

EAGÜ-V Hazırlık Komitesi Toplantısı Kapsamında Düzenlenecek “Structural Transformation As A Driver Of Prosperity” Başlıklı Panel

Hitap Taslağı

Dear Minister Hott, Ambassador Al-Thani, Ambassador Taye, Distinguished Participants,

-I would like to thank the co-chairs of PrepCom -Canada and Bangladesh- for their kind invitation. It is my pleasure to speak in this panel.

-As a member of the Bureau, Co-chair of the Group of Friends of the LDCs and host of the Fourth LDC Conference, our commitment to the welfare and development of LDCs continues unabated.

-Supporting LDCs is one of the central pillars of Turkey’s enterprising and humanitarian foreign policy and we serve as an advocate of LDCs in the G20, IMF and all other relevant platforms.

Excellencies,

-This year, the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action comes to an end. Over the past decade, with the support of the development partners, LDCs have achieved significant progress on the way to implement both the Programme and the Sustainable Development Goals.

-However, Covid-19 crisis threatens to wipe away all this hard-gained progress. According to Global Economic Prospect Report, published by the World Bank in January 2021, the real GDP of the low-income countries decreased by 0.9% in 2020.

-Pandemic has halted the implementation of transition strategies in some graduating countries and even exacerbated persistent challenges, such as access to health care, quality education, infrastructure development and innovation in LDCs.

-As the international community, we have taken major steps to fight the health and socio-economic impacts of Covid-19, including in LDCs. The G20, World Bank and the IMF have each taken important steps. Multiple Covid vaccines have been discovered in a considerably short time and many noteworthy initiatives such as COVAX have been realized.

-Yet, we are still long way off from delivering a well-coordinated multilateral response. We need to ramp up our efforts to ensure that LDCs are not left behind, starting with the provision of affordable and rapid supply of vaccines.

Dear participants,

(a) -The limited productive capacities remains as one of the root causes of the LDCs persistent challenges.

-Enhancing productivity in agriculture is important due to its effective contribution to poverty reduction through better food security and higher farm incomes.

-The EU and the FAO have agreed to increase joint efforts to transform agri-food systems, in order to make them more inclusive, efficient, resilient and sustainable. As Turkey, we support these initiatives and efforts tackling with the food security.

-Tourism is another cornerstone of structural transformation, growth and employment in developing economies and has been among the hardest hit of all sectors by COVID-19.

-Therefore, it is imperative that we support the tourism, an essential pillar of the SDG, and ensure that tourism regains its position as a provider of decent jobs, stable incomes and the protection of our cultural and natural heritage.

-Turkey is ready to share its long experience in the tourism sector and contribute to the development of tourism in LDCs through vocational training programs.

(b) -The COVID-19 pandemic showed the risks of depending on a limited number of suppliers and accelerated the trend of the revision of procurement sources and subsequently “islandization of value chains” and “onshoring” of manufacturing.

-Trade in services creates new economic opportunities and drives growth and development by contributing directly to productivity gains; competitiveness especially for MSMEs; wealth and job creation as well as revenue generation.

-Thus, it is an important channel for developing countries, especially LDCs, to enhance their share in global trade.

-Increasing the scope and depth of regional integration, and pursuing a more active stance on multilateral liberalisation may help to avoid trade diversion and reduce the costs of sourcing competitive intermediates.

-Benefits are most likely to emerge from trade facilitation efforts, both in terms of soft and hard infrastructure.

-The international community should continue to implement LDC-specific international support measures like duty-free and quota-free market access.

Excellencies,

(c) -We also need to pay utmost attention to the infrastructure development as the basis of the progress in LDCs.

-It is important not only to meet the basic needs, such as access to clear water, health and safe transportation, but also to provide opportunities for work and base for innovation.

-An important component of Turkey’s support to LDCs is the financing of infrastructure projects such as irrigation, sanitation, dams and transportation projects, as well as, the construction or renovation of schools and hospitals.

-We work to raise the living standards of people as regular earners of income in different sectors particularly in Africa and South Asia in countries to name a few: Burkina Faso, Myanmar, Niger, and Bangladesh.

Dear participants,

(d) -MSMEs are the engine of economic growth and development all over the world.

-In order to strengthen the resilience of MSMEs in the LDCs, it is crucial to effective use of digital technologies to upgrade their production processes and improve their integration into sustainable and inclusive global value chains.

-Lack of access to finance is a critical barrier to growth for MSMEs globally. Digital financial services have the potential for expanding access to finance for MSMEs of vulnerable and underserved groups.

(e) -We should also prioritize mobilizing domestic resources and creating enabling environments for private investment. Preventing unfair trading and financial rules, subsidies and other policies will be essential.

-Here, I want to mention the responsible action undertaken by our civil society organizations. Direct investment and concessional loans in addition to Official Development Assistance have been important instruments of our country in LDC action.

-In that sense, investments by Turkish entrepreneurs particularly in Africa increase every year in the framework of the “Cotonou agenda for productive capacity building in LDCs” (*adopted in the Ministerial Conference on New Partnerships for the Development of Productive Capacities in LDCs in 2014*), which was supported by Turkey and assigned special roles to the private sector.

-External debt, which was already remarkably high in the pre-COVID period, is further ballooning in LDCs due to economic stress from the current context.

-Therefore, for the last 35 years, Turkey has been supporting LDCs via the International Financial Institutions (IFIs). We have been making contributions to the replenishments of the International Development Association, African Development Fund and Asian Development Fund.

-From the very beginning, we supported G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) and their extensions to provide countries’ the most needed space to combat with the social and economic impacts of the pandemic.

-As a timely and strong step, we support a new general SDR allocation to boost buffers.

-Going forward, debt treatments need to be more coordinated and tailored.

(f) -In the next decade, we need to focus our efforts on prioritizing policy actions that build and strengthen productive capacities in those countries, including by promoting technological development and establishing industrial and sectoral policies.

-Turkey actively supports the strengthening of the science, technology and innovation (STI) capacities of the LDCs to facilitate their technological advancement. The establishment of the UN Technology Bank marks the fulfillment of the first SDG target (17.8) since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. We are proud to work with our LDC partners in assisting them with technological upgrading.

Excellencies,

-The measures will be critical not only for responding to the current pandemic, but also for the acceleration of structural transformation. The lives of millions of people in LDCs lie with their vision and determination to improve their structural capacities, with the support of their development partners.

-The Doha Programme of Action for LDCs (2021-2030) should be built on the lessons learned from the Covid-19 crisis. The success of the new Programme will depend on the actions taken by the LDCs and the international community.

-The United Nations development system should continue to provide assistance to LDCs, including graduating countries in their efforts to mitigate and recover from the crisis, as well as in the formulation and implementation of their national development strategies.

I thank you.

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