

Introduction

The 2020 High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) Side Event entitled UN Roadmap for Accelerated Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs in the Decade of Action and Covid- Era was organized by the Chair of the LLDC Group and UN-OHRLLS and held on 9 July virtually using the Microsoft Teams virtual platform. The Side Event served as a forum for LLDC Member States and other relevant stakeholders to discuss the UN Roadmap for Accelerated Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs, share country experiences in dealing with the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and discuss the needed support of the UN system and other international organizations towards achieving accelerated implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs (VPoA) in the Decade for Action and COVID-19 era.

The event was attended by over 70 participants, including Member States, UN system agencies, and other international and regional organizations. Moderated by H.E. Mr. Kairat Umarov, the Chair of the LLDCs Group, the event featured statements from H.E. Mr. Tijani Muhammad-Bande, the President of the 74th General Assembly (PGA) and Ms Fekitamoeloa Utoikamanu the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS, UN-OHRLLS, followed by interventions from Member States and other stakeholders.

Proceedings

Opening Remarks by H.E. Mr. Kairat Umarov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan and Chair of the LLDC Group

H.E. Mr. Kairat Umarov appreciated the participation of the President of the General Assembly and the USG and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. The Chair highlighted the challenges of LLDCs that make them especially vulnerable, including lack of direct access to the sea, isolation from world trade, inadequate infrastructure, cumbersome border crossings, and reliance on restricted number of commodities for exports. H.E. Mr. Umarov reiterated the finding from the Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action that indicated that despite positive efforts, progress was not sufficient to meet the objectives set forth in the VPoA or to be on pace to achieve the SDGs by 2030. He noted that the Political Declaration that was adopted by the Midterm Review outlined areas with greatest need for action in order to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA. He cautioned that the COVID-19 pandemic has emphasized the need to address the challenges LLDCs face and has threatened to roll back much of the progress made on the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda.

The Chair stressed that effective implementation of the VPoA is critical to the achievement of the SDGs and that he requested for the UN Roadmap for accelerated implementation of the VPoA to be developed to ensure greater visibility of results on the ground. The Chair thanked the USG and OHRLLS staff for developing the Roadmap, in particular the detailed mapping by(o)-5(rg)7 Tmn G[(UN)]To)-3(g)4(re)10(ss 0000912 0 61

Statement by H.E. Mr. Tijani Muhammad-Bande, President of the 74th General Assembly

H.E. Mr. Tijani Muhammad-Bande thanked the LLDC Chair and USG of OHRLLS for the invitation to the event, stressing that the new reality of COVID-19 brings the urgent needs of LLDCs to the forefront of the global development agenda. He reaffirmed his commitment to support achieving of the SDGs and ensuring no one is left behind as the 74th GA session draws to a close. He acknowledged that progress has been made on the VPoA, such as improved human development index, land corridors have opened for LLDCs, and regional trade participation has increased. However, noting that more work remains to be done, he welcomed the Roadmap, as a concrete follow-up from the Midterm Review and a tool to guide the work of the UN system. He called for the momentum from the Midterm Review to be channeled into accelerated implementation of the VPoA and the UN Roadmap.

H.E. Mr. Muhammad-Bande stressed that the COVID-19 pandemic should not discourage LLDCs from attaining implementation of the VPoA, but rather urge them further in implementing it and achieving the SDGs. He called on enhanced efforts to work towards inclusive, sustainable and resilient future, with transition to green economy at its core. He called on Governments to refocus on the 2030 Agenda and align their national SDG implementation plans. He highlighted that the digital divide must be closed and policy responses must be targeted and inclusive to ensure that women, girls, youth, elderly and other vulnerable groups are not left behind. He added that regional dialogue should be harnessed, both within and outside of the UN. H.E. Mr. Muhammad-Bande ended his remarks by encouraging and the momentum

support to help LLDCs deal with the impacts of COVID-19, the empowerment of women and girls in all facets of society, and the development of stakeholder networks during the implementation of the VPoA.

The USG emphasized the importance of Part Four, which is the detailed mapping of activities as submitted and to be implemented by the UN system and other international and regional organizations. The USG highlighted that some of these activities are proposals, meaning they require further conceptualization or funding. She added that the final part of the Roadmap covers implementation and outlined that the Roadmap and its implementation will be regularly reviewed in the context of the IACG and in the annual Report of the Secretary-General and that it will remain a living document. The USG concluded that halfway through the VPoA's ten-year timeline, and as we are entering the Decade of Action, increased international solidarity and support for the LLDC Group is essential.

Intervention by H.E. Mr. Nkopane Monyane, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Lesotho

The Ambassador appreciated the development of the Roadmap at such a critical time coinciding with the commencement of the Decade of Action. He noted that in light of the Midterm Review of the VPoA and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Roadmap and in particular the detailed mapping of activities can be leveraged to not only accelerate the implementation of the VPoA but also to build back better. The Ambassador echoed the USG's call to 'Deliver as One', calling for effective and timely execution of the Roadmap.

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also called on any LLDCs that have yet ratified the Agreement on the establishment of the Think Tank to do so. H.E. Mr Enkhbold gave a brief overview of Mongolia's response to COVID-19, as it is working with the UN to scale up its national healthcare capacity and support neighbouring countries.

Intervention by H.E. Mr. Mahmamin Mahmadaminov, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Tajikistan
The Ambassador n

minerals. He noted that LLDCs make up 10% of ISA membership, and urged them to fully leverage the opportunities that come with ISA membership. He added that ISA was happy to see its contributions included in the Roadmap and highlighted specific areas of support, including capacity building in marine science, especially for women, access to marine scientific research and ensuring full participation of LLDCs in deep-sea exploration.

Intervention by Mr. Satya Tripathi, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the UNEP New York Office

Mr. Tripathi explained that many of the diseases that have spread over the last few decades have come from human encroachment into animals' natural habitats, often disproportionately impacting LLDCs. He highlighted the importance of increased support for LLDCs in the era of COVID-19, to help them build back better as well as to help them deal with impacts of environmental degradation and climate change. He noted that UNEP is continuing its capacity building and technical assistance to LLDCs to help them achieve sustainable development through green economy transition. He stressed that adaptation is critical for LLDCs and noted UNEP's efforts in facilitating knowledge sharing on climate change adaptation and resilience building, assisting countries to develop national adaptation plan and integrating adaptation in existing programmes.

Intervention by Mr. Ahmed Abdel-Latif, Permanent Observer to the United Nations, IRENA

Mr. Abdel-Latif noted IRENA's continued efforts in working closely with LLDCs to accelerate renewable energy deployment in the context of advancing the SDGs, Paris Agreement and VPOA. He expressed IRENA's full commitment within the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and supporting LLDCs with recovery measures using energy transformation and renewables. He noted that IRENA welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the Roadmap, especially in light of a joint Memorandum of Understanding with OHRLLS

