

## LDC Watch Statement at the Second PrepCom for UN LDC-V

New York City, July 26, 2021 (Virtual Form)

By Demba Moussa Dembele  
LDC Watch Chair

Respected Co-Chairs, Head of UN-OHRLLS, Distinguished Guests, Fellow CSOs' Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of LDC Watch membership, I express my sincere gratitude to the Co-Chairs for the invitation to this second PrepCom for the United Nations Fifth Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

LDC Watch was launched in 2001 in Brussels, in the presence of the late Kofi Anan. Over the last two decades, it has articulated the views of LDCs' CSOs at all major UN meetings. That was the case in 2011 in Istanbul, where LDC Watch mobilized more than 300 civil society representatives, and held a successful Forum, attended by the former UN Secretary General, Mister Ban Ki-Moon.

For the Fifth UN LDC-V, LDC Watch is mobilizing its membership in all 46 LDCs. In that regard, two Regional Consultations will be held in Africa and in Asia-Pacific.

LDC Watch is also mobilizing international civil society organizations, as it did in 2011 for the Istanbul Conference. It has set up an International Working Group (IWG) with key international NGOs and CSOs, with expertise in many areas pertaining to LDCs' development challenges.

The Group and LDC Watch have worked on the Zero Draft Outcome Document.

We will submit written statements and detailed analysis on the issues covered by the draft.

But in general, we welcome the work done by the document. It correctly highlights the devastating economic and social consequences of the coronavirus pandemic for LDCs and calls for "*greater action and extraordinary measures*" in order to tackle the challenges facing LDCs.

This means a break with current economic policies and a new framework for cooperation with LDCs. We hope that the international community will heed that call.

The document raises concern over the slow process of graduation as illustrated by the failure of the Istanbul Program of Action to achieve its major goals, especially the graduation of 24 countries by 2020. We reiterate our view that only a break with the current approach to graduation could lead to a better outcome.

Therefore, we recommend reexamining the criteria and the quality of the data used to determine graduation thresholds.

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The document calls for the mobilization of international solidarity and revived global partnerships in support of sustainable graduation. However, solidarity and partnerships should be based on true policy ownership and the development priorities set by LDCs.

LDC Watch and its partners support the legitimate demands made on debt and resource mobilization; trade and related issues; climate change, and global governance, among others.

On governance, we share the document's **“deep concern”** about the under-representation of LDCs in the global decision-making processes. Indeed, this applies to the Global South in general.

Therefore, we support the call to quickly correct this injustice.

In conclusion, let's hope that LDC-V will mark a radical break with policies of the past 40 years and be the beginning of a genuine global commitment to eliminating the LDC category!

**Thank you for your attention!**