



**Third United Nations
Conference on
Landlocked Developing
Countries**

Civil Society Forum

4-5 August 2025

Awaza, Turkmenistan

Conference Room 2

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

The LLDC3 Civil Society Forum (4–5 August 2025), taking place alongside the Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) in Awaza, Turkmenistan (5–8 August 2025), is a unique opportunity for civil society from around the world to engage directly with world leaders, UN officials, and key stakeholders to share experiences, propose solutions, and shape the sustainable development agenda toward achieving the Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, LLDCs faced mixed progress toward sustainable development. The pandemic amplified their structural vulnerabilities, reversing gains under the Vienna Programme of Action and Agenda 2030. LLDCs remain highly exposed to external shocks, with macroeconomic instability compounding their challenges.

Civil society is pivotal in driving sustainable development, offering innovative solutions and grassroots insights critical for LLDCs' resilience and prosperity. A multi-stakeholder approach — as requested by Member States — is essential to conduct a comprehensive review and galvanize broad support for a new generation of action. Civil society also plays a key role in bringing LLDC priorities into global policy discussions on finance, trade, climate, and beyond.

From local organizations to international networks, civil society actors are central to the development and implementation of national strategies, ensuring policies are rooted in the realities of people's lives. The success of the Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs will rely on their active participation, alongside governments and the private sector.

Forum Objectives

- **Provide a platform** for civil society, academia, the private sector, and government to identify critical priorities, forge partnerships, and chart a way forward.
- **Showcase successful partnerships and strategies** that drive sustainable development in LLDCs.
- **Facilitate the exchange of innovative solutions**, best practices, and lessons learned in addressing LLDC-specific challenges.

Monday, 4 August

Venue: Conference Room 2

11:00–11:30 | High-Level Opening

The first-ever Civil Society Forum at an LLDC Conference opens with high-level remarks from the Government of Turkmenistan, civil society and UN leadership.

The opening will underscore the indispensable role of civil society in advancing the Awaza Programme of Action for LLDCs — from driving structural transformation and climate resilience to fostering inclusive innovation and partnerships.

Moderator: Dr. Arjun K Karki, Global Coordinator, LDC Watch

Speakers:

- Ms. Rabab Fatima, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States/Secretary-General of LLDC3
- Ms. Bayramgul Orazdurdyeva, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan
- H.E. Lok Bahadur Thapa, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, President of ECOSOC
- Ms. Oguljennet Berdiliyeva, Chairperson of National Center of Trade Unions of Turkmenistan

11:30 | Family Photo

11:35 – 12:00 | Health Break

12:00 – 13:00 | Interactive Plenary Discussion: Civil Society Response to Awaza Programme of Action and CSO Declaration

This session will socialize and finalize the CSO Declaration. The advanced draft of the Declaration will be shared prior to the Forum and the session could allow the voicing of key concerns/proposals.

Facilitator: Mirna Fernandez, Third World Network

13:00 – 15:00 | Lunch Break

15:00–16:15 | Plenary 1: People-Centered Structural Transformation and Environmental Sustainability

This session will explore how LLDCs, through a civil society lens, can achieve inclusive and sustainable growth through economic diversification and environmental stewardship.

With over half of the land in LLDCs classified as dryland and many countries facing compounding climate risks, civil society has a crucial role in promoting community-based solutions, social inclusion, and resilient development strategies. Participants will share effective approaches for aligning people-first economic policies with environmental sustainability.

Moderator: Mr. Chhimi Dorji, Director for Tarayana Centre for Research and Development, Bhutan

Opening Remarks: H.E. Mr. Akbar Tashkulov, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Speakers

- Jane Nalunga, SEATINI Uganda
- Gershom Kabaso, Zambia Social Forum
- Mirna Fernandez, Third World Network
- Kadyr Amandurdyev, Deputy Chairman of the National Center of Trade Unions of Turkmenistan

Interactive Discussion

16:15 – 16:30 | Health Break

16:30 – 17:45 | Plenary 1: People-Centered Structural Transformation and Environmental Sustainability (*Continued*)

Moderator: Mike Banda, Regional Coordinator, Malawi Economic Justice Network

Speakers

- Hannah Forster, Executive Director of the African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies
- Honorine Isingizwe, Young Volunteers for the Environment, Rwanda
- Dulamsuren Jigjid, Executive Director of the Culture Centre of the Deaf, Mongolia
- Ayana Myrzabekowa, Kyrgyzstan Youth Representative

Interactive Discussion

Tuesday, 5 August

Venue: Conference Room 2

11:30–13:00 | Plenary 2: Digital Economy, Innovation, and Sustainable Development

Innovation and digital connectivity are essential for unlocking opportunities in LLDCs.

This session will focus on addressing the digital divide, strengthening digital infrastructure, and supporting innovation ecosystems to enhance productivity and service delivery. Participants will discuss how civil society can champion digital inclusion and contribute to achieving the Awaza Programme of Action through transformative technologies.

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Edil Baisalov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic

Speakers:

- Kenan Aslanli, Advisor, ITeM
- Mr. Deodat Maharaj, Managing Director, UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries
- Dean Mulozi, Executive Director, Southern Africa Telecentre Network
- Natalia Mochu, Regional Director, ITU Regional Office for the Commonwealth of Independent States
- Chinara Aitbaeva, Director, Public Foundation Nash Vek, Kyrgyzstan
- Simonetta Siligato, Director, Austria Multi-Country Office, UNOPS

Interactive Discussion

15:00–17:30 | Plenary 3: Financial Architecture, Policies and Partnerships for LLDCs

Finance must serve development — not deepen vulnerability.

This session will focus on civil society's role in advocating for debt sustainability, fairer financial systems, and more accessible, predictable financing for LLDCs. It will also look back to the 2025 Financing for Development Conference (FFD4) in Sevilla, aiming to align civil society voices for impact.

Moderator: Yagmyr Nuryyev, Director of Institute of State, Law and Democracy of Turkmenistan

Speakers:

- Editha Meling Leju, Executive Director, National Women Empowerment and Rehabilitation Organization (NWERO), South Sudan

- Par Liljert, Director of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Office at the United Nations in New York
- Mr. Thomas Eriksson, Director of the Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Middle East, Green Climate Fund
- Samuel Doe, UNDP Resident Representative in Ethiopia
- Kadiatou Traore, CEO, Association de Solidarité d'Aide et Action Enfance Mali

17:30–18:00 | High-Level Closing Session

The Forum will conclude with a summary of key messages, commitments, and civil society declaration that will feed into the LLDC3 conference.

This closing moment will reinforce the value of civil society as a partner for implementation, accountability, and transformation.

(Civil Society Summary to be presented at the official closing of the LLDC3 Conference)

Moderator: Mr. Riz Khan, host of the "Riz Khan Show", chief journalist of "Al Arabiya" TV Channel

- Ms. Rabab Fatima, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States/Secretary General of LLDC3
- H.E. KP Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal
- Ms. Bayramgul Orazdurdyeva, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan
- Dr. Arjun K Karki, Global Coordinator, LDC Watch

Partners

- Botswana Council of Non-Governmental Organizations (BOCONGO)
- Southern Africa Development Community- Council of NGOs (SADC CNGO)
- Botswana Watch (BW)
- Rwanda Civil Society Platform
- Network of International NGOs, Rwanda
- AFRODAD – African Forum and Network on Debt and Development
- LDC Watch
- Third World Network
- Zambia Social Forum
- SEATINI Uganda – Southern and Eastern Africa Trade Information and Negotiations Institute
- Young Volunteers for the Environment, Rwanda
- Global Policy Forum

- Social Watch

Outcome

The LLDC3 Civil Society Forum will produce a declaration developed by the participating civil society organizations. This declaration will be shared with the Plenary of the Conference and included in its report.

Focal Points

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More information on LLDC3 is available at: [Third UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries | United Nations](#)