

Remarks by the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia

Mr. David Knyazyan

**at the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of the Landlocked Developing Countries,
convened under the Theme “Accelerating implementation of the Vienna Programme of
Action in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and building momentum towards
the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries”**

22 September 2022

Mr. Chair,

I would like to start by thanking Botswana for its leadership as Chair of the Group of the Landlocked Developing Countries and for your efforts, Mr. Chairman, in mainstreaming the priorities of the LLDCs within the agenda of the United Nations.

I also commend the President of the General Assembly Mr. Csaba Kőrösi and the Deputy Secretary-General Madam Amina Mohammed for their remarks earlier today and attention to the complex challenges encountered by the countries in special situations and LLDCs in particular.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to congratulate Under-Secretary-General Madam Rabab Fatima on her appointment as High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) and express my gratitude to her Office for its important contribution to the work of the Group.

Excellences,

Today’s meeting provides an opportunity to take stock of the progress and gaps and identify measures to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in light of the continued unprecedented crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Effective response and recovery require tackling inequalities, discrimination and lack of inclusion. Removal of the political barriers to the free movement of people, goods and services, in particular in terms of realization of the economic and social rights and the right to

development of all peoples is a prerequisite for the promotion of LLDCs integration into global markets.

The United Nations Development System has the necessary toolbox, expertise and partnering networks to enhance cooperation between the LLDCs, transit countries and development partners. In this regard, we attach utmost importance to enabling full utilization of the trade, transport and transit potential of the LLDCs by promoting inclusive connectivity through quality, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, and ensuring affordable and equitable access to transport networks, and trade facilitation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Armenia attaches special importance to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action.

We have recently embarked on the reform of our National Action Plan for the implementation of the VPoA - a comprehensive set of actions and measures, with a strict timetable for implementation, aimed at integrating the six priority targets of the Programme into the national policies and strategies and, thus, contributing to the implementation of the VPoA at the national and regional levels.

In recognition of the need for better regional and international connectivity, strenuous efforts are being made to upgrade state roads. In this regard, the construction of the North-South highway – a high-priority strategic programme for Armenia - is a vivid example. This project will not only ensure easier traffic from the North to the South of Armenia but will also significantly contribute to connectivity between the Persian Gulf and the Black Sea, thus becoming an important transit hub at the intersection of West Asia and East Europe.

As a landlocked country with borders from the East and West in blockade for the last three decades, Armenia is vitally interested in opening all the regional communications and promoting connectivity in line with the norms of international law and with full respect for state sovereignty. The unblocking of regional communications in the South Caucasus and the realization of the project “Armenian Crossroad” will have a crucial impact not only on the countries of the South Caucasus but on the wider region.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that Armenia remains fully committed to effective multilateral cooperation in support of the Vienna Programme of Action. As a member of the Bureau of the Global Group of the LLDCs, we look forward to working with all our partners to achieve progress in the implementation of the VPoA and formulate a renewed set of measures for a comprehensive response to the needs and priorities of LLDCs ahead of the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.

I thank you.