, and are subjected to harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage; and gender-based violence. Investments are required to provide access to education throughout the life-course, to expand financial services such as credit, and to eliminate harmful practices and address barriers to full participation in all spheres of society in order to further enhance the contribution of women to economic and social development. The disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the social and economic situation of women and girls also pose challenges to foster gender equality in the LDCs.

49. **Targets:** Achieve women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life

- Achieve women's equal opportunities in businesses, entrepreneurship and decent jobs.
- Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.
- Achieve access to sexual and reproductive health and education for all women and girls.

We agree to take the following actions:

50. We commit to establishing policies and programmes to expand women's entrepreneurship, job opportunities and economic opportunities and ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic, and public life, including through institutional reforms.

51. We commit to eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking, sexual and other types of exploitation as well as all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

52. We commit to establishing support programmes to prevent and respond to conflict related sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict LDCs and to assist survivors of conflict related sexual violence including through long-term health care, counselling, timely police response, access to justice, and safe accommodation and shelter.

53. We commit to providing access to family planning to all women in LDCs and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of other relevant United Nations conferences.

Population and health

54. We note that the LDCs have the fastest growing populations globally rising at an annual rate of 2.3 per cent and many are projected to double in population between 2019 and 2050. Appropriate policies and measures need to be put in place to leverage the potentials offered by the demographic dividends.

55. LDCs face major challenges in improving the health status of their population due to lack of adequate healthcare facilities and services. Infant and maternal mortality remains unacceptably high in LDCs. They also experience an increase in non-communicable disease, including a rise of obesity, diabetes, cancers and other preventable or treatable conditions.

56. **Target:** Ensure universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all at an affordable cost

- Eliminate preventable maternal, infant and child deaths and provide access to quality health services at an affordable cost.
- Ensure birth registration to all newborns in LDCs

We agree to take the following actions:

57. We will increase our support and investment in promoting education and training to the burgeoning youth population of LDCs to leverage the opportunities presented by the demographic dividend. LDCs, with the support of their development partners, will upgrade science and technology-based education system that lead to dynamic and emerging critical thinking skills of the young generation and ensure their successful integration into national and international labour markets, with full and productive employment and decent work for all.

58. We commit to providing increased financial and technical support for LDCs to strengthen integrated national health systems, and the design and implementation of modern health infrastructure, develop adequate skilled professionals and medical facilities and supplies, improve essential health services, and provide incentives to retain the national health workers in order to achieve the provision of universal health care and reproductive health services for all in LDCs.

59. We reaffirm the decision of the Council for TRIPS on the Extension of the Transition Period Under Article 66.1 of the TRIPS Agreement for LDCs Members for Certain Obligations With Respect to Pharmaceutical Products until 1 January 2033, and commit to providing financial and technical support to LDCs through technology transfer as obliged under Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement with a view to enabling LDCs to produce life-saving medicines including the vaccine for COVID-19. We call on WTO members to extend the same benefits for twelve years for countries graduated from LDC category.

60. We commit to providing necessary support to LDCs to ensure birth registration for all newborns in LDCs and provide a national identity or social security number to them.

Investing in youth

61. In 2020, 66.9 per cent of the population was below 30 years old. By 2030 one in five of the youth in the world will be born in the LDCs. In 2019, more than one in five of the world's youth were not in employment, education or training (NEET), almost unchanged since 2005. Since young women were already twice as likely to be jobless and not in education nor training than young men, and as women have been disproportionately pushed into inactivity during the pandemic, the COVID-19 crisis is likely to worsen the NEET gender gap among youth.

62. **Targets:** Ensure, by 2030, that all youth achieve literacy and numeracy

- Ensure access to lifelong digital learning opportunities for skills development
- Increased youth participation in decision making process as well as opportunities for skills development through cooperation mechanisms as provided by north-south and south-south cooperation.
- Access to decent employment opportunities, knowledge and skills for all youth in the LDCs
- Promote entrepreneurial training to youth including through financial and technical assistance.

We agree to take the following actions:

63. We will strengthen youth participation mechanisms to facilitate young people's engagement in policies and activities that enhance sustainable development efforts. We will increase youth involvement in national sustainable development coordination councils, working with national youth councils, expanding the United Nations Youth Delegate Programme and other opportunities for youth representation, as appropriate, and ensuring that young people contribute to the implementation and review of the Programme of Action.

64. We will adopt an inclusive results-based and employment-generating approach to development planning and implementation in accordance with national priorities and legislation. We commit to ensuring digital fluency, life-long-learning opportunities, appropriate training including vocational training, entrepreneurship skills, and best opportunities for full employment and decent work for all people, especially youth in the LDCs. We commit to supporting the LDCs to reform and strengthen education systems to allow for the development of skills and talents that are consistent with the demands of the national and global job markets, which include preparing young people for frontier technologies and the new digital age.

Water, sanitation and hygiene

65. The proportion of the population with access to basic drinking water services was 64.6 per cent in 2018, with 84.1 per cent access in urban areas compared to 55 per cent of the population with access in rural areas. Access to basic sanitation services remains very low in the LDCs at an average 34% of the population, in particular in rural areas.

66. **Target:** Achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all in LDCs by 2030.

We agree to take the following actions:

67. We commit to providing adequate finance and technology to develop water and sanitation infrastructure in the LDCs and develop water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies. We also commit to providing access to adequate water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities, including handwashing facilities and menstrual hygiene facilities in schools and health facilities in LDCs.

Urbanization and shelter

68. The average proportion of the urban population living in slums was 58.89 per cent in 2018 in the LDCs. Conditions in slums carry especially high risks, due to overcrowding, limited access to water and sanitation, poor health-care systems and a lack of other basic services. Financing sustainable urbanization remains a challenge in LDCs. Sustainability of municipal funding through additional resources is key to supporting the investment needs of growing cities in LDCs.

69. **Target:** By 2030, ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services

- By 2030, provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport system for all, improving road safety, notably by expanding public transport

We agree to take the following actions:

70. We reaffirm our commitment to provide financial and technical support to LDCs to strengthen government housing agencies, including at the local level and improve access to land, as per national legislation, affordable housing and basic services, and upgraded slums, and sustainable transport and communication systems for all taking into account the special needs for reconstruction of LDCs devastated by natural and man-made disasters and conflict.

71. We commit to supporting LDCs, including through financial and technical assistance, in building sustainable and resilient housing utilizing local materials and increasing affordable housing, including by leveraging public-private partnerships and sharing good practices among LDCs.

Migration

72. We recognize that migrants make positive contributions to inclusive growth and sustainable development in their countries of origin, transit, and destination, and to the response and recovery to the crisis caused by COVID-19.

73. **Target:** Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies

- Enhance the positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development
- Invest in skills development of migrants and facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualification and competences.

We agree to take the following actions:

74. We recognize the positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development. We also recognize that international migration is a multidimensional reality of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, which requires coherent and comprehensive responses. We will cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status, of refugees and of displaced persons in LDCs. Such cooperation should also strengthen the resilience of communities hosting refugees, particularly in LDCs.

75. We commit to investing in innovative solutions that facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications and competences of migrant workers at all skills levels, and promote demand driven skills development to optimize the employability of migrants in formal labour markets in countries of destination and in countries of origin upon return, as well as to ensure decent work in labour migration.

76. We encourage appropriate steps to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation of migrants in the development of local solutions and opportunities, as well as efforts to improve public perceptions of migrants and migration and to address the special situation and vulnerability of migrant women and girls, particularly migrant women employed in the informal economy and in less skilled work, to abuse and exploitation, underlining in this regard the obligation of States to protect, respect and fulfil the human rights of all migrants.

77. We invite the international community and all relevant stakeholders, without prejudice to ongoing support, to cooperate and mobilize resources and expertise, including through financial and in-kind assistance, as well as direct aid to host countries, refugee populations, and countries of origin of refugees, especially LDCs, with a view to enhancing the capacity of and reducing the heavy burden borne by countries and communities hosting refugees and displaced persons in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations while fully respecting the humanitarian principles of humanity, independence, neutrality and impartiality for humanitarian action. In this regard, we call for sufficient safeguards to enable refugees to exercise freely their right of return to their countries of origin voluntarily, in safety and dignity.

Good and effective governance at all levels

78. Many LDCs have made progress in governance in the past decade. However, more needs to be done and several countries are still in conflict and post-conflict situations. In 2018, 33 million forcibly displaced people originated from LDCs, which is a growing problem acting as a drag on governance appraisals. The average e-government development index developed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs for the delivery of public services in LDCs increased from 0.23 in 2010 to 0.34 in 2020 but remains lower than the world average of 0.6.

79. We reaffirm the importance of the principle of sovereign equality enshrined in Article 2.1 of the United Nations Charter and of broadening and strengthening the voice and participation of LDCs in international economic decision-making, norm-setting and global economic governance.

80. We express our deep concern that LDCs are hugely under-represented in the global decision-making processes in the economic, social, and environmental fields, which needs to be addressed with top priority.

81. **Targets:** Strengthen good governance and the rule of law at all levels
- Substantially enhance the voice and participation of LDCs in global governance architecture

We agree to take the following actions:

82. We commit to strengthening good governance, democracy, and the rule of law by strengthening transparent and accountable governance and strengthened and independent judicial institutions, human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women, the poor and marginalized groups, democratic participation, preventing corruption and enhancing institutional capacity at all levels. We will also strengthen efforts to fight corruption, bribery and money-laundering, the illegal transfer of funds and other illicit activities by strengthening anti-corruption laws and regulations and their effective application.

83. We will support LDCs in the establishment of e-government services to facilitate access to public sector offices and services, and disseminate key information about laws, regulations and Government activities to citizens.

84. We commit to reforming the decision-making and governance structures of international organisations to ensure that the LDCs are well represented. We also commit to providing continued support for strengthened and effective voice and participation of LDCs in international dialogue and action on development, as well as in decision- and rulemaking and standard- and norm setting processes in all areas affecting their development, and in relevant international forums.

85. We commit to promoting policy coherence and coordination of international financial, trade and development institutions, processes and mechanisms, taking into account the diversified and special development needs and challenges of LDCs.

Building and sustaining peace for sustainable development

86. Twenty-four of the 46 LDCs had active conflicts in 2019. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development emphasizes the link between peace, security, stability, and sustainable development. Peace, security, development, human rights, and humanitarian efforts are complementary and need to reinforce one another. Supporting and building partnerships with conflict affected LDCs, through sustained and predictable resources, remains a critical step in achieving peaceful and inclusive societies.

87. **Targets:** Build durable peace and ensure stability, security, and sustainable and inclusive development in LDCs.

- Foster peaceful, just, and inclusive societies which are free from fear and violence

We agree to take the following actions:

90 We must redouble our efforts to resolve and or prevent conflict and commit to strengthening support for LDCs affected by conflict to address country-specific needs and situations, including broad-based, inclusive and rapid socio-economic development with a special focus on rebuilding national institutions and capacity, rebuilding critical infrastructure and generating productive employment and decent work for all.

91 We will build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights including the right to development, on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions.

92 We commit to increasing the predictability of aid: first through publishing three- to five-year indicative forward estimates, and through making more effective use of global and country level funds for peacebuilding and state building. We also encourage multilateral institutions to scale up access to instruments supporting investment in fragile contexts.

II. Leveraging the power of science, technology, and innovation to fight against multidimensional vulnerabilities and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

93 We acknowledge the critical importance of science, technology, and innovation, including environmentally sound technologies and information and communications technologies, in the pursuit of achieving the SDGs. They can also play a key role in accelerating the pace of economic diversification and transformation, improving productivity and competitiveness, as well as enabling the full participation of LDCs in the global economy. We also acknowledge the potential of the Fourth Industrial Revolution to raise global income levels and improve the quality of life for populations around the world.

94 We express concern that despite advances in science, technology, and innovation, significant gaps remain in STI between LDCs and the rest of the world. We are also concerned that the current international technology transfer landscape has serious gaps, especially in reaching out to LDCs, where institutional and technology capabilities are limited.

95 During the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action over the period 2011-2020, LDCs faced significant and persistent lags in major indicators related to science, technology, and innovation. The ratio of research and development expenditure in LDCs as a share of gross

domestic product was 0.6 per cent or less between 2011-2017, compared with around 2 per cent of developed countries' much larger gross domestic product. Citizens of LDCs filed only 1,536 patents in 2018. As a share of patents globally, the figure is almost zero. The LDCs published only 11 journal articles for every 1 million people in 2018.

Key Action Areas

Access to modern technologies for sustainable development. Building human capital, infrastructure, and institutions to reap the benefits of the Fourth Industrial Revolution

96 We express concern that LDCs with limited human and institutional capacities and limited internet access are unable to participate and benefit from the modern technologies and ICT revolution. During the period of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, internet access in LDCs increased to 19 per cent in 2019 from about 5 per cent in 2011. Despite this progress, there is a growing digital divide between countries as well as between urban and rural areas and women and men within the LDCs. This divide results from low internet and broadband coverage especially in rural and remote areas, the relatively higher cost of using the internet, lack of local content and lack of relevant digital skills in LDCs. Approximately 800 million people in LDCs are not online and have no possibility of participating in online services, e-commerce, e-learning or communication.

There is an urgent need to create a global LDC knowledge repository, a portal to capture, process, analyze and present for a structured framework to support for climate and other LDC priorities.

97 **Targets:** Substantially increase investment in research and development, as well as human, and institutional capacity building

- Building adequate digital infrastructure including for e-learning, e-governance, and e-commerce
 - Promote transfer of technology including digital and environmentally sound technologies to LDCs
 - Establish and strengthen national science institute in each LDCs
 - Move away from low value-added natural resources and low-technology products to higher value-added manufactures, and higher-technology products

We agree to take the following actions:

98 As a whole-of-government approach, we commit to formulating comprehensive national regulatory and normative frameworks, building physical infrastructure and digital ecosystems and formulating smarter policies on STI, trade, investment, industry, and education to accelerate the implementation of SDGs, reduce inequalities and build resilience against shocks.

99 We commit to improving affordability of internet access and its productive usage for LDCs through international support, appropriate regulations and promotion of competitive market so that operators compete for low-use customers through a variety of internet plans that cater to different income levels and improve rural coverage through universal service funds.

100 We will identify rural, remote, low-population density and hard-to-reach communities that need greater connectivity and if these cannot be served through terrestrial connection, affordable satellite broadband will be provided as an alternative and integral part of national broadband plan to bring broadband to rural and remote areas.

101 We agree to support LDCs to build capacity to scale up the deployment of and utilization of emerging technologies for the SDGs and incorporate them into the local production of food, manufactured goods, and services for both rapidly growing regional markets as well as global value chains.

102 We commit to strengthening the science-policy interface and expanding LDCs knowledge and understanding of and access to new technology trends by building partnerships and interfaces with academies of science, universities, labs, innovation incubators, and private sector entities at the forefront of this technological change including those located in developed countries.

103 We commit to enhancing LDCs' cybersecurity capabilities to better respond to cyberthreats and ensure enhanced protection of their national infrastructure, including the critical ICT infrastructure, thereby making the internet safer and protecting internet users including online safety of women and children, to serve national priorities and maximize socio-economic benefits.

104 We commit to providing enhanced financial and technical support to LDCs to establish and strengthen national and regional science institutes to promote research and development in science, technology and innovations as well as adaptation and application of modern technologies for domestic uses. We will also promote local innovation capabilities of LDCs for inclusive and sustainable economic development by bringing together local scientific, vocational and engineering knowledge. We will address gender disparities by enhancing participation of women and girls in science, technology and innovation activities.

105 We will support LDCs to move away from low value-added natural resources and low-technology products to higher value-added and higher-technology products; and integration into Global Value Chains (GVCs) to build productive capacities and diversify their export matrix.

106 We call upon Member States and the United Nations development system, and encourage other stakeholders to facilitate improved level of participation of scientists and engineers from LDCs in international collaborative research, STI projects; and to strengthen their support for the different science, technology and innovation partnerships with LDCs in primary, secondary and higher education, vocational education and continuing education; business opportunities for the private sector; science, technology and innovation infrastructure.

Science, Technology, and Innovation for development and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and building resilience against emerging challenges

107 We acknowledge that STI offers an opportunity for LDCs to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, build back better and resilient to future systemic shocks and crises and emerging challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the pressing need for LDCs to elevate the application of science, technology, and innovation at both policy and Operational levels.

Ensure that WTO TRIPS Art 66.2 is implemented:

Developing countries, in particular, see technology transfer as part of the bargain in which they have agreed to protect intellectual property rights. The TRIPS Agreement aims to achieve the transfer and dissemination of technology as part of its objectives, and specifically requires

developed country members to provide incentives for their companies to promote the transfer of technology to least-developed countries

108 **Targets:** Significantly improve STI infrastructure in LDCs by 2031.

- Ensure universal access to and meaningful use of internet by all in all the LDCs by 2030.
- Significantly reduce the cost of using the internet.

We agree to take the following actions:

109 We commit to bridging the STI divide and provide financial and technical support and technology transfer to LDCs including through south-south and triangular cooperation to ensure that all LDCs can engage effectively in low emission and climate resilient development that will also protect the lives of our populations, economies and systems.

110 We commit to increasing investment in education, including digital skills and e-education, and to improving education and training, including lifelong learning endeavors in LDCs, especially in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to close the digital divide in rural and urban areas, as well as between women and men and increase human capacity and labor productivity. We will enhance collaboration in research, data and knowledge sharing to cope with the immediate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthen resilience.

111 We will provide enhanced funding for innovative solutions of LDCs -specific problems, including in the areas of agriculture and food production, energy and development, infrastructure development, disaster risk reduction, and climate resilience.

112 We agree to enhance the capacity of and providing financial and in-kind resources to the United Nations Technology Bank as well as collaboration among Government, the private sector and academia to advance STI, research and development, bridging the digital divide by facilitating technology transfer and contributing to COVID-19 response.

Promoting private sector engagement, digitalization and broadband connectivity

113 We aim to achieve sufficient level of digital skills and literacy to ensure digital inclusion that address both basic infrastructure development and human capital accumulation. We acknowledge the Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation and its vision of a more inclusive, equitable and safe digital future for all.

114 **Targets:** By 2030, all people in LDCs should have safe, affordable and meaningful digital connectivity

- By 2025 broadband-internet user penetration should reach 35 per cent in LDCs
- By 2031 double the broadband-internet user penetration in LDCs to reach 70 per cent mark

We agree to take the following actions:

115 We commit to enhancing multi-stakeholder support to strengthen digital capacity-building for LDCs to fully harness digital technologies, while developing robust and effective regulatory framework and policies to promote digital infrastructure and services, digital capacity-building, and digital transformation.

116 We will promote partnerships with the private sector to leverage fully their capacity for innovation and encourage greater investment in sustainable network infrastructure and practical digital capacity-building initiatives in LDCs. We encourage and support the private sector, particularly major technology companies, to work closely with public, educational, research-

focused, and development agencies to facilitate technology transfer, exploit research and innovation and build the necessary capacities and technical competencies of LDCs.

117 We call upon the development partners to enhance their support to LDCs to build their broadband infrastructure, connectivity, access and productive use; incentivize investors to invest in broadband infrastructure in LDCs to meet their investment gaps including through leveraging existing investment guarantee arrangements, such as MIGA; and support capacity building programmes for LDCs to access to existing facilities.

III. Structural transformation as a driver of prosperity

118 The initiation of a sustained process of structural transformation remains a critical challenge for LDCs. Their economies are largely undiversified, commodity dependent and at the bottom of regional and global value chains. The high-productivity manufacturing and services have miniscule contribution to gross domestic product in LDCs. While the agriculture sector employs more than half the population, it is characterized by subsistence practices with low levels of value addition per worker, and inadequate access to both national, regional and global markets.

119 The services sector directly contributes to structural transformation. However, it contributes less than half of GDP in LDCs, the bulk of tertiary employment is concentrated in less knowledge-intensive services and participation in global export of commercial services is negligible.

120 For LDCs to fully utilize their potential, we aim to promote the achievement of inclusive and sustainable structural transformation capable of increasing productivity and growth, reducing their exposure to the existing vulnerabilities and external shocks, creating employment, sustaining the environment, and ultimately leading to poverty eradication and inclusive and sustainable development.

Key Action Areas

Productive capacity building

121 LDCs economies feature limited productive capacities, which constrains their ability to produce efficiently and effectively, to diversify their economies and to create sustainable and productive employment. This challenge translates into binding supply constraints and ultimately into weak export and economic potentials and limited productive employment generation and social development prospects.

122 **Targets:** Generate quality employment opportunities and increase labour productivity by 50 per cent by 2031.

- Substantially increase economic and export diversification with a view to reaching the level of other developing countries in export concentration by 2030.
- Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, double industry's share of employment and gross domestic product in LDCs.

We agree to take the following actions:

123 We commit to promoting and supporting the formulation of national strategies aimed at increasing diversification, value addition, efficiency, and competitiveness in the manufacturing, agriculture, and services sectors; and call for enhancing financial and technical support from development partners, international organizations, and multilateral development banks to facilitating the implementation of these strategies.

124 We will create a conducive policy environment for industrial diversification and value addition, including strengthening efforts to accelerate capital accumulation, building institutional and human capacities and knowledge development.

125 We encourage innovative solutions, entrepreneurship, and the use of modern, cost-effective, and locally adapted technologies, with an emphasis on the manufacturing, agriculture, and services sectors, including tourism, information and communications, and finance, and call for sharing of scientific knowledge and innovative technologies.

126 We commit to enhancing support towards establishing or upgrading quality assurance and standards of products and services in LDCs to meet international standards.

127 We commit to increasing financial and technical support to LDCs in promoting the development of agribusinesses and industries with value-addition along the agricultural value-chain; while implementing resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintaining ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding, and other disasters, and facilitate access to agricultural research, technology, and climate-smart technologies to support adaptation.

128 We will promote micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises by ensuring full and equal access to financial services and products, supporting them to enter into national, regional and global value chains and support them for digitalization and tapping the potentials of e-commerce.

129 We reaffirm the importance of human capacity as a critical factor for the utilization of other productive capacities, and call for increasing public and private investment, including through international cooperation, in human capacity development and skills development to increase productive capacities and the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for full employment and decent jobs, and entrepreneurship.

Infrastructure Development

130 LDCs continue to face huge infrastructure gaps in particular regarding access to energy, transport and information and communication technologies (as addressed under commitment 2) and lack the capacity to maintain existing infrastructure and fully address the gaps. Therefore, enhancing efforts and support towards infrastructure development and maintenance to these countries is fundamental.

a) Transport

131 Despite efforts made, LDCs continue to face inefficient, unreliable physical transport infrastructure, due to high costs, lack of investment, poor maintenance, and lack of institutional

capacity. The establishment of a secure, reliable, and efficient transport system including rail transport, road transport, seaports, and air transport is critical for LDCs to reduce transport costs, facilitate trade, link to regional and international markets and enhance the competitiveness.

132 **Target:** Significantly expand, upgrade, and maintain all forms of transport infrastructure and closing the missing links, and strengthening the institutional capacities and transport services.

We agree to take the following actions:

133 We agree to develop and implement comprehensive national policies for transport infrastructure development and maintenance, encompassing all modes of transportation. We will ensure the transport infrastructure to be climate- resilient that can withstand the impacts of natural disaster, climate change and rising sea levels. In this regard, we will be mobilizing domestic and international resources and share experiences on transport infrastructure development and financing, building institutional capacities and strengthening transport services.

134 We call on development partners, international organizations, regional development banks and the private sector through public-private partnerships, to increase financial and technical support to the efforts of LDCs in transport infrastructure development and maintenance. In this regard, we stress the importance of developing necessary policies and regulatory frameworks to promote private sector involvement in infrastructure development including enhancing technical assistance and capacity building. We will also leverage new and innovative financing sources and new funding mechanisms, including blended finance, green bonds through public-private partnerships.

b) Energy

135 Despite the importance of access to reliable energy to achieving structural transformation, LDCs face challenges at three levels in particular, generation, transmission, and utilization of energy and they lack the capacity to mobilize the large amounts of financing that are required to invest in major power generation projects. Only about 53 per cent of the population in LDCs has access to energy, with rates of access in rural areas of only around 10 per cent in some countries. We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has underlined the importance of reliable and seamless energy access, from health services to the use of information and communication technologies.

136 The LDCs committed to net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 in the context of resources being available to do so, as well as to delivering climate-resilient development pathways and securing full access to sufficient and affordable renewable energy for all by 2030. The pathway to net-zero emissions requires a substantial increase in the share of renewable energy in all three main end-use categories: electricity, transport, and heating/cooling. Despite immense potential of the renewable energy sector in LDCs, these countries rarely benefit from larger financing schemes to the same extent as more prosperous developing countries. We are concerned that 15 LDCs are at the top 20 access deficit countries in the world and in 2019, the LDCs attracted only 20 per cent of international commitments in support of clean energy to developing countries.

137 Access to clean cooking also remains a major concern in LDCs, although it increased to 17% in 2019, up from 11% in 2010. The majority of the people in LDCs are living in rural areas,

with access to clean fuel for cooking as low as 7% and several LDCs have overall access to clean cooking equal to or less than 5%.

138 Targets: By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services

- Double generation of electricity per capita in LDCs by 2030
- Double the share of renewable energy in the total final energy consumption in LDCs by 2030
- Double international public finance in support of clean and renewable energy; and enhanced capacities in energy production, trade, and distribution in LDCs in line with SDG7
- By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all
- Enhance technology transfer to LDCs to accelerate transition to clean and renewable energy

We agree to take the following actions:

139 We commit to doubling international public finance to meet the urgent need for investments in power generation, along with grid reinforcement and upgrading of technology, in order to provide modern, reliable and sustainable energy to all through improved generation, transmission and distribution facilities and enhanced energy efficiency in LDCs. We also commit to providing scaled up and targeted support to LDCs in the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, including the global plan of action for the Decade.

140 We commit to providing financial and technical support to LDCs on a priority basis to double generation of electricity per capita in LDCs by 2030 and double the share of renewable energy in the total final energy consumption in LDCs by 2030.

141 We commit to strengthening cooperation at the regional level to promote innovation and facilitate financing, support regional cross-border power grid connectivity to advance economic integration and sustainable development and share best practices and in this regard invites Governments to reinforce their energy interconnections, connecting regional energy markets and increasing energy security at the regional and global levels.

142 We commit to significantly increasing public and private investments to transition households to cleaner, more efficient, and sustainable cooking technologies and fuels, including through publicly supported technology innovation accelerators, with a focus on remote, poor and vulnerable households.

143 We commit to increasing the deployment of least-cost decentralized solutions, policy support, new business models and the sharing of best practices, including mini and micro-grids, stand-alone renewable energy systems, rooftop solar photovoltaic and storage, and other technologies that can be directly linked to livelihood improvement and economic activities, especially in remote low-demand areas, can help to close the access gap and bridge the last mile.

144 We call upon LDCs to create enabling environment including appropriate regulatory frameworks and policy reforms to facilitate private sector investment as well as promoting attractive project pipelines. We also call upon development partners, MDBs, other international and regional organizations, including IRENA, International Solar Alliance and other relevant stakeholders to substantially increase their investments in LDCs, through simplified access process, in developing sustainable, reliable, modern, inclusive and equitable energy systems, including, inter alia, by strengthening energy systems through cross-border grid connections, as appropriate, and to consider incorporating decentralized renewable energy solutions in energy planning, as appropriate, and recognize that energy transition will take different paths in different parts of the world.

145 We commit to the development, dissemination, diffusion transfer and application of environmentally sound technologies and technical know-how to LDCs including advanced energy technologies, cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and the sustainable use of traditional energy resources with a view to rapid reductions in the cost of new and renewable resources of energy in LDCs.

Connecting to global and regional value chains, strengthening their services economy and trade

146 LDCs are faced with numerous challenges in their efforts to integrate into the regional and global value chains including limited industrial development; low level of productivity and diversification; lack of technology and structural transformation; limited access to trade finance; stringent rules of origin and non-tariff barriers such as various quality standards.

147 **Targets:** Significantly increase the value added and manufactured component of the LDCs exports, with the objective of integrating into the regional and global value chains.

We agree to take the following actions:

148 We call for greater integration of LDCs into the regional and global value chains to enhance their competitiveness and increase diversification and accelerate their structural economic transformation and sustainable development.

149 . We commit to supporting LDCs to significantly increase their integration into the regional and global value chains with a view to enhancing their competitiveness, leap-frogging their development process and driving their productivity growth. We will also support LDCs to their productive capacity, export competitiveness, access to trade finance, skills transfer and connectivity market access, trade facilitation and technology transfer to further integrate LDCs into regional and global value chains.

Support private sector development

150 A dynamic, broad-based, well-functioning and socially responsible private sector is a valuable instrument to sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, access to goods and services, a source of tax revenues and to sustainable structural transformation. Structural constraints, such as infrastructural bottlenecks, limited access to finance, high operating and

trading costs, limited human capital, limited ICT capacities and institutional constraints have limited the growth of the private sector in LDCs.

151 Target: Create an enabling environment for private sector development.

- Ensure full and equal access to financial services and products for MSMEs, including insurance, and improve financial literacy, especially for women. (IPoA, 2011, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, 2015)

We agree to take the following actions:

152 We will promote an enabling environment for private sector development including for MSMEs through a transparent and rules-based regulatory framework, simplifying business regulations and processes, reducing and streamlining administrative formalities, improving supply chain, ensuring access to market, reinforcing cooperation and building capacities to implement effective competition policies, and adopting open, transparent and clear regulatory frameworks for business and investment, with protection for property rights, land rights and intellectual property rights, as appropriate and as per national circumstances. Where appropriate we aim to strengthening regulatory frameworks to better align private sector incentives with public goals, including incentivizing the private sector to adopt sustainable practices, and foster long-term quality investment.

153 We will foster economic activity and ease doing business for private companies by promoting economic clusters hubs/industry parks/export processing zones that remove obstacles to investments and infrastructure usage and enable simpler facilitation of business operations and trade and support LDCs in the implementation of such measures. We will also support MSMEs to enter into national, regional and global value chains through financial support and access to appropriate digital tools.

154 We commit to promoting public-private sector dialogues and strengthening cooperation for cross-fertilization of experiences and dissemination of best practices that foster entrepreneurship, promote business-to-business dialogue and contacts, and stimulate transfer of skills and technology.

IV. Enhancing international trade of least developed countries and regional integration

155 We recognize that LDCs can derive significant benefit from a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization. Notwithstanding, the massive expansion of trade and investment in the last decades, LDCs face considerable challenges in effective integration into global trading system and benefitting from the opportunities afforded by international trade and global value chains.

156 We are concerned that in 2019 LDCs merchandise exports registered 1.01 per cent share in world trade which is less than the share of 1.06% that LDCs registered at the launch of the IPoA in 2011. The Sustainable Development Goals target of doubling the LDCs' share of global exports by 2020 from 2011 - 2 per cent target, has not been met.

157 We are concerned that due to COVID-19, trade value for LDCs has plunged considerably. Merchandise exports of LDCs fell by 10.3 per cent against the global average decline of 7.7 per cent in 2020. Preliminary evidence suggests that in 2020, the value of global services trade was down 40% year-on-year. Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) have been adversely impacted by the pandemic. Limited export diversification has heightened the vulnerability of LDCs to the impact of the pandemic on global trade. The crisis also highlighted the fundamental importance of trade in making essential goods and services available to countries and people in need.

158 We are concerned that the rising protectionist tendencies and shifts towards bilateral and regional trade agreements are threatening to further weaken the role of the World Trade Organization as the central governing body for global trade. This in turn could lead to an increasingly polarized and fragmented international trade landscape in the coming decades which would be harmful for the LDCs.

159 We call on members of World Trade Organization to fully and expeditiously implement all the decisions of the World Trade Organization Ministerial Meeting taken in favor of le LDCs, (Based on AAAA 80). We also reaffirm our determination to complete the Doha Development Agenda as has been endorsed by our Leaders in Sustainable Development Goal.

Key Action Areas

Duty-free and quota-free market access

160 We note that there have been progressive improvements since the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action on providing duty-free and quota-free market access to LDCs. WTO members adopted a DFQF decision at the Bali ministerial conference in 2013, building on a decision taken at the Hong-Kong ministerial conference in 2005. Most of the developed country members grant either full or nearly full duty-free and quota-free market access, with gaps remaining in a limited number of markets and a few sectors. A number of developing country members have granted a significant degree of duty-free and quota-free market access to LDCs products, and a number of them have reached nearly full duty-free and quota-free coverage. (Issues paper) LDCs need to be provided with increasingly greater market access including improving the existing coverage of DFQF access in preference granting countries.

161 **Target:** Full implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all LDCs, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions

We agree to take the following actions:

162 We call on all developed country WTO members and developing country WTO members declaring themselves in a position to do so to realize timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all products originating from all LDCs, consistent with World Trade Organization decisions, which would facilitate the integration of LDCs producers in regional and Global Value Chains.

163 We emphasize the importance of extending the Duty Free Quota Free market access as well as other LDC specific trade benefits and flexibilities to the countries graduated from the LDC

category for a fix period of time of at least twelve years after their graduation to ensure sustainable and irreversible graduation and achieve the 2030 Agenda.

164 We commit to rejecting vaccine nationalism and protectionism, fully meeting our transparency obligations on trade measures and meaningfully improving access for all countries, especially LDCs, to COVID-19 vaccines, including through facilitating technology transfer within the framework of multilateral rules, so as to encourage research and innovation while at the same time allowing licensing agreements and any other arrangements that help scale up manufacturing.

Preferential rules of origin and non-tariff barriers

165 We note that considerable progress has been made towards ensuring that preferential rules of origin are simple and transparent and contribute to facilitating market access of imports from LDCs. World Trade Organization members adopted two decisions on preferential rules of origin for LDCs at the Ministerial Conferences in Bali in 2013 and in Nairobi in 2015. Almost all preference-granting members (20 out of 22) have submitted notifications of their preferential rules of origin requirements. We stress that various non-tariff barriers and sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to trade measures, including private standards, are of great concern for market access of LDCs exports.

166 **Target:** Ensure preferential rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs are transparent and simple and contribute to facilitating market access.

We agree to take the following actions:

167 We call on all developed country WTO members and developing country WTO members declaring themselves in a position to do so to take steps to facilitate market access for products of LDCs, including by developing simple and transparent rules of origin applicable to imports from LDCs, in accordance with the guidelines adopted by WTO members at the Bali ministerial conference in 2013 and the decisions taken at the Nairobi ministerial conference in 2015. We urge Members to provide technical and financial assistance to LDCs to further scale up their legal and technical capacity to comply with sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to trade provisions.

LDCs services waiver

168 We recognize that the agreements on trade in services can enable safe, regular and orderly mobility, including by removing barriers to the temporary movement of natural persons to supply services abroad, or “Mode 4” of trade in services. We note that efforts are being made to improve LDC participation in services trade. We note that 51 members (including individual EU member states) have notified their preferences under the LDCs Services Waiver. We note with concern that multilateral commitments in this regard have been limited and conditioned by measures such as economic needs tests, quotas, or pre-employment requirements.

169 **Target:** significantly increase LDCs exports of services by fully implement the WTO Ministerial Decision on the Operationalization of the Waiver Concerning Preferential Treatment to Services and Service Suppliers of LDCs.

We agree to take the following actions:

170 We call upon the WTO members to take concrete measures including meaningful preferences for LDCs services and service suppliers in accordance with the WTO decisions in 2011, 2013 and 2015 on the operationalization of the LDCs services waiver and in response to the collective request of those countries and call for strengthening the domestic service capacity in LDCs with a view to making use of existing opportunities as well as any preferences afforded to them through enhanced technical assistance and capacity building.

Technical assistance and capacity building including through aid for trade

171 We note that between 2011 and 2019, over USD 100 billion have been disbursed in aid for trade to support LDCs in strengthening infrastructure (61%), building productive capacity (38%) and enhancing trade policy and regulations (2%). After reaching a peak of USD 20 billion in 2018, aid-for-trade commitments to LDCs fell by 19% to USD 16.6 billion in 2019. Although Aid-for-Trade funding to LDCs has grown 13 per cent annually since 2006, reaching \$13.5 billion in 2018, the amount is not sufficient, and the pandemic threatens to slow or reverse this trend.

172 **Target:** Double the share of aid for trade support going to LDCs by 2031 from 2018 level

We agree to take the following actions:

173 . We commit to increasing the proportion of Aid for Trade going to LDCs, provided according to development cooperation effectiveness principles, aiming at doubling it by 2031 from 2018 level. We also call for increased support from multilateral development banks and the private sector to fill trade financing needs, particularly of small businesses. We urge private and public sector actors to work together to address trade finance gaps, by enabling a rapid transition to paperless trading and addressing regulatory constraints that hinder trade finance.

174 We urge the Enhanced Integrated Framework donors - existing and potential - to provide additional financial and technical support in a predictable way to enhance the institutional and productive capacity of the LDCs and in line with the principle of leaving no LDCs behind.

Accession

175 We note that 35 out of 46 LDCs, more than three quarters, are members of the World Trade Organization. Since 2011, six LDCs have successfully completed the accession process and joined the World Trade Organization. Currently, eight LDCs are at different stages of the World Trade Organization accession process.

176 **Target:** Ensure accession of all LDCs to World Trade Organization by the end of current decade.

We agree to take the following actions:

177 We call on WTO Members to fully implement the 2002 LDCs Accession Guidelines and 2012 General Council Decision "Addendum I," as the accession instruments for LDCs and refrain from seeking concessions and commitments beyond the benchmarks aiming at ensuring the accession of all LDCs into the WTO by next decade. We commit to supporting acceding LDCs to strengthen their human, institutional and regulatory capacities in trade policy and trade negotiations to ensure their accession.

178 We will provide financial and technical support to LDCs to facilitate and accelerate the negotiations for the accession of LDCs to the WTO.

Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)

179 We welcome the entry into force of the TRIPS Amendment aiming to facilitate access to medicines for countries having limited manufacturing capacities. We note that pursuant to the decision on the implementation of Article 66.2, developed Members have provided annual reports on actions taken or planned under Article 66.2. We welcome that in 2021, the duration of the general transition period under Article 66.1 has been further extended until 1 July, 2034. Similarly, in 2015, the specific transition period to implement patent protection for pharmaceutical products was extended until 1 January 2033 for LDCs. We also invite all members of the WTO to extend to graduated countries the LDC specific flexibilities under Article 66.1 for a period of twelve years after their graduation from LDC status.

180 **Target:** Support LDCs in order to enable them to create a sound and viable technological base, including by providing incentives to enterprises and institutions in developed country member territories for the purpose of promoting and encouraging technology transfer to LDCs.

We agree to take the following actions:

181 We call for the full implementation of the provisions under Article 66.2 of the TRIPS Agreement, and urge WTO members to deliberate on the meaning of “incentives to enterprises and institutions” and provide incentives by developed country members to the enterprises and institutions in their territories for promoting technology transfer to enable LDCs to create a sound and viable technological base.

182 We acknowledge the importance of the TRIPS flexibilities offered to LDCs, including the extensions of the transition period under Art. 66.1 of the TRIPS Agreement and the transition period exempting LDCs from protecting patent protection and undisclosed information for pharmaceutical products. We will provide financial and technical assistance to ensure that LDCs develop manufacturing capacity and guaranteed access to life saving medicines to promote public health by making full use of the flexibility under article 66.1 of TRIPS Agreement.

Agriculture and cotton

183 We take note of the progress made in reforming agricultural trade. We attach great importance to the ongoing discussions with a view to reducing trade distorting support in agriculture, including cotton. We recognize the importance of food security. We commit to finding a permanent solution on public stockholding for food security. We will work to advance the discussions on export restrictions on foodstuff purchased by the World Food Programme.

184 **Target:** Correct and prevent trade distortions in world agricultural markets, including through elimination of all forms of trade distorting domestic support in agriculture.

We agree to take the following actions:

185 We call for correcting and preventing trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, including through the parallel elimination of all forms of agricultural export subsidies and all export measures with equivalent effect, in accordance with the mandate of the Doha Development Round.

186 We will support multilateral negotiations and agreement on fisheries subsidies disciplines that prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies in accordance with the Doha and Hong Kong Ministerial mandates, and Sustainable Development Goal 14.6.

WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)

187 We note that while the current TFA implementation rate stands at 70.2 per cent for all World Trade Organization members, the implementation rate of LDCs is only 36.8 per cent, as of 10 June 2021. We also take note that 80 per cent of LDCs have already identified their technical assistance needs. We also note that there are several challenges for LDCs to implement the agreement primarily due to capacity constraints in financial, technical and regulatory areas.

188 **Target:** Fully implement the trade facilitation agreement and provide financial and technical support to LDCs.

We agree to take the following actions:

189 We will implement the trade facilitation agreement to speed up customs procedures; make trade easier, faster and cheaper; provide clarity, efficiency and transparency; reduce bureaucratic hurdles; and use technological advances.

190 . We commit to supporting LDCs with the implementation of TFA, including by providing financial and technical support to least developed countries to enable implementation of the agreement, consistent with the letter and spirit of the trade facilitation agreement. Assistance must not be diverted from support provided in other priority areas of LDCs.

E-commerce

191 We note that the pandemic has highlighted the importance of digital technologies in general - and e-commerce in particular - as tools for continuing economic activity during the crisis. E-commerce in the form of business to business (B2B) and business to consumers (B2C) combined with secure mobile platforms fundamentally and profoundly reduce the matching costs by which buyers and suppliers can meet, connect and create profits within the country and across the borders. This can speed-up economic adjustments to shocks like COVID-19 and many other profound economic, environmental, and geopolitical shocks that a country may face in the coming years. Despite huge potentials, LDCs have not been able to benefit from the opportunities offered by the e-commerce due to lack of necessary digital infrastructure and logistical facilities as well as regulatory and policy frameworks.

192 **Target:** Substantially increase e-commerce in LDCs by strengthening ICT infrastructure and building their capacities to enter into digital value chains.

We agree to take the following actions:

193 We will promote e-commerce in LDCs by building digital eco-system and providing capacity building support. We urge the development partners to provide additional and substantial support to LDCs to build required infrastructure in energy, electricity, internet penetration; data protection; upgrade workforce skills, ensure affordable and reliable access to broadband and mobile networks and Wi-Fi connectivity; facilitate mobile banking with low or no fee of digital payment; build the ability of LDCs suppliers to participate fairly in, and establish their own, e-commerce platforms to directly trade their goods and services; strengthen productive capacity and structural transformation along with transparent and fair regulations for promoting e-commerce and integration of LDCs in the global economy.

194 We take note of the discussions under the 1998 work programme on e-commerce, taking into account the needs of LDCs and call on developed country members to provide preferential market access to all business to-consumer goods and services originating from all LDCs that are exported using an e-commerce- platform directly from LDCs' suppliers.

Special and Differential treatment

195 We call for the full implementation of the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular LDCs, in accordance with World Trade Organization agreements. We welcome the establishment of the monitoring mechanism to analyze and review all aspects of the implementation of special and differential treatment provisions, as agreed in Bali, with a view to strengthening them and making them more precise, effective and operational as well as facilitating integration of developing and least-developed World Trade Organization members into the multilateral trading system.

Regional integration

196 We underline that regional cooperation, including trade integration, and transit cooperation, can facilitate LDCs integration into the global trading system. We note that as of 1 February 2021, 339 Regional Trade Agreements were in force of which 42 are in Africa. Among others, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) present a major opportunity for many LDCs to boost trade, output in services, manufacturing, and natural resources sectors. Despite positive experiences, regional and international cooperation still needs to rise to the challenges ahead.

We agree to take the following actions:

197 We will promote regional economic integration and enhance regional connectivity to increase regional trade including integration into regional value chains and services trade by LDCs. We urge the international community, including international financial institutions and multilateral and regional development banks, to increase their support to projects, programmes, and cooperation frameworks that foster regional and subregional integration, with special attention to LDCs, and that enhance the participation and integration of small-scale industrial and other enterprises into regional and global value chains and markets.

198 We will support LDCs for the implementation of multi-country customs transit guarantee regimes through the implementation of either international transit agreements or functional regional agreements.

199 We commit to supporting LDCs efforts in promoting subregional and regional cooperation, including export promotion and improving regional connectivity through trade-facilitating measures, such as joint projects on customs and border procedures, and insofar as possible transport infrastructure and linkages, telecommunications facilities and energy.

200 We will provide assistance to landlocked and small-island LDCs aimed at addressing the challenges of their remoteness from international markets and lack of infrastructure connectivity.

V. Addressing climate change, recovering from COVID-19 pandemic, and building resilience against future shocks

201 The LDCs are especially vulnerable to and disproportionately affected by the adverse effects of climate change and natural disasters, despite the good practices in addressing these effects by some countries, including installation and use of early warning systems, adaptation solutions in key sectors/systems such as agriculture and food security, water, health, infrastructure and ecosystems, forecast-based financing, integrating climate change risk considerations in development planning, development of risk indices to support different stakeholders, and comprehensive risk management, among others.

202 Among more than 120 countries reporting across all Sendai Framework targets for disaster losses, LDCs account for 48 per cent of livelihood disruptions, 40 per cent of deaths, 17 per cent of economic losses, and 14 per cent of infrastructure damage, although their combined gross domestic product amounts to only 1 per cent of the total; and their combined populations are just 18 per cent of the global population.

203 The COVID-19 pandemic has not only exposed but also amplified LDCs' high degree of vulnerability and the risks of cascading crises. We are concerned that a prolonged economic downturn following the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic will adversely impact the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the ability of countries, especially LDCs, to adequately respond to the adverse impacts of climate change.

204 We are deeply concerned that the limited fiscal space and resilience capacity in LDCs seriously constrains their ability to tackle the pandemic and foster sustainable recovery. The investments in climate change adaptation and disaster risk management in LDCs have fallen far short of meeting the needs. We are also concerned that climate change impacts are becoming more acute. Food insecurity, water scarcity, land degradation, melting of glaciers, ocean acidification, coastal erosion, damage to infrastructure and assets, pressures on pastures, displacement of populations, **disruption of indigenous and traditional lifestyles**, and threats to livelihoods are severely disrupting economic and social development. Changes in water resources are disrupting hydroelectric generation and putting industrial production and basic services at increased risk.

205 We are committed to reducing the vulnerability of the LDCs to economic, environmental shocks and disasters, especially those related climate change, and to enhance their ability to meet these and other challenges through enhanced adaptive capacity and resilience. Building adaptive capacity and resilience lies at the core of the new Programme of Action for LDCs, to complement

and support the provisions contained in international agreements on climate change and disaster risk reduction.

Key Action Areas

Building sustainable, equitable and resilient recovery from COVID-19

206 On average, the projection suggests that the LDCs are expected to take three to five years or more to recover to their pre-crisis level of gross domestic product per capita. The persistent challenges posed by climate change will further deteriorate the recovery efforts.

207 **Target:** Declare vaccine as a global public good and provide sufficient COVID-19 vaccines immediately to vaccinate all eligible citizens of LDCs free of cost

- Ensure technology transfer to harness production capacities of vaccines of LDCs
- Provide \$5 billion as direct budgetary support to LDCs for social protection system
- Ensure widespread testing and tracing, maintaining adequate stocks of therapeutics and protective gears and ventilations
- Provide adequate support to build health infrastructure of the LDCs to tackle the current and future shocks

We agree to take the following actions:

208 We take note of 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 A/74/843 and commit to supporting for its full implementation.

209 We declare the COVID-19 vaccine as a global public good and recognize the role of extensive immunization against COVID-19 as a global public good for health in preventing, containing and stopping transmission in order to bring the pandemic to an end, once safe, quality, efficacious, effective, accessible and affordable vaccines are available.

210 We stress that vaccinations need to be supported with essential complementary measures to minimize the loss of lives and morbidity from this pandemic and urge development partners to provide to LDCs in a timely manner, access to quality, safe, efficacious and affordable diagnosis, therapeutics, medicines and medical science-based treatment protocols, vaccines, and essential health technologies, and their components, as well as equipment, for the COVID-19 response.

211 We commit to ensuring that LDCs receive adequate and timely access to sufficient number of reliable vaccines to vaccinate all of their eligible citizens free of cost including through the COVAX facility, adequate support to address liquidity and fiscal space constraints and debt relief, and that international trade measures are put in place to support their recovery that is sustainable and build resilience against future shocks.

212 In the spirit of global solidarity, multilateralism and collaboration between governments, international organizations, international financial institutions, civil society and the private sector, we call upon development partners to provide financial and in-kind support to least developed

countries as direct budgetary support and to increase the resources of relevant regional and multilateral emergency financing facilities and to ease the conditions of access to these facilities.

213 We commit to establishing and strengthening social protection mechanisms to protect the most vulnerable populations, including provision of direct support in the form of cash or food to at least 350 million people living in extreme poverty in LDCs. In this regard, we call upon the development partners to provide \$5 billion allocation in emergency assistance as fresh funds for cash transfer to the extreme poor people living in LDCs.

214 We agree to ensure that stimulus measures are aligned with and contribute to fast recovery from the pandemic and building resilience in LDCs, including among others: nature-based solutions, including conserving and restoring natural ecosystems and biodiversity; sustainable agriculture; resilience of infrastructure and the built environment; sustainable finance instruments such as green bonds and Sustainable Development Goal bonds; incentives for private investment in sustainable opportunities such as: affordable renewable energies; and safe, smart and sustainable mobility.

Climate adaptation and building resilience

215 While LDCs have made some progress with the process to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and in implementing the Sendai Framework, they lack the resources and capacity to address critical needs. Adaptation in agriculture, manufacturing, services and livestock is of prime importance for LDCs, and has major implications for food security, livelihoods especially of the most vulnerable segments of society, and employment. Water resources already face multiple pressures and are highly sensitive to climate change impacts such as drying up of sources, disruption in rainfall patterns and increased frequency of both extreme and slow-onset events. The rapid projected growth of urban populations presents challenges for the provision of services such as water and sanitation, which must develop and grow at a faster rate in order to keep pace. Critical infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, buildings, and grid systems, remain highly vulnerable to extreme climatic events.

216 We note the high importance of building resilience in LDCs through stepped up capacity building for adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction, including through a comprehensive multi-stakeholder resilience-building mechanism for LDCs”, leveraging the existing measures and initiatives.

217 **Targets:** Support to full implementation of NAPs, including adaptation projects at the national and local levels by all LDCs.

- Develop national platforms for disaster risk reduction to implement fully the Sendai Framework targets.
- Build a multi-hazard early warning system and a comprehensive multi-hazard crises mitigation and resilience building mechanism for LDCs.

We agree to take the following actions:

218 We commit to increasing support, including for capacity building for adaptation planning and implementation in LDCs, both through the LDCs work programme under the UNFCCC as well as through additional and complementary means, in order to address medium to long term

adaptation needs through the formulation of national adaptation plans and subsequent implementation of the policies, programmes and projects identified by them.

219 We agree to enhance technical assistance to LDCs to develop operational national risk indices and related products that support policy and decision-making by all stakeholders, including national and local governments, private sector business operations, real estate and land planning, insurance industry, and others.

220 We agree further to enhance support to LDCs to strengthen national statistical and planning offices and other relevant authorities for the systemic collection, analysis and validation of data on disaster loss and other relevant disaster risk reduction targets, and to strengthen inter-institutional, inclusive coordination on disaster risk data and integrated analysis.

221 We underline the need for building and strengthening a multi-hazard early warning system and a comprehensive multi-hazard crises mitigation and resilience building mechanism for each LDC as key instruments to build resilience against and mitigate the impacts of various shocks. We invite the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive study involving all relevant UNDS and other entities on the existing arrangements, lessons learned, gap identified and make recommendations on the modalities, terms of reference, institutional mechanism and funding modalities of a multi-hazard early warning system and a comprehensive multi-hazard crises mitigation and resilience building mechanism for LDCs at national and regional levels and submit it to the 77th session of the General Assembly for its consideration.

222 We call for public and private, domestic and international investment, as well as bilateral and multilateral support, to be risk informed and aligned with national and local climate resilience and disaster risk reduction strategies.

223 We commit to enhancing international cooperation and technical assistance and support to LDCs to take urgent and significant actions to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt biodiversity loss and prevent extinction of threatened species that are essential for sustainable development.

Access to finance and technology to address climate change

224 While dedicated funds have been set up to assist LDCs in addressing climate change, to date, the scale and pace of available funding and support for LDCs has fallen far short of the required amounts. Most LDCs currently cannot access the international public finance directly due to lack of technical capacity and cumbersome access conditions. Enhanced support is needed to assist LDCs in preparing bankable projects.

225 We note the critical gap in adequate climate finance for LDCs, and commit to improving amounts available, and ease of access, of climate change finance going to LDCs, especially for adaptation, disaster risk reduction and resilience building, and to ensure the systematic monitoring and reporting of all these flows.

226 **Targets:** Deliver on the goal of mobilizing US\$100 billion Climate Finance per year and scale up support to LDCs

- Provide 50 per cent of the total share of climate finance provided by all developed countries and multilateral development banks to adaptation and resilience and 50 per cent of the adaptation to particularly vulnerable countries, including LDCs
- Additional and increased funding for implementation of national adaptation plans of LDCs under the Green Climate Fund and other funds

We agree to take the following actions:

227 We agree that donor countries and multilateral, regional and national development banks will significantly increase the volume, quality and predictability of their finance for adaptation priorities identified in national and subnational and sectoral adaptation plans and building resilience in LDCs, and to systematically collect and publish such information.

228 We reaffirm the collective developed country goal to jointly mobilize \$100 billion per year from public and private sources, through to 2025 in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation.

229 We welcome the decisions of the Board of the Green Climate Fund to aim for a 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaptation over time on a grant equivalent basis and a floor of 50 per cent of the adaptation allocation for particularly vulnerable countries, including LDCs. In the same vein, we call for providing 50 per cent of the total climate finance provided by all developed countries and multilateral development banks to adaptation and resilience and 50 per cent of these funds for particularly vulnerable countries, including LDCs.

230 We commit to substantially enhancing funding to all climate-related financing windows including the least developed countries Fund (LDCF), the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, and to substantially enhance access to all these funds by LDCs. We also commit to simplifying the access procedures for climate finance for LDCs and supporting the LDCs to develop bankable projects.

231 We agree to support the development in LDCs of programmatic approaches for dealing with adaptation including on nature-based solutions, adaptation in cities, with a focus on the most vulnerable communities and systems such as youth, indigenous communities, gender, and essential climate resilience programmes around food systems, water resources, health services, living spaces/settlements and critical infrastructure. By creating a knowledge repository, a portal to capture, process, analyze and present for a structured framework to support for climate and other LDC priorities

232 We commit to enhancing regional cooperation and support to LDCs in addressing the impacts of regional transboundary climate risks associated with supply and value chains.

233 We request relevant entities of the United Nations system, international financial institutions and development banks as well as private sector and foundations to significantly increase their support to LDCs to implement national adaptation plans and disaster risk reduction strategies. We also call on these entities to apply the Principles for Responsible Investment and to commit to comprehensive and robust physical climate-related risk assessments and disclosures related to their activities in LDCs.

234 We agree to increase our investments in prevention and risk reduction, including risk-informed and resilient infrastructure and public services; the adoption of legislation, policies and standards that regulate and incentivize investors and companies to adopt a risk-informed approach; and for monetary and regulatory authorities to incorporate the impact of disaster and climate risks into regulatory and policy frameworks.

235 We commit to significantly scaling-up existing catastrophe-triggered financial instruments and initiatives such as the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility and African Risk Capacity and the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative, as well as developing and enhancing instruments and derivatives that provide risk insurance and guarantees for where they are most needed, such as micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and low-income households.

236 We commit to providing financial and technical assistance and facilitate technology transfer to LDCs to develop and implement national strategies for sustainable use, preservation and protection of the national environmental resources and the sustainable management of marine biodiversity and ecosystems in line with the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

237 We call for action by the private sector, including bank and institutional investors, to support environmental, social, and corporate governance issues as well as take climate change into consideration in their investment decisions in LDCs.

VI. Mobilizing international solidarity, reinvigorated global partnerships and innovative tools for risk-informed sustainable development - A march towards sustainable graduation

238 We acknowledge that LDCs are largely dependent on public resources to finance sustainable development needs and ensure a smooth transition from the least developed countries category. Available resources – domestic and external, public, and private - have not been sufficient to meet growing investment and spending needs. The high reliance of LDCs on external resources, including official development assistance, foreign direct investment, concessional lending, and private flows, such as remittances and portfolio investment, persisted over the past decade. During the IPoA implementation period, external debt has been rising, and it is, in some cases, exacerbated by large costs caused by disasters and structural vulnerabilities. The pandemic and its economic fallout have exacerbated financial vulnerabilities and debt risks in least developed countries that have been building up over the last decade.

239 We welcome progress made over the past decade with respect to graduation and stress that continued support and incentives will be important to accelerate the number of least developed countries reaching the graduation thresholds and for ensuring sustainable and irreversible graduation with momentum.

240 We aim to achieve at least 7 per cent gross domestic product growth per annum in LDCs and graduated countries from the LDC category.

Key Action Areas

Support for domestic resource mobilization and fight of illicit financial flows

241 We acknowledge that the low tax-to-gross domestic product ratios of LDCs are due to their economic structures, high poverty rates, weak tax administration and the nature of their tax systems. The median tax-to-gross domestic product ratio in LDCs increased very slowly, from 13.3 in 2011 to 16.2 in 2018, with rates lower than 10 per cent in several of them. Efforts to increase government revenue have been under way in many LDCs, including broadening of the tax base and enhancing compliance and transparency, including through digitization of tax systems. Other challenges for LDCs include tax evasion and illicit financial flows.

242 **Target:** Increase tax revenue as a proportion of gross domestic product to at least 15 per cent

- Enhance international cooperation for the recovery of stolen assets and their return to the country of origin

We agree to take the following actions:

243 Recognizing the efforts of LDCs to enhance domestic resource generation, we commit to supporting efforts by LDCs towards taxation, savings mobilization and financial inclusion, all of which aiming at sustainable public service delivery, including for marginalized groups, channeling savings to productive investment and to 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.

244 We commit to enhanced international tax cooperation and efforts to close international tax loopholes, all of which aiming at avoiding base erosion and profit shifting, and welcome support through initiatives including Tax inspectors without borders. We commit to supporting LDCs to take advantage of increases in tax transparency and exchange of information, such as by implementing the new international standard of automatic exchange of information.

245 We recommit to strengthening the capacities of revenue administration and broadening tax base in LDCs through modernized, progressive tax systems, and modern ICT-based tax collection systems in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We acknowledge that any consideration of tax measures in response to the digital economy should include a careful analysis of the implications for LDCs, taking into account their inputs, with a special focus on their unique needs and capacities.

246 We encourage the use of and improved access to innovative tools, such as mobile banking, payment platforms and digitalized payments, as appropriate, including by women and micro-businesses, and we recognize the role that this can play in promoting financial inclusion, as well as in reducing costs, increasing transparency, improving the speed and security of payments and opening up new markets.

247 We call for support by development partners and international and regional financial institutions, to support strengthening the capacity of domestic financial institutions and the banking system, to promote appropriate, affordable, and stable financing for MSMEs through the creation of credit lines targeting those enterprises and to create, strengthen, and widen lending markets that cater to the diversified needs of private enterprises, MSMEs, and consumers, including women.

248 We commit to substantially reducing illicit financial flows by 2030 in order to help LDCs to mobilize resources, including through increased international cooperation to stem corruption and identify, freeze and recover stolen assets and return them to their countries of origin, in a manner consistent with the United Nations Convention against Corruption and to developing their capacities to track financial transactions, administer taxation, facilitate customs services and investigate and prosecute offences to contribute to the success of efforts to deal with illicit financial flows.

Traditional and innovative sources of finance to meet the funding gaps in least developed countries

249 We note with concern that official development assistance to LDCs by Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members declined in real terms over the past decade and the average share of gross national income provided as ODA to LDCs from DAC donors declined from 0.1 per cent in 2011 to 0.09 per cent in 2019. At the same time ODA remained crucial for financing investments for sustainable development in LDCs, while innovative sources of finance, such as blended finance, remained limited in these countries. There is a clear need for much more determined efforts by developed countries to fulfill, and where possible to enhance, their ODA commitment to LDCs.

250 We underline that North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation is vital to 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.

251 **Target:** Ensure the fulfilment of all internationally agreed ODA commitments to LDCs.

We agree to take the following actions:

252 We are committed to meeting the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNI for ODA to LDCs in the short term and encourage ODA providers to set a target to provide at least 0.35 per cent of GNI for ODA to LDCs or provide at least 50 per cent of net ODA to LDCs by 2025.

253 We invite development partners to ensure that the allocation of global ODA resources takes into account the structural handicaps and constraints which are unique to LDCs. We call upon development partners to ensure the right balance in the allocation of ODA among various sectors, including economic, social and environmental as well as for building resilience against various shocks and for empowerment of women and to support international coalitions that enable a transition to risk informed, resilient and inclusive development.

254 We call upon the countries of the South to further strengthen their support provided to 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.

255 We urge development partners to recapitalize multilateral, regional and national development banks and accelerate the timetable for agreeing on a fresh replenishment of funds, including concessional windows of MDBs and immediate steps should be taken by the international community to significantly expand concessional financing and deliver it to LDCs through simplified procedures.

256 We welcome continued efforts to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of development cooperation and other international efforts in public finance, including adherence to agreed development cooperation effectiveness principles. We will align activities with national priorities of LDCs, including by reducing fragmentation, accelerating the untying of aid. We will promote country ownership and results orientation and strengthen country systems, use programme-based approaches where appropriate, strengthen partnerships for development, reduce transaction costs and increase transparency and mutual accountability. We will make development more effective and predictable by providing LDCs with regular and timely indicative information on planned support in the medium term.

257 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 LDCs and does not unduly burden them. This should include expanding ODA allocations to include flexible financing that can be used as first loss, concessional, or de-risking capital to attract additional resources from the private sector to SDG-aligned investments that can scale to address the needs of LDCs. We decide to establish a dedicated financing mechanism that delivers catalytic investment capital for MSMEs and small investment projects in LDCs and graduated countries to mobilize sustainable private investments that advance the SDGs and act as a crisis facility.

258 We welcome the agreement by G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors to support a new \$650 billion allocation of IMF Special Drawing Rights. We invite the IMF to allocate at least \$ 50 billion SDRs to LDCs to provide enhanced liquidity and to further support health needs, including vaccinations, and to help enable greener, more robust recoveries from the pandemic.

259 We call on official creditors to make long-term sustainable finance available to LDCs and offer more fixed-interest lending at low interest rates.

Foreign Direct Investment

260 We note with concern that the FDI flows to LDCs had already been on a declining trend since 2015, reaching \$21 billion, or 1.4 per cent of world foreign direct investment in 2019. COVID-19 accelerated the decline of FDIs to LDCs, which remains heavily concentrated in the extractive industries. Several LDCs have undertaken steps to facilitate investment, such as the acceleration of approval procedures, an increased use of online tools, a reduction of fees and an automatic renewal of permits.

261 **Target:** Adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for LDCs.

We agree to take the following actions:

262 We commit to implementing, by 2023, the decision contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for the 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 request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly a comprehensive roadmap for its consideration in 2022 on the implementation of the investment promotion regime for LDCs.

263 We will incentivize additional financing and investment in sustainable infrastructure and facilitate efforts to channel long-term sustainable investment to LDCs. We commit to help LDCs benefit from sustainable financing sources, develop a pipeline of investable projects and use risk-sharing mechanisms to incentivize private investment, where applicable.

Debt relief, debt cancellation initiative through improved international debt architecture

264 We note with concern that the stock of debt as well as debt service payment obligations of LDCs increased significantly over the past decade. Total debt service increased from an average of 5 per cent of exports of goods and services in 2011 to 13 per cent in 2019. As of February 2021, 4 LDCs were classified as in debt distress, while the number of LDCs at high risk of debt distress increased to 16. Over the past decade the composition of debt of LDCs changed considerably towards less concessional finance. We note with appreciation the steps taken by the international community to suspend debt payments from LDCs since 2020. However, COVID-19 has highlighted the need for long-term solutions to the debt challenges least developed countries are facing.

265 **Target:** Achieve sustainable debt levels in all LDCs through debt cancellation by 2031 and ensure that no LDCs is in debt distress by 2025.

We agree to take the following actions:

266 We commit to assisting LDCs in attaining long-term debt sustainability, through coordinated policies aimed at fostering adequate debt financing and resolution tools, such as debt relief and debt restructuring supporting sound debt management [based on A/C.2/75/205, 11 and ensuring that debt relief does not detract from ODA resources intended to be available for LDCs.

267 We invite the Secretary-General to constitute a High-level Panel of Experts, with adequate representation from LDCs, on the debt crises of LDCs with a view to undertaking the following tasks:

- a. In depth review of LDCs' external debt and their SDG financing needs
- b. Effects of pandemic on LDCs' debt servicing capacity
- c. Recommend policy options at national and international levels to urgently and effectively address the burgeoning external debt problem of LDCs; and
- d. The Panel should submit its report to the Secretary-General for consideration by the General Assembly at its 77th session.

268 We commit to enhancing efforts to increase support, including financial and technical assistance, for institutional capacity-building in LDCs to enhance sustainable upstream and downstream debt management as an integral part of national development strategies, including by promoting transparent and accountable debt management systems and negotiation and renegotiation capacities and through supporting legal advice in relation to tackling external debt litigation and debt data reconciliation between creditors and debtors so that debt sustainability may be achieved and maintained.

269 We urge official creditors, including international financial institutions, to include state-contingent clauses in public debt contracts to automatize standstills in times of crisis, and to set a precedent for private markets, including through granting suspension of debt service.

270 We invite creditors and debtors to further explore, where appropriate and on a mutually agreed, transparent and case-by-case basis, the use of debt instruments, such as debt swap initiatives, for sustainable development and climate action.

Remittances

271 We note that remittances to LDCs have increased significantly over the past decade but declined in 2020 due to COVID-19. At the same time costs of remittances to LDCs have remained disproportionately high.

272 **Target:** Reduce cost of remittances to maximum 3 per cent of the amount of remittances by 2030.

We agree to take the following actions:

273 We will work to improve the access to, usage and quality of financial services to lower the cost of remittances to LDCs.

274 We agree to provide accessible information on remittance transfer costs by provider and channel, such as comparison websites, in order to increase the transparency and competition on the remittance transfer market, and promote financial literacy and inclusion of migrants and their families through education and training.

275 We agree to put in place specific incentive programmes to ensure that remittances are used for long-term investments in productive capacity building in LDCs, such as MSMEs, and ensure that women and men are engaged as equal partners and beneficiaries.

Extension of international support measures to graduating and graduated least developed countries to make graduation sustainable and irreversible

276 We note with appreciation that four countries have graduated since 2011, another four (to be updated after GA takes note of the ECOSOC resolution) have been designated to graduate by 2024 while another twelve have met the graduation criteria at least once. However, most graduating LDCs face a multitude of challenges, including poverty and inequalities, in particular gender inequalities, inadequate structural transformation and productive capacity, as well as vulnerability to economic and climatic shocks. Furthermore, we are concerned by the simultaneous

loss of LDC specific support measures compounded by the negative social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 crisis.

277 We aim to ensure an incentives-based international support structure to graduating and graduated least developed countries, including support for their smooth transition by development and trading partners, as well as the UN system, to make graduation sustainable and ensure post-graduation development momentum and achievements of SDGs.

278 **Targets:** Enable 15 additional LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2031.

- Improve the scope and use of smooth transition measures and incentives for all graduating LDCs.
- Provide specific support measures to graduated countries for making the graduation sustainable and irreversible.

We agree to take the following actions:

279 We emphasize that a successful transition out of the LDC category needs to be based on a national smooth transition strategy, elaborated by each graduating country. We urge development and trading partners and the United Nations system to continue their support for the implementation of smooth transition strategies so as to avoid any abrupt reductions in either official development assistance, aid for trade or other technical and financial assistance provided. [based on MTR, 46 second part] This includes the need for better planning and coordination of transition finance by ODA providers both during preparatory period and in the post-graduation phase.

280 . We request development and trading partners to extend to graduated countries the LDC-specific trade preferences and technical assistance and capacity building programmes for a period of 12 years after their graduation from the LDC status. We also invite all members of the WTO to extend to graduated countries the LDC-specific special and differential treatment measures and exemptions under the Agreements, Understandings and other relevant Decisions, including the flexibilities TRIPS Agreement and all LDC-specific technical assistance and capacity building programmes and facilities provided under the WTO system, for a period of 12 years after their graduation from the LDC status. We also call upon the development partners to continue to provide special climate-change related finance and technological support to graduated countries for a period consistent with their vulnerabilities, sustainable development needs and other national circumstances and emerging challenges.

281 We encourage the LDCs and development partners to integrate graduation and smooth transition strategies into their respective national development and aid strategies, as appropriate, including capacity-building and technical assistance to diversify sources of financing; including blended finance and private finance.

282 We recognize the relevance of disaster risk and the impact of disasters in the process of graduation from the LDC category, including the impact assessment of the likely consequences of graduation and the vulnerability profiles, and encourage the integration of disaster risk reduction into the smooth transition strategies of graduating countries.

283 We recognize the need for enhanced support to countries before and after graduation, through appropriate predictable and additional incentives and support measures, including in the following areas:

- Technical assistance for preparing and implementing a smooth transition strategy, including capacity development and technical assistance for analysis and identification of support needs
- Enhanced availability of credit ratings and risk management measures, including through the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
- Legal assistance to negotiate market access after trade preferences that are granted based on least developed countries status end
- Technical assistance to build and strengthen their intellectual property rights systems to enable them to comply with obligations related to intellectual property after graduation.
- Provide expanded and specific access provisions for the climate vulnerable -graduated countries to the dedicated funds for tackling adverse impacts of climate-change
- Provide access to concessional funds of IFIs and regional development banks by redefining eligibility threshold based on multidimensional criteria beyond income only measures
- Provide access to vertical funds such as GAVI by redefining upward eligibility threshold
- Extending access to Aid for Trade and Technology Bank for ten years after graduation

284 We welcome the work of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on LDC Graduation, led by OHRLLS, to provide strengthened and coordinated UN System-wide support to the countries graduating from the LDC category and invite OHRLLS to advocate for appropriate predictable and additional incentives and support measures for graduating and recently graduated countries (mentioned in para above) and mobilize additional international support for the implementation of the smooth transition strategies. We invite all relevant UN entities to collaborate under the UN Inter-Agency Task Force and develop operational guidelines for their support to least developed countries, including assistance to graduating countries.

285 We welcome the establishment of a Sustainable Graduation Support Facility (SGSF) jointly by the OHRLLS as Chair of the UN Inter Agency Task Force on LDC graduation and UN DESA as the Secretariat for the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP) , as a concrete country-led solution of dedicated capacity development support. We call on member states to support this initiative operationalized under the umbrella of the UN Inter Agency Task Force to further strengthen coordinated and coherent UN System support and bring together country-specific integrated graduation-related advisory and capacity building services responding to the concerns of Member States regarding graduation and serving as a repository and clearing house of initiatives and projects pursued in support of these countries.

286 We commit to establishing an International Investment Support Center (IISC) for LDCs and graduated countries involving all stakeholder to support bankable project preparation and contract negotiation, advisory support in investment-related dispute resolution, access to information on investment facilities and risk insurance and guarantees in partnerships with the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and other relevant entities. In this regard, we invite donor countries to host the IISC and provide financial support for its establishment and

ensure its effective operation with a view to achieving the SDGs and building resilience of the graduating and graduated countries against current and future shocks.

287 We call for a monitoring mechanism that is responsive to emerging crises and that better links monitoring to specific support, including possible extensions of the preparatory period. An enhanced monitoring by the Committee for Development Policy should include, among others:

- Establishing a crisis response process within the monitoring mechanism to react to crisis and emergencies happening within the annual monitoring cycle
- Mobilizing existing crisis management expertise of the UN System and other international entities to assist countries in responding to emergencies and building resilience
- Utilizing the convening power of the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, both in case of crisis and in case of regular monitoring
- Expanding coverage of annual monitoring reports and the preparation process

Availability and use of data

288 We note with concern that many LDCs lack data to measure and track progress in the goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals. The average statistical capacity indicator increased from 56.4 in 2011 to 58.0 in 2019 but remains below the world average of 64. The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated vividly, how crucial reliable data is for policy making. Disaggregated data is required to understand the differential impacts of the pandemic and address its economic and social effects, especially for vulnerable groups.

289 **Target:** Significantly increase the availability of high-quality, timely reliable and disaggregated data

We agree to take the following actions:

290 We will further strengthen traditional data sources, such as surveys and administrative records, while also embracing new sources, and continue to strengthen our efforts to collect, analyze and disseminate relevant and reliable data, disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, for better monitoring and policymaking to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Doha Programme of Action.

291 We commit to scaling up financial support, equipment and infrastructure and technical assistance to strengthen capacities of national statistical offices of LDCs and fill data gaps with responsible, open and inclusive data. In this regard, we recognize that civil registration and vital statistics systems and geospatial information sources must be a priority to prepare for future disasters and make progress on the SDGs.

Implementation, follow-up, and monitoring

292 Efficient follow-up and monitoring mechanisms at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels are crucial for the successful implementation of this Programme of Action. National, regional and global mechanisms should be mutually complementary and reinforcing. Necessary steps will be taken to ensure mutual accountability of LDCs and their development partners for delivering their commitments undertaken under this Programme of Action.

293 National-level arrangements are particularly important, as the Programme of Action is owned and led by the LDCs. At the national level, each LDC Government should develop ambitious national implementation strategy of the Programme and integrate the provisions of this Programme of Action into its national policies and development framework and conduct regular reviews, which are country-led and country-driven, with the full involvement of all key stakeholders. Existing country review mechanisms, including those for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, poverty reduction strategy papers, United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and the existing consultative mechanisms should be broadened to cover the review of this Programme of Action and extended to all LDCs. National parliaments as well as other institutions can also support these processes.

294 We call on the entities of the United Nations Sustainable Development System (UNSDS) to actively support the implementation of the Programme of Action for LDCs at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, in close cooperation and partnerships with the World Bank and the international financial and development institutions, and to integrate this programme of action into their strategic plans and annual work programmes and reporting at all levels and further calls on the entities of the United Nations Sustainable development system to support the Resident Coordinators in the LDCs and to assist them in the mainstreaming of the Programme of Action into development planning at the country level in a coordinated and cohesive manner.

295 We invite the RC system and the country teams, as well as country-level representatives of the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund, and other multilateral institutions, to continue to collaborate with and provide support to national follow-up and monitoring.

296 Development partners should support agreed objectives and policies designed by LDCs on the basis of the Programme of Action that are integrated into existing national development and cooperation frameworks. They should monitor the delivery of their commitments and consider appropriate measures to overcome shortfalls or shortcomings, if any.

297 At the regional level, the relevant United Nations regional commissions and agencies should undertake biennial reviews of the implementation of this Programme of Action in close coordination and cooperation with subregional and regional development banks and intergovernmental organizations. Inclusive regional processes will draw on national-level reviews and contribute to follow-up and review at the global level. The relevant United Nations regional commissions and agencies should continue to ensure that the needs and challenges of LDCs are addressed as part of their ongoing work.

298 At the global level, the implementation and monitoring mechanisms established after the IPOA should be strengthened and improved with a view to ensuring timely and effective follow up of the implementation of the Programme of Action including, inter alia, through better stocktaking of policies and measures at the national, regional and sectoral levels; improved substantive support to the implementation of the Programme of Action at the global level; systematic monitoring of relevant developments in other intergovernmental processes and actions by the UN system organizations and interagency processes; and structured support to follow up by the LDCs themselves. The General Assembly should continue to monitor the

implementation of this Programme of Action on an annual basis under the specific item on its agenda. Effective linkages will be made with the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant UN Conferences and processes, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework.

299 We invite the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under their auspices, to devote adequate time to the discussion of the sustainable development challenges facing the LDCs in order to enhance engagement and implement commitments.

300 The Economic and Social Council is invited to continue to include periodically an agenda item during its annual substantive session on the review and coordination of the implementation of this Programme of Action. Periodic reviews of progress made, and constraints confronted by least developed countries should be conducted by the Economic and Social Council to allow for focused interactions. The Economic and Social Council is invited to include the review of the implementation of the Programme of Action in its annual ministerial reviews, as required. The Development Cooperation Forum should keep reviewing trends in international development cooperation, as well as policy coherence for development, including for LDCs and graduated countries. These will be supported by reviews by the ECOSOC functional commissions and other inter-governmental bodies and forums.

301 The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should conduct annual review of the progress in the implementation of the current Programme of Action.

302 We invite the governing bodies of the United Nations funds and programmes and other multilateral organizations, including the World Bank Group, the IMF and other international financial institutions, and the WTO to contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action and to integrate it into their work programmes, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates. These organizations are invited to participate fully in reviews of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels.

303 The Secretary-General of the United Nations is requested to ensure the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system to facilitate coordinated implementation and coherence in the follow-up and monitoring of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels. The coordination mechanisms available, such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the United Nations Development Group, should be broadly utilized and the inter-agency consultative group should be kept active in this regard.

304 We welcome the work of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group for LDCs , led by the Office of the High Representative, invite the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the High-level Committee on Programmes to support the coordination and follow-up of the implementation of the Programme of Action on a system-wide basis, and invite the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the Chief Executives Board, to include the implementation of the Programme of Action in the agenda of the Board.

305 We invite the Office of the High Representative for the LDC, LLDC, and SIDS to prepare a comprehensive roadmap for accelerated implementation of this Programme of Action identifying specific roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders with a view to ensuring that the commitments in favor of LDCs lead to concrete deliverables that would facilitate implementation of the Programme of Action and help LDCs achieve the SDGs.

306 The Office of the High Representative for the LDC, LLDC, and SIDS should strengthen its functions to:

- (i) assist the Secretary-General in the systematic and effective follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action and the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system, including through sector, country and gender disintegrated data, with a view to facilitating the coordinated implementation of and coherence in the follow-up and monitoring of the Programme of Action for the least developed countries at the country, regional and global levels along with the 2030 Agenda,
- (ii) assist in mobilizing international support and resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action for least developed countries.
- (iii) strengthen its awareness-raising and advocacy works in favor of least developed countries in partnership with the relevant part of the United Nations System, as well as with parliaments, civil society, the media, academia and foundations, and
- (iv) undertake research and analytical works to provide substantive support to LDCs in group consultations and their participation in other intergovernmental meetings and conferences to facilitate science and evidence-based decisions in favor of LDCs taking into account new and emerging challenges and opportunities; support the works of the General Assembly, Economic and Social Council, High-level Political Forum and the CEB as they relate to LDCs and foster debate and innovative thinking, promote consensus on ways forward, and coordinate efforts to achieve the implementation of the Programme of Action.

307 The Office of the High Representative for the LDC, LLDC, and SIDS will continue to be responsible for coordinated substantive support to the global-level review of the Programme of Action including through: (a) following up national level actions based on inputs from governments, UN system agencies, civil society organizations and all relevant stakeholders; (b) monitoring sectoral policy developments at the intergovernmental processes of relevant international and regional organizations; (c) maintaining substantive contacts with UN system organizations and other relevant international and regional organizations as well as UN resident coordinators in LDCs; (d) assisting the Secretary-General in his actions in support of LDCs; (e) supporting follow up by LDCs themselves at the global and sectoral levels. The Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS will continue to monitor international policy developments of relevance to LDCs including the outcomes of major global conferences, and carry out relevant advocacy efforts aimed at effective and timely implementation of the Programme of Action.

308 We take note of the network of the national focal points of LDCs established by OHRLLS and convening meetings of the national focal points on a regular basis. We also note that the national focal points designated by respective LDCs are heavily involved in the localization of the IPoA and the SDGs as well as their national implementation, monitoring, review and reporting of the PoA. Invite the OHRLLS to further strengthen the network of national focal points of LDCs

and convene meetings of the focal points biannually to share experiences and best practices on mainstreaming the Programme of Action and SDGs into national development processes as well their implementation and follow up; network among the peers; and better understand existing means of implementation, including viable financing and business models.

309 With a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the functions of Office of the High Representative for the LDC, LLDC, and SIDS and strengthening its capabilities and its effectiveness to support the LDCs, as well as the effectiveness of the United Nations system support provided to LDCs, we request the Secretary-General to prepare a report, in consultation with Member States and the relevant specialized agencies, funds, programmes and regional commissions, taking into account the work done by the United Nations system, and to submit it with recommendations to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session.

310 The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development should continue to address the challenges faced by least developed countries through conducting intergovernmental consensus-building, especially in the Trade and Development Board, and to contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action also through its technical assistance to LDCs. UNCTAD's institutional capacity in the research and analysis of LDC issues should be maintained to this end.

311 The United Nations General Assembly is invited to consider conducting a comprehensive high-level midterm review on the implementation of the Programme of Action in 2026. The General Assembly, towards the end of the decade, is also invited to consider holding a Sixth United Nations Conference on the LDC in 2031, in order to make a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of this Programme of Action and to decide on subsequent action.