

Regional consultation on LDC5 for LDCs in Africa and Haiti

17 January 2023, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Draft opening remarks: H.E. Ms. Kadra Ahmed Hassan, Ambassador of Djibouti and LDC Coordinator

Under-Secretary Rabab Fatima,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon,

I am very pleased to be home in Africa together with all our participants who came to Addis for this regional consultation from different parts of the continent and from Haiti and with all our speakers who came from across the world.

I would like to thank the UN-OHRRLLS, UNECA, EIF and WTO Secretariat for bringing all of us together.

As we are approaching Doha for the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs, I believe it is very important that we strategize on our shared vision for trade and development for the next decade. And I am saying this not because I am the Coordinator of the LDC group and the Chair of Trade and development negotiations in the special session, though these topics are obviously very dear to my heart.

I am saying this because our collective thinking would allow us to pave a clear road ahead on where we would like to be with our trade and development efforts from now until 2031.

And our brainstorming on trade and development today will be instrumental in ensuring that tomorrow we continue to speak in unison on our shared trade priorities in Addis or Accra, in Geneva and in New York.

We have an intense programme in front of us covering all the key aspects of trade elements of the Doha Programme of Action:

- We will be discussing our regional integration efforts, and of course the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area. This is a key priority to all countries in Africa.
- We will be discussing trade impacts of LDC graduation. This is an important priority to the WTO LDC Group in Geneva. And international community is discussing possible ways of supporting graduating LDCs.
- And we will also be discussing how to strengthen our capacity to trade. This is a very important priority for our development partners. And I am very pleased that several of my colleagues from Geneva will be joining us tomorrow for this discussion.

So, I hope we will have a rich conversation. I hope we can learn from each other. And I hope we can prepare the ground for our shared trade and development vision for the next decade.

I count on your active participation, and I look forward to hearing your views and ideas.

Thank you all very much.

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