



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

17 December 2020

Excellency,

Further to my announcement regarding the establishment of a Board of Advisers for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), I have the pleasure to share a summary of the inaugural meeting held at United Nations Headquarters on 24 November 2020.

Excellency, this Board provides a significant opportunity to narrow the development gap between LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS, with the rest of the world. In this regard, I trust that my Board of Advisers and I can count on your support in this crucial endeavour.

For further information pertaining to the Board of Advisers, your office may contact Ms. Toni-Shae Freckleton, Senior Adviser (toni-shae.freckleton@un.org) and Ms. Nehali Anupriya, Adviser (nehali.anupriya@un.org).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Volkan Bozkir', written in a cursive style.

Volkan BOZKIR

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



Summary
Inaugural Meeting



**Board of Advisers for Least Developed Countries,
Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island
Developing States**

24 November 2020, Conference Room 8, United Nations Headquarters

On 24 November 2020, the President of the General Assembly (PGA), H.E. Volkan BOZKIR, hosted the inaugural meeting of his Board of Advisers for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The first meeting discussed the overarching landscape for the three special situations within the work of the United Nations system and the General Assembly, with a view to assessing strategic moments that can be leveraged to increase support for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. The PGA used this occasion to provide a snapshot of the key mandated events and strategic moments of engagement over the 75th session and requested inputs from the Board members on the substance and framing of these events.

The Board meeting was attended by the following individuals:

- H.E. Mr. Perks Master Ligoya, Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations and Chair of the Least Developed Countries
- H.E. Mr. Amrit Rai, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations on behalf of H.E. Mr. Maghzan Ilyassov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the United Nations and Chair of the Landlocked Developing Countries
- H.E. Mr. Walton Alfonso Webson, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (2021-2022)
- Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme
- Under-Secretary General, Ms. Fekitamoeloa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States
- Ms. Marion Barthelemy, Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development in the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs on behalf of Under-Secretary General Mr. Liu Zhenmin
- Ms. Chantal Line Carpentier, Chief of the New York Liaison Office of the UN Conference on Trade and Development
- Mr. Marco Toscano-Rivalta, Chief of the New York Liaison Office of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
- Ms. Sofia Borges, Senior Vice President of UN Foundation

A summary of the key points raised during the meeting are as follows:

- Despite the existence of specific programmes of action for the three groups of countries in question (LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS), there is a need for greater coordination between the programmes of action and the mechanisms to implement the post-2015 development agenda
- Appropriate and adequate financing of innovative and transformative solutions to the development challenges in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS will be critical for their attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Partnerships and collaboration across agencies and entities is critical to providing more specific, effective and responsive support to the needs and challenges of host governments.
- The Board should take into consideration the mandated events and processes under the purview of the President of the General Assembly and their relevance to furthering the interests of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. It was recommended that some portion of the discussion (s) in these meetings be devoted to the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.
- The socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, has led to launching of various stimulus packages by countries across the globe. While there exists great potential for a 'Great Reset', the Board reflected on the risk that the pandemic and its impacts would widen the gap between these three groups of countries and the rest of the world.
- Participants also discussed the compounding nature of many of the vulnerabilities faced by LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS relating to their size, geography, location, population sizes, and other factors. It was noted that there is a need to overhaul the outdated methods of assessing and tracking progress. Special mention was made of the multi-dimensional vulnerability index as a potential alternative to and improvement on other more simplistic measures of development and development potential.
- The Board recognized the role for political advocacy within and by the General Assembly to bolster support and resources for LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS. In this regard, the Board agreed to develop key messages to inform the PGA's communication and advocacy throughout the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.
- The role of meaningful, lasting, and revitalized partnerships – old and new – was highlighted as a critical element of the accelerated pathway towards attaining the 2030 Agenda in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. In this light, the Board recommended the development of a set of robust key messages for the PGA's use and to generate greater understanding of, commitment to, and political will behind the development agenda in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

The Board has broadly agreed :

- A roadmap containing the plan of work for the Board as presented by the PGA, with the understanding that as a living document, the Board can revise the roadmap as and when necessary. The planned meetings will discuss matters including financing, partnerships, and coherence across work streams.
- The Board will develop key messages to enhance advocacy and strategic communications efforts
- The Board will provide substantive inputs for the PGA's mandated meetings
- The Office of the PGA will circulate summaries of all Board meetings for circulation to the member states during the seventy fifth session. At the end of 75th Session, these summaries will be consolidated and issuing it as an official document of the United Nations General Assembly in order to ensure the longevity of the work.