

**Agenda Item 22:**  
**Groups of Countries in Special Situations:**  
**(a) Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs; &**  
**(b) Follow-up to the Second UN Conference on LLDCs**  
**19 October 2016**

**INDIA STATEMENT**

**First Secretary Mr. Ashish Sinha**  
**Second Committee**  
**71st Session of the**  
**United Nations General Assembly**

**Thank you Mr. Chairman,**

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Thailand on behalf of Group of 77.

At the outset, let me thank the Secretary-General for his reports on the groups of countries in special situation. We would like to express our thanks to Under-Secretary General H.E. Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya and his team at the UN-OHRLLS for their substantive and continued support to the countries in special situations.

Every country faces specific challenges in its pursuit of sustainable development. But the most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDSs deserve special attention as per the provisions of Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) and Vienna Programme of Action (VPoA). The success of our efforts in our resolve of 'leaving no one behind' will be measured against the progress of countries in special situations. For the SDGs to be achieved globally, they must be achieved in the LDCs and LLDCs.

The High-Level Mid Term Review Conference held in May this year in Antalya, Turkey for the IPoA for LDCs was useful in assessing opportunities and challenges faced by LDCs in the context of the adoption last year of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

**Mr. Chairman,**

India remains fully committed to partnering the rapid growth and development in the LDCs. Our partnership with the LDCs has been nurtured through a shared history and common development needs and is guided by a vision of a common destiny. It is in this spirit, for ensuring a successful organization of the High-Level Mid Term Review and Follow-up of the

IPoA Conference for LDCs in May this year, Government of India contributed a sum of US\$ 300,000.

India's development partnership with LDCs focuses on capacity building, sharing of technological expertise and financial assistance.

India provides economic and technical assistance to LDCs through its various programmes. Under India's longstanding flagship ITEC programme that commenced in 1960s, India has provided a large number of scholarships and training slots in a host of priority sectors like agriculture, infrastructure, medicine, energy, banking and information technology among other. In the current academic year alone, India has provided nearly 4600 slots to LDCs.

India became the first emerging economy in 2008 to offer a Duty-Free Trade Preference Scheme for LDCs with an aim to provide market access to LDC goods. At present, 31 LDCs are beneficiaries of this scheme. Under the scheme, India provides Duty-Free/Preferential market access on 98.2% of its tariff lines.

India has always been proud of its special relationship with countries in special situations. The three India-Africa Forum Summits held so far along with the Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIIC) Summit have further crystallized this special relationship.

At the 3rd and latest India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in October 2015, India extended an additional concessional credit of US \$10 billion to African countries over the next 5 year.

This is in addition to its on-going credit programme. India also extended a grant assistance of US \$ 600 million, including an India-Africa Development Fund of US \$ 100 million and an India-Africa Health Fund of US \$ 10 million.

India is also alert to the capacity building needs of African countries. India has offered 50,000 scholarships to Africa over the next five years. We have set up several capacity building institutes in various sectors in Africa to act as centres of human resource skilling.

Pan Africa e-Network project is now operational in nearly 50 countries.

At a multilateral level, India along with Brazil and South Africa has an active partnership with UNDP for fruitful South-South Cooperation to assist developing countries, mainly LDCs.

While there is a worrying decline in the aid levels from donor countries towards the LDCs, India's support as part of South-South Cooperation continues to expand substantially.

**Mr. Chairman,**

The Landlocked Developing countries face connectivity and cost constraints in terms of international trade and economic linkages. The majority of the LDCs are commodity exporting

economies. We need to place a strong focus on developing their productive capacities. Mobilization of adequate resources to fill the huge financing gap for development should receive our highest attention. Donor countries should urgently fulfill their ODA commitments.

India has special bilateral cooperation agreements with its landlocked neighbours for easy transit of their goods. We stand committed to meeting the critical infrastructure needs of the LLDCs.

**Mr. Chairman,**

In concluding, let me once again reassure you of India's strong support and steadfast commitment to continue sharing our development experience and expertise with our fellow developing countries in a spirit of solidarity.

Thank You.

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