

*Check against Delivery*

**Brief Remarks**

**By**

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**On**

**The Africa Regional Review Meeting in preparations for the  
Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed  
Countries (LDC5)**

**Session 1: Ministerial Dialogue on Lessons Learned and  
Building back**

**22 February 2021**

*Mr. Chairperson,*

At the outset, let me start by thanking you and your team for the excellent organization of the meeting. I would also like to express appreciation to Ms. Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary of UNECA and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of WHO for their keynote addresses.

*Mr. Chairperson,*

Though commendable efforts have been made by all LDCs over the last decade (2011 – 2020), including a significant progress across the 8 priority areas of the IPoA, we all agree that the overall level of the implementation has been mixed and uneven.

We in Ethiopia have been consistently demonstrating strong political commitment and leadership to eradicate poverty through promoting rapid and inclusive growth. Through our development planning, we have created the opportunity to mainstream and effectively implement global and regional development goals, including the Istanbul Plan of Action.

Despite the rapid economic growth during the last decade, however, there are structural issues which pose challenges for the sustainability of our rapid economic growth. These challenges include slow structural transformation of the economy and a poorly performing export sector. The government is taking several measures to improve the country's competitiveness in the global market, which include trade facilitation, expanding port options, improving infrastructure, building industrial parks and clusters, among others. We are also promoting

regional integration and cooperation as demonstrated, for example, by our decision to join the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA), and the resumption of the accession process to membership of the WTO.

*Mr. Chairperson,*

Coinciding with the LDC plan of action for the upcoming decade, Ethiopia has been taking wide-ranging measures including, formulating a ten-year perspective plan (2020-2030), which focuses on structural economic transformation and ensuring inclusive and sustainable development, in addition to boosting export growth. The SDGs and other global development goals are fully and effectively mainstreamed in the plan. We will continue investing on infrastructure development, including roads, energy, and ICT, to enhance the competitiveness in the global market.

Ethiopia will continue to promote regional integration and cooperation to unleash the market opportunities in the region through jointly constructing transportation infrastructure and exporting electricity to neighbouring countries. The government is also taking bold measures to improve the “Ease of Doing Business Rank” of the country to cut unnecessary bureaucratic bottlenecks and create a conducive environment for the private sector. A high-level team, which is chaired by the Prime Minister, is working on the issue, while a new logistics strategy, which is part of the government’s effort to promote the external trade sector and reduce transaction costs by engaging the private sector, has already been issued.

*Mr. Chairperson,*

The need for enhanced support to LDCs to overcome structural challenges that they face in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be overemphasised. The upcoming programme of action of LDC V is extremely critical in demonstrating the international community's commitment of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first. In this regard, the African regional review meeting will set the tone for an ambitious, comprehensive, and action-oriented Programme of Action for 2022-2032; with concrete deliverables that address systemic economy-wide gaps and limitations that hinder efforts aimed at fostering productive capacities and structural economic transformation of LDCs.

**Finally,** let me reaffirm Ethiopia's active and constructive engagement in the upcoming sessions of the Africa Regional Review meeting and throughout the process leading to the successful conclusion of the LDC V in Doha, Qatar with an ambitious, comprehensive, action-oriented outcome document that supports LDCs in their endeavour of implementing the Agenda 2030 in the remaining decade.

**I thank you.**