

TALKING POINTS

**Africa Regional Review Meeting on the implementation of the Istanbul
Programme of Action in preparation for the Fifth United Nations Conference
on the Least Developed Countries
Ministerial Dialogue: Lessons Learned and Building Back Better
22 February, 3:00-5:45pm (CET)**

1. The Istanbul Programme of Action has been instrumental in advancing the DRR agenda in the LDCs. In light of the unprecedented increase in disaster risk over the past decade, with climate emergency and COVID-19 attacking the most at risk countries, there is an urgent need for the DRR agenda in the Istanbul Programme of Action to reflect the multi-hazard and systemic nature of risk the LDCs face.
2. The Sendai Framework for DRR adopted six years ago unanimously by all member states gives a clear direction and guidance for this. As nothing erodes sustainable development like disasters, disaster risk reduction must be placed at the core of the objectives, principles and priorities of the Programme of action, particularly in the areas of structural transformation, productive capacities, and infrastructure development.
3. Enhancing prevention and disaster risk reduction in national strategies and policies is an important way forward to build resilience and ultimately towards graduation from the LDC category.
4. The LDC-5 Conference is a crucial opportunity to step-up national action on DRR. Conducting risk assessments and integrating DRR into development sectors are the main challenges faced by LDCs, and in order to overcome these challenges, there is an acute need for increased international support. This support is necessary to finance the implementation of national disaster risk reduction strategies, and support to capacity building for developing and implementing risk-informed policies and legislation.
5. Focusing on reducing risk and building resilience is critical to break the cycle of crisis and recovery. For this, we must shift our focus from responding to disasters after they strike us to preventing and preparing better to disasters.

6. I would like to commend the African member states, the African Union, and sub-regional organizations on their strong commitment to disaster risk reduction, and would like to commit that the UN Office of DRR stands ready to support African LDCs in their journey towards resilience so that no country and nobody is left behind.