



LDC5
5TH UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON THE
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

High-level Thematic Round Table 6

Sustainable recovery from the pandemic and building the resilience of least developed countries against future shocks

8 March 2023, Doha time: 9 am to 12 pm
Thematic Roundtable Hall

Summary of proceedings (maximum 600 words)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of H.E. Mr. Siaosi Sovaleni, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga and H.E. Justice Nthomeng Majara, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, I am honoured to be delivering the summary of Roundtable 6 on Sustainable recovery from the pandemic and building the resilience of least developed countries against future shocks. The Roundtable was held on 8 March between 9am to 12pm. It was co-chaired by Tonga and Lesotho and brought together a distinguished panel comprising member states, the United Nations, other intergovernmental organisations and multilateral financing institutions. There was also an opportunity for civil society speakers from least developed countries to report on their work on the ground.

The Roundtable had a number of key takeaways, with participants noting that sustainable recovery, access to vaccines and enhanced disaster mitigation

capacities are crucial to ensure the achievement of internationally agreed development goals and build resilience in the LDCs.

It was stressed that traditional approaches and responses to the many global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, have been inadequate. What is needed, at the national level, is a whole-of-government approach, to coordinate all relevant ministries in the effort to address current and future global pandemics, as well as other crises such as climate change.

Responsive national, regional and global planning, including a focus on the most vulnerable populations and countries, was identified as a necessary condition for a sustainable recovery and for building resilience. Participants of the Roundtable agreed that resilient development frameworks, which emphasize risk informed preparation and early action, and focus on youth, entrepreneurship, digitalization and other economic drivers, are critical for recovery and ultimately sustainable development.

There was a particular emphasis on the need to build resilience into the multilateral health architecture. Universal health coverage was highlighted as a foundational element of social protection and welfare.

Noting the food insecurity and high inflation affecting the LDCs, the need for robust food systems that can guarantee equitable access to safe and healthy food for all was also emphasized.

LDCs also face energy deficits and high energy costs, yet they receive an extremely small share of renewable energy investments. Participants noted that investments and local capacity building were needed to ensure a transition away from fossil-fuel-based economies to renewable energy.

The importance of participation in regional and international trade, and the development or enhancement of policies for regional integration and cooperation was also highlighted.

There was consensus during the roundtable that given the multiple challenges that LDCs are grappling with, sustainable recovery would depend on the support of all stakeholders, especially on the part of development partners, international financing institutions and multilateral organizations. There was, therefore, a call for an increase in funding flows from the global North to global South and for meeting ODA commitments.

There was also a call for strengthened partnerships, including with the private sector, developed in alignment with national plans and strategies. The importance of full, speedy and effective implementation of the DPOA was stressed, noting the need for increased access to innovative financing and significant investments in the six priority areas.

During the interactive debate, some existing initiatives that were contributing to a sustainable recovery in LDCs were discussed. For example, the African Development Bank informed of the transitional support facility, which was

launched for countries that are lagging behind because many of them are facing conflict situations and structural weaknesses. Additionally, Belgium announced that it would work together with global partners toward an ambitious international framework to prevent, prepare for and respond to future pandemics.