



Ministerio de  
**RELACIONES  
EXTERIORES**

 **GOBIERNO  
NACIONAL**

*Paraguay  
de la gente*

*Misión Permanente de la República del Paraguay ante las Naciones Unidas  
Nueva York*

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Opening remarks by H.E Ambassador **Antonio RIVAS PALACIOS**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Paraguay and Global Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group, on the sidelines of the 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

His Excellency Professor **Tijjani Muhammad-Bande**, President of the United Nations General Assembly at its Seventy-Fourth Session,

Honorable Ministers of Foreign Affairs and High-level Officers;

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

Distinguished Permanent Representatives;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is a great honor to chair for the first time this Annual Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Landlocked Developing Countries convened by my country in the exercise of the Group Presidency.

First of all, I would like to highlight the support, the incessant work and, above all, the joint and coordinated work with the Office of the High Representative. Thank you very much, Mrs. **Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu**, to you and to your team of collaborators.

The theme that summons us today, “Mid-term Review of the Vienna Program of Action: Renewing efforts for its implementation and the transformation of Landlocked Developing Countries” invites us to renew our commitment to our action program.



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In recent years, our countries have been making huge efforts to achieve the objectives of both the Vienna Program of Action and the 2030 Agenda, with a view to achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth.

The objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of the six priority priorities of the Vienna Program of Action constitute a commitment and, at the same time, a tool of the international community to meet the special needs and the particular challenges that our countries face in order to achieve the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, in order to realize the premise of leaving no one behind.

I would also like to highlight and express gratitude for the support received from the partners countries and from the Regional and International Organizations, whose contribution constitutes another tool to achieve the objectives set.

Excellencies, distinguished participants,

Paraguay, in its role as Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, advances the promotion and defense of our interests in all the forums in which it participates in this character.

In that sense, we have actively participated in representing the group during relevant processes throughout this year, such as the High Level Meeting for Global Climate Protection for Present and Future Generations, the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development and The High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, convened this year both under the auspices of ECOSOC and the General Assembly.



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In addition, the preparatory process for the Mid-Term Review gave us the opportunity to share important evaluation and dialogue spaces, such as the three regional exams carried out in Bangkok, for the Eurasian region, in Marrakech for the African region and in Santiago for the Latin American region. We also had a high participation and an enriching debate during the retreat for Ambassadors of Landlocked Countries that took place in New York in April.

All these activities, in addition to the usual meetings of the Group both at the level of Ambassadors and experts, as well as other thematic events organized by the Office of the High Representative, allowed us to have high diversity of opinions and inputs of great quality for the process of negotiation of the political declaration that will be adopted in the month of December.

And with regards to the political declaration, I would like to thank the co-facilitators of the process, the Permanent Representative of Bhutan, Ambassador **Doma Tshering**, and the Permanent Representative of Austria, Ambassador **Jan Kickert**, and their respective teams, who through their leadership and brilliant work could lead the negotiations towards a consensus text that was concise, relevant and action-oriented.

In the same way, I would like to thank all delegations for their active participation and constructive approach during the negotiations of the political declaration. I also allow myself to make a special recognition to the delegation of Zimbabwe, for its coordination work on behalf of the landlocked developing countries and the Group of 77 and China during the consultation process.



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Excellencies, distinguished participants,

We are convinced that our countries can establish solid foundations for the eradication of poverty, the generation of decent employment and inclusive economic growth, but it is essential that in these coming years we accelerate the implementation of integrated and sustainable economic and social plans and programs.

Finally, let me remind you that unity is strength and that, as countries facing specific challenges imposed by their common geographical condition, we must not cease the objective of acting collectively, giving visibility to how important it is for the international community to continue lending us special attention.

Thank you very much.