



**United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least  
Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and  
Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS)**

**Remarks by Ms. Rabab Fatima  
Under-Secretary-General and High Representative**

**Secretary-General of the Third UN Conference on the LLDCs**

**At the Flag Raising Ceremony**

**Awaza, Turkmenistan**

**3 August 2025**

**09:00 to 10:00 AM (TBC)**



***H.E. Mr. Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers & Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan***

***Excellencies***

***Distinguished Colleagues***

***Ladies and Gentlemen***

**Assalam -o Alaikum and good evening to you all.**

**It is my great honour and privilege to welcome you to this flag-raising ceremony, marking the official opening of the venue of the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.**

**Today's ceremony is more than a customary tradition. It is a celebration of solidarity, multilateralism, and the spirit of partnership that defines this Conference – and indeed the work of the United Nations.**

**The theme of this Conference - *“Driving progress through partnerships”* is powerfully reflected in this simple act of**



**raising our flags together. It also reminds us of our collective responsibility for the 32 landlocked developing countries and their 600 million people.**

**On behalf of the United Nations, I thank the Government and the people of Turkmenistan for their warm and generous hospitality, excellent arrangements made, and their exemplary leadership that make beautiful Awaza an ideal stage for our shared ambitions.**

**Awaza, with its rich cultural heritage, and growing international profile, is indeed a fitting venue for this historic once-in-a-decade event.**

**We are especially grateful to His Excellency the Honorable National Leader of the Turkmen People, and His Excellency Serdar Gurbangulyyewic Berdimuhamedow, President of Turkmenistan, and to His Excellency Honorable Foreign minister for their personal leadership in overseeing the preparations of this important conference.**



**I [also] recognize with deep appreciation the tireless efforts of the national team and all our UN colleagues who have worked hand in hand to bring us to this moment.**

**Excellencies,**

**As we raise the flag of Turkmenistan alongside the UN's iconic blue flag, we also raise our ambitions for the LLDCs - that transcends borders or geography.**

**And we reaffirm the enduring principles that unite our global community:**

- peace**
- cooperation**
- and the pledge to leave no one behind.**

**This week, leaders, partners, and stakeholders from around the world will come together here in Awaza to reaffirm their**



**solidarity with the LLDCs and to chart a new course for transformative change. The Conference will mobilize international support and partnerships for the full implementation of the Awaza Programme of Action.**

**This new, ambitious, and forward-looking framework sets out a clear roadmap to accelerate structural transformation, enhance regional connectivity, and build resilience in LLDCs. It is anchored in the principles of equity, sustainability, and above all, partnership.**

**Let this moment remind us of what we are here to do.**

**We are here to connect every LLDC to global markets, transforming them from being landlocked to land-linked.**

**We are here to close the transport and trade gaps that hinder their growth.**



**And we are here to secure climate finance and investment needed to protect their future.**

**The United Nations flag will now be raised alongside the national flag of Turkmenistan. They will fly high together as a symbol of our shared ambitions.**

**Let this Conference be a turning point - defined by solidarity, solutions, and renewed global commitments for the LLDCs.**

**With these words, I am pleased to declare the venue of the Third United Nations Conference on LLDCs officially open.**

**Thank you, and once again, welcome to the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.**