

Remarks
by
Mr. Odbayar Erdenetsogt
Executive Director of the International Think Tank for LLDC
Annual Ministerial Meeting of LLDCs

Your Excellency,

Mr. Tileuberdi Mukhtar, Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, the Chair of Landlocked Developing Countries,

H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations

Your Excellency

Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States,

Distinguished Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries,

It is my pleasure and an honour to participate in this historic event. This is our sixth attendance in the LLDCs Ministerial meeting since 2013 and the second time as an official observer of the United Nations General Assembly.

I would also like to convey my appreciation to the Republic of Kazakhstan for chairing and organizing this very important meeting for landlocked developing countries.

Since the entry into force of the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of the International Think Tank for the Landlocked Developing Countries in 2017, the Think Tank has been working very actively on conducting research and organizing useful events for LLDCs and development partners around the globe.

The COVID-19 pandemic and its unprecedented impact on member states and partners has led to drastic changes in our annual work plan.

COVID-19 forced us to cancel already agreed projects and led to cancelations of already promised financial contributions.

Nevertheless, the Secretariat of the Think Tank actively worked on its Draft Staff Rules and Staff regulations including its Human resource management document and submitted it to the Board of Governors.

In 2020, we have had several activities planned such as organizing events on

- LLDC aviation sector during the 9th Aviation Summit in Beijing,
- a conference for women entrepreneurs of landlocked developing countries,

- conducting research work on the “Belt and Road” initiative and on “Fin-Tech in LLDCs” with our partners, European Institute for Asian Studies and CAREC Institute as well as the Institute for Aviation Research.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to the Government of Mongolia for its fixed annual contribution to the Trust Fund of the International Think Tank without which the regular operation of the think tank would not be possible.

Even in times of COVID-19, the continuous support from the Government of Mongolia hasn't stopped, for which the think tank is extremely grateful.

I would also like to highlight the earmarked contribution made to the Trust Fund of the think tank by the Government of Kazakhstan in 2020, which has been earmarked for a study relevant to the LLDC community.

The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the crucial need for multilateralism and more collaboration between us and urges us to improve our commitment to knowledge sharing exchange of best practices and once again it highlights the importance of evidence based high quality research.

I would like to congratulate the Government of Niger on becoming the newest member of the ITLLDC and I have no doubt that Niger will actively participate in our activities to tackle challenges faced by our fellow landlocked developing countries.

I kindly request the Government of Niger to appoint your representative to the Board of Governors and inform the Secretariat of the ITLLDC.

The voices of African LLDCs are important to the International Think Tank and I call on all remaining LLDCs from Africa to accede to the multilateral agreement on the establishment of an International think tank for LLDCs at their earliest convenience.

On concluding, let me reaffirm our firm commitment to the cause of the LLDCs. We will be standing beside you in supporting you and through you supporting all landlocked developing countries.

Please exhibit your ownership of the think tank and actively participate in our noble work and through the think tank be more effective in engaging with other landlocked developing countries and with that we will have better coordination amongst each other for common positioning, which always leads to benefits and higher development.

Thank you for your kind attention.

**International Think Tank for LLDC
Ulaanbaatar**

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