



**Statement by Ms. Rabab Fatima  
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least  
Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and  
Small Island Developing States**

**High-level event on National Adaptation Plans at COP 28:  
“Transformation towards accelerated implementation of  
National Adaptation Plans”**

**Under the segment “Accelerating support for NAPs”**

**4 December 2023, 19:00 to 21:00hrs**

**Time allocated: 5 minutes, word count 700**

**Excellencies,**

**Mr. Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC,**

**Distinguished Heads of UN entities,**

**Distinguished Colleagues,**

**At the outset, I would like to thank Executive Secretary Simon Stiell for the kind invitation to join this high-level event.**

**Indeed, adaptation is the foremost challenge facing the world's most vulnerable nations.**

**National Adaptation Plans play a central role in identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs, as well as developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs for the LDCs and other developing countries.**

**The recently adopted Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs highlighted climate vulnerability as a major obstacle for the LDCs' efforts to achieve sustainable development.**

**The Doha Programme of Action called for the strengthening of resilience-building measures, including prioritizing adaptation and the preparation of national adaptation plans (NAP).**

**The UNFCCC LDC Expert Group as well as numerous international partners and institutions have provided invaluable capacity building, financial, technological, and scientific support for preparing NAPs.**

**However, progress has been far too slow, especially for the LDCs.**

**To date, only 22 LDCs (and some LLDCs and SIDS) have formally submitted their national adaptation plans, although activities related to the different stages in NAP preparation are underway in many more.**

**Capacity constraints, lengthy approval procedures in accessing finance, identifying accredited entities, and national coordination are among the many challenges that LDCs reported for such slow progress.**

**We must find ways of streamlining the process not only to access finance, but “massively increase” it, as called for by the UN Secretary General at the launch of the 2023 UNEP Adaptation Gap Report.**

**The financial situation in the LDCs and SIDS is especially challenging due to the shrinking fiscal space and worsening debt situation due to the pandemic, rising food, energy, and fertilizer prices, and increasing interest rates.**

**This makes concessional climate finance – rather than loans – especially important.**

**Regional approaches could offer greater efficiency and economies of scale in the process of NAP preparation and implementation of projects. The example of the Global Fund for Coral Reefs could be a model to be replicated elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>**

**To support the NAP process, my Office is actively seeking to mobilize funding to support the 20 LDCs that are farthest behind in the preparation of their NAPs.**

**Finally, I would like to draw attention to two upcoming conferences which offer important opportunities to integrate**

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<sup>1</sup> The Global Fund for Coral Reefs is a blended finance instrument to mobilise action and resources to protect and restore coral reef ecosystems. It is receiving funding from the GCF. More information is available here <https://www.greenclimate.fund/news/global-fund-coral-reefs-brings-together-grant-and-investment-windows-gcf-cop26-event>

**adaptation planning into national sustainable development frameworks.**

**The fourth International Conference for the SIDS will be held in Antigua and Barbuda, in May 2024.**

**The preparatory process has highlighted the important role of developing and implementing climate adaptation strategies for the new Programme of Action for the SIDS.**

**The third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, in June 2024.**

**The LLDCs – over half of which are also LDCs - have emphasized their high vulnerability to climate change which needs to be addressed in their new Programme of Action.**

**Climate change magnifies the many structural challenges facing the LLDCs, such as weak infrastructure, low connectivity, agricultural commodity dependence, lack of energy access, and inadequate transport networks.**

**Thus, adaptation must be integrated across the new Programme of Action at all levels.**

**If not, the existing structural impediments of the LLDCs will only be amplified.**

**In conclusion, NAPs must indeed become the central blueprint for achieving climate resilience.**

**The design of the respective Programmes of Action of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS and their subsequent implementation can support this endeavour.**

**On this, you can count on my full support.**

**Let me rest it here.**

**I thank you.**