



**Statement by Mr. Sandagdorj Erdenebileg
Chief**

**Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed
Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island
Developing States**

ECOSOC Management Segment

**Item 11: Implementation of and follow-up to major United Nations
conferences and summits**

**(b) Review and coordination of the implementation of the Doha
Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries**

**Introduction of the Report of the Secretary-General on the
implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least
Developed Countries (A/78/112E/2023/94)**

25 July 2023, 3-6 pm

ECOSOC Chamber

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**Her Excellency Amb. Paula Narváez, Permanent Representative of Chile to the UN and Vice President of ECOSOC [check],
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

I have the honour to introduce the Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

At the outset, I would like to thank all Member States for their active participation and high-level engagement at LDC5, which was instrumental to the success of the Conference.

LDC5 was attended by more than 5,000 participants, including 47 Heads of State or Government, over 200 ministers and vice-ministers, as well as the UN system including the resident coordinators from LDCs, private sector, and civil society organizations, and major groups.

Participants committed to an impressive array of concrete support measures, including:

- financial pledges in the hundreds of millions of dollars**
- strengthened cooperation agreements**
- new partnerships, and**
- enhanced investment.**

Yet much remains to be done to tackle the continuing impact of the pandemic and the ongoing overlapping global crises.

In this regard, the Secretary-General's report identifies the pressing challenges of the LDCs and provides specific recommendations to overcome them. Given the time constraints, I will only highlight key points.

The social and economic consequences of COVID-19 and other crises have had a devastating impact on the development progress of LDCs.

In 2020 alone, 32 million people in LDCs were pushed into extreme poverty.

The number of severely food insecure people in LDCs increased from 243 million in 2020 to 266 million in 2021.

It is imperative to address food insecurity, undernourishment, and the impact of food emergencies.

As mandated by the General Assembly, my Office will carry out further work to submit a second report to the 78th session of the General Assembly towards the operationalization of a food stockholding system for LDCs.

In 2022, 22% of primary-school-age children were out of school in the LDCs, more than double the world average.

Access to quality education is essential to tackle the long-term obstacles to economic growth through higher value-added activities.

As requested in the DPoA, my Office is preparing a feasibility study on the establishment of an online university for consideration by the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, which we hope will leverage the potential of digitalization to advance STEM education in the LDCs.

LDCs still lag behind on health indicators - the infant mortality rate is at 45 per 1000 live births, 62% higher than the world average of 28.

Furthermore, the basic infrastructure required for structural transformation is often lacking or absent.

For example, in 2021, the share of LDCs' population with access to electricity stood at 56 per cent, with rural areas at 45 per cent.

Only about 36 per cent of people in the LDCs are using mobile broadband.

The pandemic and its fallout have had a dire impact on the overall fiscal and financial situation in LDCs, with 15 countries now at high risk of debt distress and six in debt distress.

Economic recovery, regaining lost ground and achieving the SDGs will require solutions to debt and financing to be put into place. Increasing investment in the LDCs will be key to recovery and progress towards the SDGs.

FDI to LDCs decreased by 14% in 2022 as compared to 2021.

My office is exploring the feasibility of an international investment support centre for the LDCs, as requested in paragraph 261 of the DPoA.

Investment support, combined with political will and action through the upcoming High-Level Dialogue on FFD, will be crucial for the sustainable development of the LDCs.

The outcome document of the recent ECOSOC Forum on financing for development follow-up has made some important progress. This must be translated into action.

But allow me to turn to some good news now.

We have built strong momentum in the LDC5 process which we must build upon and harness.

OHRLLS is working actively to translate LDC5 commitments from words to action. For example, As requested in paragraph 283 of the DPoA, we are in the process of operationalizing the Sustainable Graduation Support Facility, also known as iGrad,

which provides dedicated support in the form of policy and technical advice to the LDCs on graduation track.

In June, the High Representative convened the UN system at principal level to follow-up with on the commitments they made in support of the LDCs at the Secretary-General's high-level event for UN principals in Doha. The report of that meeting is available on our website.

Despite the very challenging circumstances, I believe that we have made important progress in the implementation of the DPoA.

The multiple upcoming high-level processes in September and beyond also offer important opportunities to highlight the specific challenges facing the LDCs and further the implementation of the DPoA.

In addition, my Office is also engaged in the preparatory processes of two other Conferences taking place in 2024, the LLDC3 and the SIDS4, which together affect 25 LDCs, or more than half.

I count on your continued active engagement and support over the coming months.

Thank you