

## **TPs Chair of Least Developed Countries at Integration Segment Panels**

### **I. Session on “Getting back on track for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” Leaving no-one behind**

**09:20 – 10:40hrs**

**Mr. Vice President of the ECOSOC  
Heads and Representatives of UN Agencies  
Colleagues, Ladies and gentlemen;**

I have the honor to deliver these remarks on behalf of the Least Developed Countries. I would like to take this opportunity to send wishes of good health to everyone and condolences to those who have lost loved ones as a result of COVID 19.

I would like to thank Ambassador Margaryan, PR of Armenia in his capacity as ECOSOC Vice President for inviting me to be a panelist and to shine a spotlight on the 2030 Agenda implementation: experiences, challenges and opportunities by the LDCs.

#### **Excellencies;**

The crises related to COVID-19 is still on the rise. The world has not yet reached the peak of the problem. The infections rate might be falling in some parts of the world, but the cascading and associated impacts on health, economy and society are on the rise- almost everywhere in the world. This has further worsened the pre-existing situation of multidimensional crises prevalent before the pandemic.

Secretary-General’s report on Progress towards the SDGs depicts an alarming picture in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The report portrays that even before the pandemic, the pace of global poverty reduction was decelerating, and the target was projected be missed. The number of people suffering from hunger was on the rise, climate change was occurring much more quickly than anticipated and inequality continued to increase within and among countries.

LDCs were not on the right trajectory to achieve the SDGs even before COVID-19. Poverty and hunger remained a big challenge and the number of malnourished people has ironically increased in the last few years. Education, research and development, biodiversity, and ecosystems- all are lagging behind. There is also very little progress in the area of global partnerships.

COVID-19 has downplayed all projections. Global GDP is expected to contract by 5.2 per cent in 2020; more than 100 million are feared to be pushed into extreme poverty; and the number of people facing acute food insecurity could rise to 265 million. Over 90 per cent of the world’s student population’s education and food security is affected. Majority of these affected people are

living in the 47 LDCs. These decelerations only increase our vulnerability and susceptibility to various other recurrent shocks as well as new and emerging ones.

Therefore, the world must work together to halt this fast-rising regression.

### **Excellencies;**

Amid huge uncertainties and escalating risks, there are reasons for hope. There is growing consensus among the vast majority of the population that we don't want to go back to the traditional global system, which is by all means, acutely inefficient and unsustainable; where profits are the key driving force for all economic activities; climate change continued to deteriorate; inequalities were paramount; and progress that the world was achieving was highly skewed.

COVID-19 has inspired us to envision a new system- a realistic way forward- which will enable us not only to address the pandemic but also to achieve the SDGs and the Paris Agreement. Collectively 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement still offer the best policy booster against COVID-19.

The challenge before us is to design a new equilibrium among economic, social and environmental paradigms- which will protect the people and the planet; safeguard the interest of all people and bring the marginalized ones into mainstream development; and optimize the potential of our generation and the generations to come without any compromise to each other.

### **Excellencies,**

Trillions of dollars are being spent on recovery plans, stimulus packages and company bailouts. This is a historic opportunity. Governments should prevent systemic risks, including those presented by climate change, by drastically reducing emissions and improving resilience. This means adopting 100% clean-energy system; harnessing the potential of natural climate solutions; building climate-resilient infrastructure; and putting in place a comprehensive crises mitigation and resilience building mechanism that could be triggered against any shock and hazard. Furthermore, we must design our new settlement system that promote healthier air, healthier mobility, healthier work and healthier play, among others. Materializing sustainable production and consumption measures is now needed more than ever. Let us integrate these and other green deals into our new normal as we build back from COVID-19.

## **Excellencies,**

LDCs are on board to do their part, but they need support.

At this critical time, the necessity for ODA in LDCs cannot be overemphasized. Our development partners are far from delivering on their ODA targets of 0.15-0.20% to LDCs. If we don't receive this assistance now, we don't know, when is the best time to get it.

Due to high fiscal needs associated with COVID-19, debt stock in LDCs has continued to increase. Specific measures offered by the G-20 and the World Bank and IMF are not enough. Unless specific debt relief measures are immediately launched and made effective for LDCs, more and more our countries will face debt distress and debt default situation. It further reemphasizes the importance of the realization of financing commitments made to LDCs as enshrined in their programmes of action and in the Addis Agenda.

During the past few months, the experience of COVID 19 has shown us that technology remains a big part of the future business practice in all spheres of our life. As big data, artificial intelligence and technological innovation continues to march forward, the LDCs are largely left in the tech dark ages with an ever-widening digital divide. Bold actions are needed to reach the bounty of modern technologies to LDCs, as a tool to cope with ongoing as well as new and emerging challenges.

Finally, the United Nations system has a critical role to play in enabling LDCs to achieve the SDGs by 2030. This will require strong commitment of all United Nations entities and to leverage all available resources, especially in the Decade of Action, through an effective partnership between the United Nations system and Member States at all levels.

**Thank you for your attention**

## **II. “Leaving no one behind in the context of COVID-19 and the decade of action and delivery”**

**10:40 – 11:50hrs**

**Mr. Vice President;**

**All protocols observed.**

- The Integration segment like the HLPF which follows it, play a crucial role as indicated in resolution 72/305 of overall policy guidance and fostering progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; contributing to the overall review of the 2030 Agenda at the high-level political forum and looking to the future of the advancement of sustainable development.
- Before COVID 19, LDCs were tracking some progress towards 2030, however, this progress was insufficient and uneven. With business as usual approach, the group is unlikely to achieve the SDGs by 2030.
- According to the SG’s report Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development in E/2020/59. The pandemic has highlighted the underlying fragilities at the core of the current global economic and social system as well as interdependence and the need to strengthen multilateral cooperation and governance.
- To get to 2030 we need to: eliminate inequalities; address poverty in all its forms; continue to put women’s empowerment and gender equality, as well as youth at the center of the agenda; promote innovation and recognize the importance of contextual and local solutions in the midst of universal goals and targets. It also calls for commitments to be backed by action if we are all to move together.
- Furthermore, As indicated by the SG’s report on SDGs implementation, LDCs will be among the hardest hit by the pandemic, because we were starting at a poor baseline and with the burden of a multitude of pre-existing challenges.
- At this critical time, we need to “fire on all cylinders”. LDCs need to strengthen domestic resource mobilization by sealing all available loopholes. Our development partners should come forward with a renewed spirit solidarity, empathy and partnerships to support LDCs to overcome the ongoing historical challenges and to build back better and resilient.

- To get to 2030 how we address COVID 19 will signal the level of commitment we have to equitable and resilient, sustainable development. Now more than ever the UN and its symbolism is crucial. Most importantly a synchronized and coordinated UN that works as one will be key in mapping how we live in the new normal that is ahead of us.
- We reiterate the importance of multilateralism and the importance of cooperation and partnership, so people remain at the center of the agenda and its success.

**Thank you for your attention**