



بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

MALDIVES

[Check Against Delivery]

Statement by
Dr Ibrahim Zuhuree, Deputy Permanent Representative
at the Fifth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries
(Part 1)

17 March 2022

Thank you, Mr. President,

1. I align myself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and with the statement delivered by Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of AOSIS. In addition, I wish to make the following comments in my national capacity.

Mr. President,

2. As we prepare for a new decade of action, we must recognise that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over and that it has had a devastating impact on LDCs and SIDS. Economies have been thrown into disarray and strides made in achieving the 2030 Agenda have been wiped out. Today, LDCs and SIDS need the assistance of development partners more than ever. In this regard, we welcome the adoption of the Doha Programme of Action today, which covers those critical areas where LDCs and SIDS require the most assistance.

Mr. President,

3. LDCs and SIDS have been at the forefront of the fight against climate change. For LDCs and SIDS, the effects of climate change are very real, as evidenced by the many existential threats, that we are experiencing today. The recent IPCC report has issued a stark warning that the window for adaptation is closing and that the time to act is **now**. Access to climate financing for LDCs and SIDS need to increase and the pledge of \$100 billion in climate financing needs to



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be mobilized at the earliest. However, we must also emphasise that financing alone cannot solve this problem. LDCs and SIDS need the technology and the capacity to address our issues.

4. The Maldives graduated from the LDC status in 2011. We were originally scheduled for graduation in 2004. However, due to the devastating impact of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, our graduation was postponed twice. Even after graduation, we continue to face many challenges, and we take this opportunity to thank our partners who assist us in overcoming them. As with the 2004 Tsunami, the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic has laid bare the vulnerability of LDCs and SIDS to not just climate change, but all manner of global threats.

5. Our experience shows that the World Bank's Country Income Groups' current classifications are inadequate to accurately reflect the economies of LDCs and SIDS. The COVID-19 pandemic contracted the Maldives' economy by 60% and caused damages of over \$4.6 billion to the economy. Overnight, we went from an upper-middle-income country to a no-income country. Therefore, a multidimensional vulnerability index (MVI) is essential to give an accurate representation of our economies and will better assist international partners to direct their official development assistance to where it is truly needed, and where the benefits can be best felt. LDCs and SIDS that are scheduled for graduation are among the most severely affected by this Pandemic and they need the same assistance that the Maldives received, and continues to receive, from our partners post-graduation.

Mr. President,

6. This Conference is taking place in unprecedented times. We must make use of this unique opportunity to come together, to strengthen multilateral cooperation. This must include a recalibration of our efforts to include fast-tracking action on pledges made in the Paris Agreement, taking meaningful action to protect our oceans, implementing disaster risk reduction as agreed under the Sendai Framework, and to protect biodiversity and achieving a sustainable balance between production, consumption and nature. Let us make sure that this Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs responds with far-reaching policies for building back better.

7. Mr. President, I take this opportunity to reiterate my delegation's full support for this process and to work towards a sustainable and prosperous future for LDCs and all countries.

I thank you.