



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



The President
of the
Economic and Social Council

27 February 2020

Excellency,

We have the honour to refer to General Assembly resolution 74/232, which requested us to organize a half day dedicated thematic event in the first semester of 2020, in order to provide substantive input to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDC-V).

We are therefore pleased to inform you that we will hold a special joint thematic event on “Accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda in LDCs to leave no one behind”. This event will be held on 13 April 2020, from 3 - 6 pm in the Trusteeship Council Chamber, United Nations Headquarters, New York. The concept note for the event is attached.

It is our hope that this special joint event will draw wide participation from Member States, as well as from relevant stakeholders. The provisional programme of the event will be disseminated in due course. Detailed information on LDC-V is available at <http://unohrrls.org/unldc-v/>. For further inquiries, please contact Mr. Bruno Ríos, Senior Adviser, Office of the President of the General Assembly (+1-917-367-2637; bruno.riossanchez@un.org).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande
President of the seventy-fourth session of
the General Assembly

Mona Juul
President of the Economic and Social
Council

All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

CONCEPT NOTE

Joint thematic event of the General Assembly and the ECOSOC on accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda in LDCs to leave no one behind 3-6pm, 13 April 2020 in Trusteeship Council

I. Introduction and Background

The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 is coming to an end in 2020. Since its adoption, notable progress has been achieved by the 47 LDCs, which are structurally constrained Members of the UN family. Twelve countries met the criteria for graduation from the LDC category and are at various stages in the graduation process.

Progress in implementing the IPoA has been made in a number of areas, including primary and secondary education, access to electricity and mobile cellular subscriptions. Some LDCs in Africa are among the top performers in terms of the percentage of parliamentary seats held by women. Despite this progress, many LDCs have not met the objectives of the IPoA. While the percentage of population living in extreme poverty was 35% in 2015, projections indicate that this will only decrease to 30% by 2030, resulting in a large share of the remaining world poor to reside in LDCs.

The LDCs face specific difficulties in implementing the 2030 Agenda and are lagging behind in most of the SDGs. There's a conspicuous gap between what has been achieved and what needs to be done. The SDG Summit of last year concluded that progress was not occurring fast enough to achieve the SDGs within the next decade and urgent action is needed now to change the current trajectory. The Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs and mobilize all actors for their achievement is a timely initiative.

The LDCs are struggling to cope with various inherent structural constraints and an unfavourable external environment; global macroeconomic, political and environmental contexts are experiencing a major shift. Economic, environmental and pandemic threats are likely to affect LDCs most severely and disproportionately. Technological advances offer unprecedented opportunities in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, however technology also presents challenges, including on labour and inequalities.

Since LDCs are lagging in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, they need to accelerate their national efforts with scaled up international support in finance, technology and capacity building. Special attention needs to be accorded to LDCs in the Decade of Action to materialize the commitment to "leaving no one behind". In resolution 74/232 the General Assembly reaffirmed that the least developed countries, as the most vulnerable group of countries, need enhanced global support to overcome the structural challenges that they face in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and in this regard calls upon the international community to prioritize and strengthen support from all sources to facilitate the coordinated implementation and coherent follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in the least developed countries.

This is the backdrop against which the General Assembly in its resolutions 73/242 and 74/232 decided that the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs (LDC-V) will be held in Doha, Qatar from 21 to 25 March 2021. The Conference will undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the IPoA and commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of

the Group of Least Developed Countries. The Conference will identify effective international and domestic policies in the light of the outcome of the appraisal as well as new and emerging challenges and opportunities and the means to address them and reaffirm the global commitment to addressing the special needs of the least developed countries made at the major United Nations conferences and summits, including in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework.

The LDC-V will mobilize additional international support measures and action, in addition to domestic resources, in favour of the least developed countries and formulate and adopt a renewed partnership between the least developed countries and their development partners, including the private sector, civil society and governments at all levels.

II. Objective

As part of the preparatory process toward the LDC-V, the General Assembly in resolution 74/232 requested the Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to organize a half day dedicated thematic event to provide substantive input to the Conference. The joint event offers a unique platform to build common ground on how the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in LDCs can be accelerated during the decade of Action.

The event will also discuss how to strengthen global partnerships for sustainable development with a view to ensuring implementation of the 2030 Agenda and thereby realizing the ambitious objective of enabling half the number of LDCs fulfilling the graduation threshold. Participants will be invited to make specific proposals and recommendations in support to LDCs.

The thematic debate is intended to make significant contributions in shaping the global policy outcomes of the LDC-V.

III. Format

The half-day special thematic event will consist of an opening session including high-level keynote speakers, followed by interactive panel discussions and a brief closing session. The panel discussion will comprise presentations by renowned experts, government representatives from LDCs, partner countries and development practitioners to be followed by an interactive dialogue among all meeting participants, including representatives of the Member States, observers, institutional stakeholders, as well as civil society and the private sector.

IV. Participation

Member States and observers are invited to participate in the thematic meeting at the highest possible level. Representatives of UN agencies and entities, international financial institutions, regional development banks, the private sector, civil society and other stakeholders will also be invited to attend.

V. Outcome

The outcome will be a Presidents' summary to be circulated to Member States and may serve as a background document for the inter-governmental preparatory committee meetings of the LDC-V.