

## **Summary**

### **Board of Advisers to the President of the General Assembly For Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States**

#### **Fourth Meeting - Responding to the Needs of the Planet 6 June 2022 3:00 pm – 5:00pm, Conference Room 3, UN HQs**

The President of the General Assembly (PGA) H.E. Abdulla Shahid convened the fourth meeting of the Board of Advisers for Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on 6 June 2022, at Conference Room 3, United Nations Headquarters, New York.

The fourth meeting of the Board focused on the theme ‘Responding to the Needs of the Planet’ from the perspective of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

In his opening remarks, the President underscored that our world continues to face the threats of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution – particularly of our ocean – and it is LLS countries that are bearing the brunt of the impacts. He noted that both the drivers and impacts of environmental degradation are interlinked. He noted that climate change, ocean, deforestation and biodiversity are interconnected. He further noted that during this session of the general assembly, a series of high-level events on the environment including COPs on climate, biodiversity, and desertification, the International Meeting Stockholm +50, and Ocean Conference have generated momentum for collective actions, and that their outcomes must be implemented. The President announced that he would convene a ‘Moment for Nature’ High Level Thematic Debate on 19 July, which aims to reflect on how to achieve greater synergies between the key environmental conferences during the 76th session and promote solutions to common bottlenecks and structural barriers affecting the entire environmental agenda, accelerating progress on the SDGs and enabling a resilient recovery from COVID-19. He requested for inputs and suggestions from Members of the Board of Advisers from the LLS perspective.

The Board members reflected on how the UN system supports LLS countries in enhancing capacity for climate adaptation, the key messages about LLS countries the PGA should deliver at the upcoming events, and suggestions on the Moment for Nature event.

A summary of the key points raised, and suggestions made during the meeting are as follows:

- The LLS countries are facing the intractable and disproportionate consequences of climate change, because of their inherent structural impediments. SIDS countries in particular, face existential threats as the ocean rises, and corals protecting their shores wither from heat and acidification. There is still hope and time to limit the most detrimental limits, however the window for limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius, is closing, and requires urgent action.

- LLS countries still face significant challenges in climate change adaptation and building resilience. Most vulnerable countries that are on the front lines of the climate crisis, and with less capacity to deal with these problems, especially as their capacities have diminished by the COVID19 pandemic, need additional support. The UN system needs to prioritize its financial, technical and capacity building support to these most vulnerable countries.
- The primary obstacle to climate change adaptation in LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS is financial resources. The current flow of climate finance is far from adequate. Significant scaling up of adaptation finance is the number one priority. The current climate and development finance architecture is complex and should be strengthened to fast-track climate and development finance through simplified processes to allow for access to investment and finances at a fair rate.
- Efforts and commitments need to be made to launch critical new negotiations on the post-2025 climate finance goal for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS to meet their mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage needs.
- International support, strong regional cooperation, and coordination among stakeholders at all levels, are important in building up a comprehensive early warning system and crisis mitigation and resilience building mechanism.
- Enhanced technical and capacity building support is needed to strengthen national adaptation capacities of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS to address climate change and natural hazards. LLS countries need modern and renewable technologies, and capacities to manufacture new technologies in their own territory.
- We must promote wide-ranging partnerships that generate ambitious ocean action. The 2022 UN Ocean Conference will therefore be critical to promote the implementation of voluntary commitments undertaken in the context of the first UN Ocean Conference.
- SIDS and coastal LDCs are custodians of enormous natural capital – the ocean. Sustainably managing these ecosystems can significantly benefit the whole planet. However, LLDC participation on issues relating to the seas and oceans has been quite limited so far due to a lack of resources, a lack of awareness and limited access to the sea.
- Creating sustainable ocean-based economics requires sustainable and integrated management of ocean and coastal spaces, resources and activities. Strong national policies, programmes and international support measures are needed. It's imperative to scale up investments in infrastructure, conservation, research and development, and institutional and human capacity development, information sharing and knowledge building. Blue and green economies should go together.
- We must improve and invest in gender statistics and disaggregated data in the gender-environment nexus. This is critical to understand, track and better address the disproportionate impacts on women and girls and gender-diverse persons and provide the basis for informed policies and programmes for gender-responsive just transitions and climate action at all levels, particularly relevant to support LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

- Coherence in policy, plans and financing across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework, and the Paris Agreement on climate change is critical to regenerate the natural world and build resilience. The natural environment is humanity's first line of defence against many hazards. We must work holistically to address interconnected challenges in LLS countries.
- The “Moment for Nature” is an opportunity to galvanize momentum for Member States to honour commitments made at COP 26 to drastically enhance financing for and support adaptation and resilience, a key call to action from the Bali Agenda for Resilience at the 2022 Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.
- At the upcoming “Moment for Nature” event, the global significance of the mountain ecosystems should be highlighted. Mountains cover 20% of land, 14% of world population, and provide 70% of world's freshwater. Sustainable development of mountains provide overall linkage of SDGs.
- The “Moment for Nature” should also address the issue of reduction in Official Development Assistance to climate action. Need to redirect emergency resources to climate response.

The meeting was attended by the following participants:

1. H.E. Mr. Alfonso Walton Webson, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda, Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States
2. Lt. General Clement Namangale, Deputy Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations, Chair of the Group of Least Developed Countries
3. H.E. Ms. Margo Reminisce Deiye, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Nauru to the United Nations
4. H.E. Ms. Doma Tshering, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Bhutan to the United Nations
5. Ms. Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director (Programme) of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
6. Ms. Sarah Hendriks, Director of Policy, Programme, and Intergovernmental Division, UN Women (virtually)
7. Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg, Chief, Policy Development, Coordination, Monitoring and Reporting Service, Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS (OHRLLS)
8. Ms. Chantal Line Carpentier, Chief, New York Liaison Office, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
9. Ms. Toni-Shae Freckleton, Chief, New York Liaison Office, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)