

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



STATEMENT FOR

HON. OLIVIER J.P NDUHUNGIREHE

**MINISTER OF FOREIGNER AND INTERNATIONAL
COOPERATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF RWANDA**

**AT THE 24TH ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF FOREIGN
MINISTERS OF LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

Theme: “From aspiration to action: Advancing sustainable development in LLDCs through the Awaza Programme of Action”

ECOSOC Chamber, 26th September 2025 (From 15pm-18pm)

Madame. Chair,

Dear Ministers,

Excellencies,

1. At the outset, allow me to thank you, Madam. Chair, for giving Rwanda the floor. We also extend our deep appreciation to Madam Under-Secretary-General Rabab Fatima for her tireless leadership and advocacy on behalf of Landlocked Developing Countries. We value her commitment and her voice in advancing our common cause.
2. We further commend the Government and people of Turkmenistan for generously hosting the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3) in Avaza. Their leadership and hospitality set the tone for renewed momentum and collective action.

3. Landlocked Developing Countries carry some of the world's heaviest burdens—yet we remain unwavering in our commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

4. LLDCs are home to over 500 million people, representing 7% of the world's population. As a landlocked country, Rwanda knows these struggles well: high transport costs, long delays, infrastructure gaps, and dependence on external corridors. But we also know this truth: with the right partnerships and bold leadership, constraints can become opportunities for growth.

5. That is why we welcome the Awaza Programme of Action 2024–2034—a roadmap to take us from aspiration to action.

Madam. Chair,

6. LLDCs today face transit and trade costs up to 74% higher than coastal states. Export procedures take twice as long and cost 2.5 times more. And though we represent 7% of humanity, we contribute only 1.2% of world merchandise trade.
7. These are not just statistics they are barriers to opportunity. And they are not only our problem—they are a global challenge requiring global solutions. The success of LLDCs is the success of all.
8. Rwanda therefore welcomes the UN High-Level Panel on Freedom of Transit. By harmonizing frameworks and fast-tracking agreements, this mechanism can cut costs, reduce delays, and better integrate LLDCs into regional and global value chains.

Madam. Chair,

9. The scale of our challenge is immense: over 200,000 km of paved roads, 46,000 km of railways, and US\$509 billion in investment needed in the next two decades. But this is not a reason for despair, it is a call to urgency.

Excellencies, Rwanda sees three priorities to advance the Awaza Programme:

- Political will: Clear national strategies, matched with solidarity and support.
- Finance: Bridging the infrastructure gap demands innovative blended finance. Rwanda supports a dedicated Infrastructure Investment Finance Facility to mobilize long-term, climate-smart capital.
- Regional cooperation: We wish to stress the need for stronger cooperation with neighboring countries which is vital in turning landlocked countries into land-linked countries.

To conclude, Excellencies,

10. The Awaza Programme of Action 2024–2034 provides a concrete roadmap to address these barriers, advancing trade facilitation, infrastructure development, and regional cooperation.
11. The Sevilla Programme of Action emphasizes integrated policies, partnerships, and sustainable development strategies, while the Pact of the Future envisions an inclusive, resilient, and interconnected global economy where the success of LLDCs is the success of all.
12. Rwanda looks forward to working and collaborating with this group and our partners to turn commitments into action in the implementation of the Awaza Programme. We also look forward to the review of the implementation scorecard, which will guide progress, ensure accountability, and strengthen our collective impact. **Thank you.**