



REPUBLIC OF UGANDA

**STATEMENT BY AMB. ADONIA AYEBARE, PERMANENT
REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS AT
THE ANNUAL MINISTERIAL MEETING OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF LEAST DEVELOPEED COUNTRIES
THURSDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER 2020, 9:00AM,**

Chairperson,

Hon. Ministers,

Excellency Deputy Secretary-General,

**Under Secretary-General and High Representative UN-OHRRLLS,
Distinguished delegates,**

Ladies and Gentlemen

My delegation congratulates the Chair and the Under Secretary-General/ High Representative UN-OHRRLLS, on the convening of this virtual meeting to take stock of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for LDCs (IPoA) 2011-2020. It is important to share best practices, challenges faced, and lessons learnt during this ten-year journey, and agree on a way forward.

I have the honor to report that Uganda has registered progress in the implementation of IPoA in a number of areas that include; improved transport network (national paved road network has since increased from 14.66% to 21.1% in 2018); improved access to electricity from 11% in 2010 to 24% in 2018; innovations in the use of mobile telephones for financial transactions; improved primary school enrollment including gender parity; decreasing maternal and infant mortality rates; reduced prevalence and incidence rates of HIV/AIDS, among others.

As the world grapples with COVID-19 pandemic, public health has been the first level of intervention focusing on preventive and containment measures as well as equipping and preparing the health system's capacity to confront the virus. However, the multifaceted impact of the virus on Uganda's economy is increasing every day. The COVID-19 response measures that include inter alia restrictions on movement of people, goods and services; and lockdowns have negatively impacted on all sectors of the economy. This has greatly reversed the progress made towards implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) and towards attainment of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development.

As a result, Uganda's debt to GDP ratio is now at 47.5% from 42% and is expected to rise to 50% in the next Financial Year 2021-2022 due to additional borrowing and expenditures to respond to the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the economy.

Uganda, therefore, calls for a global stimulus package including debt cancellation, to help LDCs mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic.

Chairperson,

As we commence preparations for the new ten-year programme of action, we must remain cognizant of the critical challenges that still face LDCs and which should be highlighted; and propose measures to address them to achieve graduation from least developed to middle income status. In this regard, there is urgent need to focus on

increasing sustainable production and productivity, value addition and expansion of the non-traditional sectors; increased labour productivity and export earnings; infrastructure development and investment in production of human capital with required skills; undertaking export diversification; industrialization; and domestic resource mobilization.

The new programme should reaffirm global commitment to work with LDCs to address their special needs as well as highlight means of implementation especially mobilization of additional funding during the decade of action and delivery of sustainable development. Therefore, Uganda looks forward to actively participating in the preparatory process of the Fifth UN Conference for LDCs including the intergovernmental negotiations of its outcome document.

Chairperson

Finally, Uganda reiterates her commitment to championing the special needs of the LDC group and calls upon the International Community and Development partners for renewed partnership and strengthened solidarity and cooperation.

Thank you for your attention