



**Statement by Mr. Abdoul Salam Bello,
Chief**

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

ECOSOC Management Segment

**item 12, Implementation of and follow-up to major United
Nations conferences and summits, sub-item (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/80/82-E/2025/63)**

10 June 2024, 3 pm

ECOSOC Chamber

Time allocated: 4 minutes

**His Excellency Amb. Bob Rae, Permanent Representative of
Canada to the UN and President of ECOSOC,
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 (LDCs), the DPOA contained in document A/80/82-E/2025/63.

The report underscores that, while some progress has been achieved, LDCs continue to face daunting structural challenges that threaten their sustainable development trajectory. .

- Economic growth in LDCs reported at 4.1% in 2024 remains well below the 7.0 % target set by the SDGs.**
- The proportion of the population covered by any social protection in LDCs was 13% in 2023, remains far from the global coverage at 52.4%**

- **Education completion rates in LDCs remain significantly below global average, at the upper secondary level, with 22.7% completion in LDCs (22.2% for girls and 23.1% for boys), in stark contrast to 59.4% globally.**
- **The digital divide is widening, with internet penetration at only 35% in LDCs, compared to over 60% globally, further hindering economic transformation and access to global markets.**
- **Nearly one-third of LDC populations continue to live below the international poverty line**
- **24 LDCs are classified as fragile or conflict-affected, hosting 44 million internally displaced persons.**
- **LDCs trade deficit reached USD 124.1 billion in 2022.**
- **In 2023, 57.3% of the population in LDCs was food insecure, driven by rising food prices, displacement, disruptions in agricultural production, and extreme weather events.**

- **Net bilateral ODA flows from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members to the LDCs were USD 35 billion, a fall of 3% in real terms compared to 2023.**
- **The total external debt stock of LDCs has surged to \$585.9 billion in 2023 a three-fold increase since 2010 and equating to 38.7% of GNI.**

And the list goes on.

Clearly, LDCs continue to need targeted support, solidarity, and concerted global action to create an enabling environment for them to thrive, address these challenges and effectively pursue sustainable development.

My Office continues to take a holistic approach. Including engaging with all stakeholders to realize the targets, commitments, and deliverables of the DPoA.

Last year, My Office launched and disseminated a toolkit for LDCs, partners and all relevant stakeholders to enable them to effectively streamline the DPoA into National Development Plans and Programmes.

In terms of the DPoA deliverables:

With the generous support of Qatar, we have set up a UN system-wide taskforce made up of EOSG, IFAD, FAO, UNCTAD, WFP, WTO and UN-OHRLLS, to guide a feasibility study for the System of Food Stockholding in LDCs.

A report on the findings of the feasibility Study, will be submitted to Member States at the 80th UNGA, as part of the process. We will also hold consultations with Member States towards the end of the year.

We are also making progress on the resilience building mechanism.

In the fourth quarter of 2025, my Office will organize the first in a series of capacity building workshop at the African regional or sub-regional level to address one of these priority areas.

My Office is pursuing fundraising efforts, including with the Government of Qatar, with a view to rolling out a major support programme to build multi-level resilience in the LDCs.

My Office is working towards undertaking the feasibility study for operationalizing an online university or equivalent platform for LDCs to promote STEM education in LDCs. Held an Experts Group Meeting (EGM) to assess the LDCs online education landscape and provided us with a lot of substantive inputs, which will enable us to make recommendations on possible options for operationalizing this deliverable.

An SG's Report on the Deliverable will be submitted to the 80th Session of the General Assembly.

My Office has also completed a feasibility study on the options for an international investment support centre for the LDCs.

The study includes an extensive mapping and gaps analysis exercise on the proposed centre.

A report of the Secretary-General on this deliverable will be submitted to the 81st session of the UNGA.

Excellencies, Colleagues,

The DPOA aims to enable 15 additional LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2031.

I congratulate Sao Tome e Principe for graduating from the LDC Category last December - the second LDC after Bhutan to do so since adoption of the DPOA.

We currently have 14 countries in different stages of graduation.

To sustain this momentum, it is important to ensure the full operationalization of the Sustainable Graduation Support Facility-iGRAD, which was launched during LDC5.

This will help in ensuring country-specific and partnership-based support to the graduating LDCs and graduated countries.

Excellencies, Colleagues,

The DPoA is fast counting down to her mid-term review.

The mid-term review takes a bottom-up approach with national and regional reviews taking place prior to the global mid-term review meeting.

We are committed to making this an inclusive and dynamic process.

A process that will take stock of DPoA implementation progress and make recommitments to a final sprint in terms of effectively and sustainably fulfilling the commitments made in the DPoA.

We look forward to your constructive engagement and support, as we deliberate and decide on the mid-term review modalities starting during the second committee session of the 80th Session, until the conference.

Excellencies, Colleagues,

We are also counting down to the Third UN Conference on LLDCs (LLDC3), which will be held in Awaza, Turkmenistan from 4-8 August 2025.

Noting that 16 out of the 32 LLDCs, are also LDCs. This conference is equally important for the LDCs.

We thank those that have already committed to travel to Awaza and invite all delegations to attend the conference at the highest level.

We count on your participation and support to make the LLDC3 Conference a success.

Excellencies, Colleagues,

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

The coming months present critical opportunities to advance the DPoA agenda. The Ocean Conference in Nice, FFD4 in Seville, the Second World Summit on Social Development in Doha, and COP30 in Belém are all pivotal platforms to advocate for LDC priorities.

Excellencies,

The DPoA remains our blueprint for delivering on the promise of sustainable development for the world's 1.27 billion most vulnerable people.

The progress made—though real—is not enough. We must redouble our efforts, deepen our partnerships, and mobilize resources at scale to ensure that no country is left behind.

I thank you for your steadfast support and urge your continued engagement as we work together to realize the vision of the DPoA for LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS.

I thank you.