



Statement by

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Secretary General of the Third UN Conference of
Landlocked Developing Countries**

On the Occasion of the First International LLDC Day

6 August 2025

Awaza, Turkmenistan

**H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredev, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan,
Mr. Balanza, Chair of LLDC Group,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,**

It is my great honour and pleasure to address you today on this historic occasion - the first observance of the International Day of Awareness of the Special Development Needs and Challenges of Landlocked Developing Countries.

It is an honour and pleasure to be here with H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, here in beautiful Awaza to celebrate this Day with you all. And since I am with the Hon'ble Minister on the same podium for the first time since the Conference started, allow me to congratulate him on a spectacular start and fantastic arrangements made. Awaza has truly set new standards.

Today, we are not just marking a date on the calendar - we are opening a new chapter for the world's 32 Landlocked Developing Countries.

I congratulate the Chair of the Group of LLDCs, Bolivia, and our host, Turkmenistan, for being the driving force behind this achievement.

This day, established by the United Nations General Assembly, is a landmark recognition of the unique and persistent challenges faced by the 32 LLDCs across four continents.

From Awaza to Lusaka, 600 million people are sending a clear message: *opportunity should not stop at the coast.*

Thanks to Bolivia's efforts, that message has become a global call to action. The Day puts a spotlight on the structural constraints that LLDCs face - trade routes that take twice as long, transport costs that are twice as high, and ambitions that are twice as hard won. But it also illuminates bold new solutions.

The Awaza Programme of Action for the decade 2024-2034, provides us with a clear and forward-looking roadmap: to reduce trade costs, build climate-smart and resilient cross-border infrastructure, and unlock digital corridors to ensure no LLDC is left behind.

This week's *LLDC3 Conference* builds on this momentum - matching ambition with action, and frameworks with partnerships.

Excellencies,

This Day is more than a commemoration.

It is a platform to raise awareness, mobilize partnerships, and ensure that LLDCs are not left behind in our global pursuit of sustainable development.

As the UN's High Representative for LLDCs, I reiterate my commitment to championing this cause and ensuring that this Day becomes a catalyst for action, visibility, and progress.

Let us seize this opportunity to reaffirm our shared commitment to inclusive development, and to a future where *landlocked does not mean opportunity-locked*.

I congratulate the LLDC Group, and on this happy and auspicious occasion, I wish them continued progress and prosperity.

Happy International LLDC Day!