



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 LAND LOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Wednesday 23RD SEPTEMBER 2020, 8:00AM,

**Chairperson,
Hon. Ministers,
Excellency President of the United Nations General Assembly,
Excellency Secretary-General,
Under Secretary-General and High Representative UN-OHRLS,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

My delegation congratulates the Chair and the Under Secretary-General/ High Representative UN-OHRLS, on the convening of this virtual meeting to review progress so far made in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA). This is a great opportunity for us to share best practices, lessons learnt, and challenges; and be able to use those lessons to accelerate implementation in the remaining four years of the VPoA.

Chairperson,

As the world grapples with the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the economies of LLDCs are most severely affected with impacts of depressed trade, transport, tourism, productivity, private investment, and increased health care costs. This has occurred as a result of countries responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by enforcing restrictions in the movement of people and goods and closures of borders, and other containment measures aimed at reducing the spread of the virus. It should be noted that LLDCs are highly dependent on international trade and in particular, on commodities, therefore, a fall in commodity prices and reduction in demand for exports has exacerbated the balance of payment challenges and further marginalization of LLDCs in the global trade.

Despite these and many other challenges, Uganda has registered progress in the implementation of the VPoA, which is in line with Vision 2040 and its associated National Development Plans. Specifically, Uganda has achieved simplification and modernization of transit procedures of the Regional Electronic cargo tracking System (RECTS) that serves Uganda, Kenya and Rwanda that enables seamless flow of transit cargo with all the Revenue Authorities of those countries along the Northern Corridor - thus reducing the cost of doing business as well as transit time.

We continue to prioritize investments in infrastructure (like road and railway constructions) in a bid to close infrastructure gaps that constrain the country's productive capacity and ultimately increasing competitiveness, with emphasis on construction of infrastructure that links production to market centers.

In addition, Uganda is implementing its export-oriented growth strategy that also promotes export diversification; and a number of

other economic policies aimed at supporting the productive sectors of the economy to trade both at domestic and international levels.

Uganda attaches great importance to Regional Integration and Cooperation to boost trade ties, transform economies and expand the markets in the region. We are currently leading the process aimed at ultimately establishing the Political Confederation of the East African Community. We were among the first countries to sign and adopt the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) in Africa, which aim at creating a single continental market for goods and services, harmonization and coordination of trade liberalization and facilitation regimes across Africa.

Chairperson,

During our midterm review of the implementation of the VPoA, it was noted that LLDCs have also made notable progress towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, we also noted that a number of challenges still hinder these vulnerable countries from achieving these SDGs, due to a number of factors that include inter alia limited financial resources, inadequate capacity, and a lack of reliable and regular data to inform policy. Therefore, Uganda, calls upon the international community to enhance their support to LLDCs to enable them realize their development agenda in the spirit of leaving no one behind.

In Conclusion, I wish to reiterate Uganda's commitment to the full implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you for your attention