



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

# Parliamentary Forum

**4 August 2025**

**Awaza, Turkmenistan**

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**CONCEPT NOTE**

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## Background

Parliaments bolster effectiveness, transparency, and accountability in the formulation, execution, and assessment of policies and programmes in Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), transit countries and development partners, and are instrumental in ensuring that commitments are fulfilled and that the priorities of the Programme of Action (PoA) for the LLDCs are implemented.

Parliaments are responsible for drafting laws through legislation and policy frameworks that determine the legal framework within which the objectives of the Awaza Programme of Action (APoA), including trade facilitation, infrastructure development, and regional cooperation, will be implemented at the national level.

Additionally, Parliaments in LLDCs, but also through development cooperation programmes by development partners, have the power to allocate resources and funding to key areas to ensure that LLDCs have the necessary infrastructure, both hard and soft, to facilitate trade, regional integration and socioeconomic development. Monitoring and accountability are vital aspects of APoA. Parliament's oversight function monitors the implementation of policies, assessing progress, and holding the government accountable for achieving targets. Complementarily, Parliaments can facilitate dialogue and collaboration between government, private sector, and civil society stakeholders.

Furthermore, Parliaments can play a role in raising awareness about the unique challenges faced by LLDCs and advocating for international support and cooperation. This can lead to stronger partnerships and more targeted assistance by supporting the development of international agreements and partnerships that are crucial for LLDCs' access to global markets.

Against this background, UN-OHRLLS is organizing a one-day Forum for Parliamentarians at the third United Nations Conference on the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3) in Awaza. The LLDC3 Parliamentary Forum will engage with all relevant stakeholders, including the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).

The Parliamentary Forum will focus on the role of Parliaments in the implementation of APoA. After reflecting on the main challenges as well as the opportunities faced by the LLDCs today, four critical issues will be discussed: unresolved changes and lessons learned from the Vienna Programme of Action, the multilateral trading system, good governance and accountability, and partnerships.

This event will cater to the members of parliament attending the LLDC3 as part of their national delegations. The forum will consist of a high-level opening segment followed by interactive panel discussions featuring members of parliament, United Nations officials, academics and representatives from other international organizations, private sector and civil society.

## Forum Objectives

The Forum will consist of high-level plenary and interactive dialogues on the priority areas of APoA and the role of parliamentarians in supporting its effective implementation.

The Forum aims to:

- **Provide parliamentarians and parliamentary staff with key policy insights** from the implementation of the VPoA, along with the main developmental challenges and opportunities for parliaments to effectively contribute to implementation of APoA.
- **Promote discussion and exchange of experiences among parliamentarians** to accelerate the achievement of the new PoA through their political work and functions at the local, national and regional levels.
- **Identify and share recommendations on concrete actions** that LLDC parliaments can put in place to comprehensively mainstream the priority areas of the PoA into their core functions (law-making, oversight, budget, representation), stimulate broader political commitment and support for such actions, and ensure effective and coherent implementation more broadly.

### Outcome

The event will result in a call for action adopted at the Forum's closing session. The conclusions will be reported to the closing plenary of LLDC3 and reflected in its report.

Monday, 4 August

### Morning Session (10:00-13:00)

#### 1. Opening Session/High-Level Plenary (10:00-10:40)

**Description:** The Opening Session will feature high-level delegates from Turkmenistan Parliament, UN-OHRLLS, Inter-Parliamentary Union, and the President of the UN General Assembly, among others.

#### 2. Thematic Session 1 (10:40-11:50) - From Vienna to Awaza: Unresolved Challenges, Lessons Learned and Emerging Opportunities

**Description:** Drawing insights from the implementation of Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA), this panel session will set the stage by providing the participants with a summary on the implementation of the VPoA, looking at national/regional experiences and lessons learned in the last decade while also exploring the emerging opportunities and the role that parliamentarians can play to drive forward the Awaza Programme of Action (APoA) for LLDCs' development over the next decade.

##### *Guiding questions:*

- What were the most common challenges faced by LLDCs when implementing VPoA priorities?
- Does the APoA provide a better platform for the sustainable development of LLDCs?
- What were the success stories in implementing VPoA priorities in the last decade? Can these successful experiences be replicated across LLDCs?
- How should the parliaments be more engaged in implementing the APoA in an effective way?

#### 3. Thematic Session 2 (11:50-13:00) - Shaping and Strengthening a Multilateral Trading System that Delivers for All in the LLDCs

**Description:** WTO rules are negotiated at the global level, yet their legitimacy derives from the fact that these rules are ratified in national parliaments. Acknowledging the potential of international trade to drive economic prosperity, inclusive growth and poverty reduction in the LLDCs, this session reflects on the importance of parliamentary engagement in shaping the future of multilateral trade cooperation. It will delve into mechanisms for parliamentary oversight in trade negotiation processes, ensuring transparency and democratic accountability by monitoring impacts of trade agreements on constituencies. Digital trade has grown exponentially over the last two decades, revolutionizing societies and presenting unprecedented opportunities and challenges for LLDCs in cross-border trade. This new reality necessitates more robust parliamentary engagement with the WTO— enacting appropriate legislation and frameworks to uphold open, secure, easy and fair trade.

##### *Guiding questions:*

- Is the multilateral trading system sufficiently supportive of LLDC?
- In the context that concerns over the global economic context and the impact of trade policy shifts have translated into major financial turbulence, how can parliaments, including through legislative actions, get LLDCs more involved in the global supply chain and combat the trend of deviation from freedom of trade?

- How can parliaments support further development of digital trade and the digital economy in LLDCs?
- What measures could parliaments take to promote better utilization of multilateral trading agreements by LLDCs?

## Lunch Break

## Afternoon Session (15:00-18:00)

### 4. Thematic Session 3 (15:00-16:10) - Safeguarding the LLDCs' Future: Good Governance and Accountability

**Description:** Good governance is a necessary condition for peace and development everywhere, including in the LLDCs. Governance requires, first and foremost, that all decision-making at both national and international levels be fully transparent and accountable, immune to corruption, representative of all constituencies and social classes, and properly equipped to deliver to the people. Yet many LLDC parliaments remain under-capacitated to exercise their constitutional functions and tend to exclude vulnerable groups, such as women and youth, as well as the marginalized. This session will reflect on governance reforms that are most critical to the LLDCs, beginning with the institution of parliament to drive the implementation of APoA. It will also explore how inclusive, participatory and trust-based governance can strengthen peace, foster social cohesion and building resilient institutions that serve all people.

#### *Guiding questions:*

- What are the key governance challenges that LLDCs must contend with, including within the confines of international institutions?
- What are the main obstacles to governance reforms in the LLDCs?
- How can LLDC parliaments become more representative of women, youth and other groups, while strengthening their oversight role?
- What roles do actors, such as political parties, the media, and civil society, play in governance reforms in the LLDCs, including in promoting transparency, accountability and trust?

### 5. Thematic Session 4 (16:10-17:20) - Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships Towards an Action Plan for Enhancing the Role of Parliamentarians

**Description:** Through their functions of representation, legislation, oversight, and budgeting, parliamentarians emerge as key stakeholders whose engagement is critical to delivering on the principles and commitments of APoA. However, limited resources and strained budgets pose a risk to fulfilling their obligations to their constituents. Before the pandemic, debt was already at record highs in many of the LLDCs. The session will examine the role of parliamentarians through this lens and focus on available mechanisms in the face of overlapping crises, from climate change and surging debt levels. It will identify recommendations to design and adapt modalities of work and engagement, taking into account diverse parliamentary landscapes across the LLDCs. It will also discuss potential collaboration avenues, partnerships with the UN, other relevant stakeholders and development partners to enhance the capacities of the parliamentarians in the LLDCs and to ensure their active engagement going forward.

#### *Guiding questions:*

- How can the LLDCs scale up investments in infrastructure, health, education and other public goods?

- How can parliamentary oversight of development cooperation be strengthened in both developed and developing countries?
- How can innovative and effective partnerships be developed in the framework of the new PoA for LLDCs?

## 6. Closing Session: Main Takeaways (17:20-18:00)

**Description:** Expanding on the ideas and recommendations extensively deliberated upon in this Forum, this session aims to present key messages and chart a course for the way forward. It will translate a Parliamentary Declaration/Message to enhance the role of parliamentarians in the implementation of APoA into a practical work programme at the national levels and beyond, strengthening the visibility of the parliaments in international forums, including the upcoming Midterm Review.

## Where and when

The LLDC3 Parliamentary Forum will take place on **4 August 2025** in Turkmenistan, alongside the third United Nations Conference on the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDC3) on 5-8 August 2025.

## Co-organizers & Sponsors



## Focal Points

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