



## **PRESS RELEASE**

19 March 2013, New York – Around 50 experts from landlocked and transit developing countries, donor countries, international organizations, including United Nations Agencies, Programmes and Funds, and other stakeholders, will meet at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 20 - 21 March to discuss the priorities of a new development agenda for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs).

Organised by the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), the two-day ‘brainstorming’ meeting will focus on how to address key development needs and challenges of the LLDCs as the Almaty Programme of Action draws to its ten-year conclusion.

Lack of territorial access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets and high transport costs, compounded by poor infrastructure and weak institutions prevent LLDCs from fully harnessing the potential of trade as an engine for sustainable and inclusive development. The 10 year Almaty action-plan adopted in 2003 established for the first time a global framework for action and international support to deal with these constraints.

Recently appointed as Secretary-General of the upcoming 2014 conference on the LLDCs, Under Secretary-General Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya said, “It is hoped that the brainstorming session will provide substantive guidance to the preparatory process and lay a solid foundation for a renewed partnership between the LLDCs and their partners that will result in the social and economic transformation of these countries over the next decade.”

International experts meeting in New York are expected to exchange ideas and lessons learned in order to identify priority areas and development policies for LLDCs in the context of a new landscape of international trade. Top of the agenda will be trade facilitation, transit transport cooperation and emerging challenges and opportunities facing the LLDCs. Participants will also weigh in on the international support measures, South-South cooperation, development of infrastructure and productive capacities, structural transformation of LLDCs economies and the post-2015 development agenda. The outcome of the meeting, chaired by Mr. Acharya, will contribute to the substantive preparations of the new global action-oriented framework for LLDCs to be adopted at the ten-year review conference in 2014.

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