

**Draft Remarks Ambassadorial Retreat on Progress towards the Fifth UN  
Conference on LDCs (LDC 5)  
Thursday, October 21 2021  
18:30 – 21:00  
(In person - 5 mins)**

**Co-Chairs of the LDC 5 process Ambassadors Fatima and Rae  
USG Rattray  
Mr. Steiner, UNDP Administrator  
Excellencies and dear Colleagues;**

Fifty years have passed since the LDCs group was formed and forty years have gone since the first programme of Action was adopted. There has been some progress, but not to the mark of our expectations.

The LDCs continue to face challenges, to a disproportionate magnitude, posed by climate change, supply chain disruptions, debt distress, and supply side capacity. The unique context of vulnerability, institutional and structural handicaps and the litmus test of the 2030 Agenda, necessitates enhanced and dynamic response to ensure significant change and resilient progress.

We need to go beyond business-as-usual, if we really care about a billion people living at the bottom of the ladder. LDC5 is an opportunity for a monumental and dynamic push for meaningful and sustainable progress in LDCs.

**Excellencies,**

As you are aware, we are reaching the finishing line in our race to Doha. It is time to speed up our race to bridge divides and build consensus to enable us to conclude the outcome document, latest by mid-December. The overall objective of this exercise as we are all aware is to devise a renewed action agenda for LDCs and their development partners to sustainably recover from the pandemic and realize the commitments in the 2030 Agenda, Addis Agenda and Paris Agreement, among others.

Of some of the key priorities that remain crucial for the group are:-

**First.** Enhanced finance in all its forms, traditional and innovative, remain central and pivotal to the success of the new programme of Action. As such its is vitally important for the group that the next programme of action contains clear provisions of adequate funding and technological support for its timely and effective implementation.

**Second.** LDCs continue to face multiple shocks- economic, social and environmental- and the draft outcome contains various specific deliverables that are crucial in responding and addressing these. Deliverables such as SDG 17.5

Investment support Centre for LDCs; Enhanced finance for climate change adaptation; Early Warning and comprehensive resilience building mechanisms; promoting quality education, agriculture and food security, among others.

**Third.** Full and fast recovery from the pandemic is a top priority for LDCs. Inequality in vaccination will slowdown the recovery and have a serious impact on growth and development trajectory of LDCs. We are therefore calling for fast-track access to vaccine and other therapeutic medicines free of cost to vaccinate all our eligible citizens.

**Fourth.** Digitalization is rapidly transforming every sphere of our life. If a country fails to catch-up, no doubt, it will be left behind and farther marginalized. We need a regime that would allow us to get access to modern technologies and build necessary human capital to reap the benefits of modern technologies. Online learning facilities for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics will boost human capital development in LDCs.

**Fifth:** Sustainable and irreversible graduation remains the ultimate objective of all the LDCs. This text especially noted the reality that graduating and graduated countries will face, especially from COVID 19 and climate change disasters. The text therefore suggests concrete actions for successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs through continued and uninterrupted development.

**Sixth:** We need a strong and well-architected follow and monitoring mechanism, with adequate resources for this purpose, to ensure its full and timely implementation.

### **Excellencies and colleagues,**

In closing, we have very little time to finalize the draft Programme of Action. Still a lot of issues to resolve. I urge all parties to remain constructive engaged to find common ground that would truly help LDCs in their sustainable development endeavours. Our partners- we deeply value your continued support to LDCs. This is the time to show your support in the extreme spirit of shared responsibility and partnerships. I am fully confident that such support from our partners is there!!

USG Ratteray, I thank you and your team for all that you have been doing for the LDC5. Ambassador Rabab and Ambassador Bob, we can not expect more than what you have been doing. And **finally, and most importantly,** Ambassador Alya, we are highly grateful to you and the State of Qatar for your unprecedented support.

**I thank you for your attention!**