



Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

Distr.: General
23 June 2014

Original: English

Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

First session

New York, 12 and 13 June 2014

Report of the intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries on its first session

Introduction

1. The first session of the intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries was held at United Nations Headquarters on 12 and 13 June 2014, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [68/270](#).

I. Organization of work

A. Opening of the session

2. The session was opened on 12 June 2014 by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, acting as the temporary Chair. The Preparatory Committee elected two Co-Chairs, who made statements. Statements were also made by the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative, in his capacity as Secretary-General of the Conference, and by the Minister of Transport, Works, Supply and Communications of Zambia, in his capacity as Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries.



B. Election of officers

3. At its 1st meeting, on 12 June, the Preparatory Committee elected its officers as follows:

Co-Chairs:

Khiane Phansourivong (Lao People's Democratic Republic)
Signe Burgstaller (Sweden)

Vice-Chairs:

Hanum Ibrahimova (Azerbaijan)
Vitaly Mackay (Belarus)
Maurício Fávero (Brazil)
Papouri Tchingonbé Patchanné (Chad)
Aman Hassen Bame (Ethiopia)
Cecilia Piccioni (Italy)
Durga Prasad Bhattarai (Nepal)
Juan Angel Delgadillo (Paraguay)

Rapporteur:

Cecilia Piccioni (Italy)

4. The Preparatory Committee decided that Austria, host country of the Conference, and Zambia, as Chair of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, would serve as ex officio members of the Bureau.

C. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

5. At the same meeting, the Preparatory Committee adopted the agenda for its first session, as follows:

1. Opening of the first session.
2. Adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
3. Election of officers.
4. Adoption of the rules of procedure of the intergovernmental Preparatory Committee.
5. Recommendations to the Conference.
6. General exchange of views.
7. Consideration of the draft outcome document of the Conference.
8. Other matters.
9. Adoption of the report of the intergovernmental Preparatory Committee.

6. Also at the same meeting, the Preparatory Committee agreed on its programme of work, as proposed in the annex to document [A/CONF.225/PC/1](#).

D. Adoption of the rules of procedure of the Preparatory Committee

7. At its 1st meeting, on 12 June, the Preparatory Committee decided, pursuant to General Assembly resolution [68/270](#), that the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and the supplementary arrangements established for the Commission on Sustainable Development by the Council in its decisions 1993/215 and 1995/201 should apply to the meetings of the Committee, as applicable.

E. General exchange of views

8. At its 1st meeting, the Preparatory Committee heard a number of statements, in addition to a presentation on the preparations for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries. The Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, in his capacity as Secretary-General of the Conference, presented to the Committee a summary of the outcomes of pre-conference events.

9. At its 1st to 3rd meetings, on 12 and 13 June, the Preparatory Committee held a general exchange of views on the substantive preparation of the Conference, including its outcome (see paras. 16 to 48).

10. In the course of the general exchange of views, the Preparatory Committee heard statements by representatives of the following 27 Member States: Afghanistan, Austria (as host country of the Conference), Azerbaijan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of) (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, China, Ethiopia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Mongolia, Nepal, Niger, Paraguay, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Turkey, United States of America, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe. A statement was also made by the representative of the European Union, on behalf of the European Union and its member States, and by the representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

11. The representatives of Armenia and Azerbaijan exercised their right of reply.

F. Consideration of the outcome document of the Conference

12. At its 2nd meeting, on 12 June, the Preparatory Committee considered issues relating to the draft outcome document of the Conference. The Co-Chairs said that the presentations made during the general exchange of views could constitute important input to the draft outcome document. Delegations were strongly encouraged to submit as soon as possible written input or positions to be compiled for the final outcome document. Pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution [68/270](#), the Co-Chairs, on behalf of the Bureau, announced that they would convene further meetings on an informal basis in New York to discuss the draft outcome document of the Conference and that communications concerning the specifics of those meetings, including the dates and venue, would be issued through the secretariat.

G. Recommendations to the Conference

13. At its 3rd meeting, on 13 June, the Preparatory Committee considered agenda item 5 and recommended to the Conference the adoption of the following:

(a) Draft provisional rules of procedure of the Conference ([A/CONF.225/PC/L.2](#));

(b) Provisional agenda for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries ([A/CONF.225/PC/L.3](#)).

H. Adoption of the report of the Preparatory Committee

14. At the 3rd meeting, on 13 June, the Rapporteur introduced the draft report of the Preparatory Committee, contained in a conference room paper which was issued in English only.

15. At the same meeting, the Preparatory Committee adopted the draft report and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize it in the light of proceedings at the closing meeting.

II. Summary of the discussion during the general exchange of views*

16. The Secretary-General of the Conference noted that the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries had been adopted in 2003 as the United Nations response to the growing need to address in a collective and focused manner the special development challenges faced by the landlocked developing countries. He highlighted the success of the Almaty Programme of Action in increasing the visibility and recognition of the landlocked developing countries and their special needs at the international level and at the United Nations. The landlocked developing countries had come to hold a prominent place on the international development agenda and had been specifically referred to in the outcome documents of the 2005 and 2010 summits on the Millennium Development Goals, in addition to the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”. Furthermore, at the ninth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO), held in December 2013, participants had agreed on the Bali package, a series of decisions that included an agreement on trade facilitation. The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, when fully implemented, had the potential to deal with many of the fundamental transit policy issues that affected the exports of landlocked developing countries and would bring specific benefits to those countries in terms of easier and swifter cross-border trade.

17. He noted that the Almaty Programme of Action had been successful in organizing global support for all identified priority areas, including financial and technical assistance, macroeconomic policy development and development in the landlocked developing countries. While progress had been made in promoting

* Texts of statements are available from www.un.org/ohrrls/.

exports from those countries and in attracting foreign direct investment, disaggregated analysis showed that it had been uneven. Sustaining such progress had also proved a challenge for most landlocked developing countries. He underscored that, although the Almaty Programme of Action had had a positive role to play in the development of most landlocked developing countries, it remained unfinished business, given that those countries still had far to go before they could fully benefit from globalization, sustainable inclusive development, poverty eradication and structural transformation. Major challenges remained, including high trading costs, lack of productive capacity and high commodity dependence. He noted that the level of development in landlocked developing countries was on average 20 per cent lower than it would have been, had they not been landlocked.

18. He highlighted that effective and efficient transit facilitation, diversification and enhancement of trading opportunities, transport development and regional integration and global support would be crucial for the landlocked developing countries if they were to integrate meaningfully into the global economy. He stressed that there was an urgent need for a comprehensive and results-oriented outcome document that presented a new generation of improved and innovative support measures and mechanisms to assist the landlocked developing countries to move into a self-sustained growth trajectory that would contribute to reducing poverty and sustaining inclusive development.

19. He lauded the decision of the General Assembly in its resolution [66/214](#) to hold a comprehensive 10-year review conference on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2014 as representing the will of the international community to continue to place issues of concern to landlocked developing countries on the international agenda. He said that the Conference should deliver an outcome document that could holistically address the development needs and challenges of landlocked developing countries and ensure strengthened and enhanced global cooperation and support to complement national leadership. The global partnership would have to be multi-stakeholder in nature. The role of the private sector, civil society, academic institutions and other sectors would be critical in dealing with the challenges of landlocked developing countries.

20. The representative of Zambia, speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, highlighted the progress in socioeconomic development achieved by the landlocked developing countries over the decade of implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. He said that, although some progress had been made, those countries continued to experience high transport and trade transaction costs which made their exports less competitive in regional and global markets. Furthermore, they had limited productive capacity, were heavily reliant on natural-resource-based commodities, were experiencing declining agricultural productivity and deindustrialization, had a low level of skills and a low technological base, and were vulnerable to climate change, which was exacerbating desertification and land degradation, and to such external shocks as the global financial and economic crisis and commodity price volatility. He stressed that the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, to be held in Vienna in November 2014, should produce an outcome that was ambitious, comprehensive, forward-looking and results-oriented, so that the desired socioeconomic transformation would be achieved in landlocked developing countries in the coming decade. The outcome document should consider the development problems of the landlocked developing countries in a broader manner, ensuring that efforts to improve transit

transport infrastructure and trade facilitation were accompanied by efforts to build productive capacity and to promote value addition, industrialization, the diversification of economies, the transfer of technology, the increased use of information and communications technology and increased regional cooperation, and by efforts to build resilience to withstand external shocks, including the effects of climate change, desertification, land degradation and drought. He identified the following as key priorities of the landlocked developing countries: fundamental transit policy issues, including policies, laws and regulations for cooperative transit arrangements between landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours; infrastructure development and maintenance; international trade and trade facilitation, including implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement; structural transformation, productive capacity and value addition; regional integration and cooperation; building resilience with regard to emerging challenges; means of implementation; and implementation, follow-up and review. He stressed that the priorities of the landlocked developing countries should be integrated into the post-2015 development agenda.

21. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, indicated that the Group considered that the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries should work towards the approval of a new programme of action which complemented and broadened existing achievements. It should also be aimed at eradicating poverty, enhancing competitiveness and productive capacity and ensuring a better future for people living in the landlocked developing countries. Therefore, a holistic approach to addressing not only specific economic aspects but also key priorities in the social and environmental areas should be embraced therein. The Group reiterated and stressed the need to tackle the following areas, which were of critical importance to the landlocked developing countries: transit issues; full establishment of efficient transit systems, an aim of the Almaty Programme of Action that had not yet been achieved in the regions; adoption of effective measures to reduce the costs of transport; and development of transport infrastructure.

22. The representative of the European Union, speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, reaffirmed the determination of the European Union to engage actively with its partners and the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries during the Conference, which was to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. He reiterated the commitment of the European Union to contributing to a successful outcome. With regard to the new programme of action, the European Union considered it important for the special challenges of landlockedness to be addressed. It should focus on key policy areas, such as trade and trade facilitation, aid for trade, economic diversification, regional cooperation and diversification. In addition, it should take into consideration lessons learned from the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, close observed gaps and tackle shortcomings. With regard to the outcome document, the European Union was optimistic that it would be able to address the relevant priorities of the landlocked developing countries and that it would be based on effective partnerships and contributions from all stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector.

23. The representative of Austria, as the host country of the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, highlighted the importance of the Conference. He underscored that, as a landlocked country, Austria was fully aware

of the cost of landlockedness. He recalled that Vienna, the venue of the Conference, was a United Nations centre.

24. The representative of Paraguay stressed that the new programme of action should be an effective tool that contributed to the eradication of poverty. It should recognize the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, especially in relation to market access for the exports of landlocked developing countries. The category of landlocked developing country, which was based on geographical location, deserved special but differentiated treatment. He underscored that the new programme of action must emphasize the importance of investment in infrastructure as a new source of development. Meeting the new global challenges, such as environmental concerns and climate change, building resilience, the development and transfer of technology and, for Paraguay in particular, optical fibre connections, required the requisite financial and technical assistance. Paraguay, as head of the group at WTO on issues relating to commerce and development, worked to include and defend the group's interests. Supporting the inclusion of landlocked developing countries in WTO and working for formal recognition of the category of landlocked developing country were considered particular priorities.

25. The representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic underlined that the upcoming Conference was of utmost importance for landlocked developing countries because it was held only once in a decade. The Conference would provide a unique opportunity for the landlocked and transit developing countries, their development partners and international financial and development institutions not only to comprehensively and critically assess the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in terms of best practice and gaps in implementation, but also to identify effective international, regional, subregional and national policies and support measures in the areas of international trade, transit transport cooperation and regional integration in the light of new and emerging challenges. He emphasized that some of the challenges and opportunities that had not been apparent when the Almaty Programme of Action had been prepared should be taken into account in preparing the new programme of action.

26. The representative of Nepal observed that, although the landlocked developing countries had made progress since the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action, they continued to face higher transport and logistical costs, high commodity dependency and declining value addition in agriculture and manufacturing capacity. He warned that, were the current situation permitted to persist, landlocked developing countries would remain vulnerable to external shocks. He urged the international community to work on an outcome document that would ensure the integration of landlocked developing countries into the global economy and promote the achievement of internationally agreed goals. He emphasized the need for a strong and robust programme of action and a framework of international cooperation to support landlocked developing countries in reducing costs, achieving economic diversification, becoming competitive and creating an enabling environment that would achieve high economic growth and build resilience. Such a programme of action should also reinforce confidence and collaboration between landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours, and complement and build upon the continuing sustainable development goal and post-2015 development agenda processes. He identified the following as some of the priority areas on which the new programme of action should focus: building productive capacity so that

landlocked developing countries could be competitive in world markets; addressing the development agenda missing from the Almaty Programme of Action; tackling market access by focusing on all restrictions, including non-tariff barriers; fostering regional integration; dealing with supply-side constraints; and providing adequate financial support for trade facilitation initiatives.

27. The representative of the Russian Federation said that it was important to support landlocked developing countries so that they could achieve full and effective participation in global trade and international processes. The second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries would create the needed continuity and provide a practical and results-oriented programme of action that could meet the special needs of landlocked developing countries. His country already extended special preferential treatment to those countries and was in favour of the implementation of measures that would reduce their high transit costs. He pointed to the commitment of the Eurasian Economic Union to helping landlocked developing countries by pursuing mutually beneficial arrangements. Landlocked Kazakhstan was one of its members, and both Kyrgyzstan and Armenia had expressed the desire to join. In addition, the Eurasian Development Bank supported five landlocked developing countries by providing technical and financial assistance. The Bank was expected to spend more than \$5 billion over the coming 10 years.

28. The representative of Mongolia informed the Preparatory Committee about the recent high-level international workshop on the implications for landlocked developing countries of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement. It had been organized jointly by the Government of Mongolia, the International Think Tank for the Landlocked Developing Countries and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to review the progress made in improving trade facilitation in landlocked developing countries, to substantively assess the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and its implications for landlocked developing countries, to equip participants with the knowledge necessary to effectively take advantage of the trade facilitation provisions available to them, and to provide policy recommendations that would form substantive input to the preparations for the comprehensive 10-year review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. He expressed the hope that the Preparatory Committee would discuss the aforementioned emerging challenges and opportunities for landlocked developing countries, in addition to economic diversification, private and public partnerships, promotion of green economic activities and investment through the creation of a conducive business environment, the use of clean technologies, mitigation of climate change, accession to WTO, South-South and triangular cooperation, and ways to ensure greater benefits for landlocked developing countries from such international initiatives as Aid for Trade. He concluded by requesting landlocked developing countries to sign and ratify, at their earliest convenience, the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, the headquarters of which would be located in Ulaanbaatar, in order to bring the Agreement into full operation. He invited the World Bank, regional development banks, organizations of the United Nations system and other interested parties to support the think tank.

29. The representative of Brazil underscored the importance of tackling issues of concern to countries in special situations. He emphasized that there must be

intensified efforts to integrate landlocked developing countries into the global economy by providing them with the tools necessary to participate fully in the multilateral trading system. Such action would require additional commitments from developed countries and international organizations in the areas of infrastructure financing, trade facilitation, capacity-building, transfer of technology and enhanced market access for the products of landlocked developing countries.

30. The representative of Ethiopia indicated that the current session marked the beginning of a significant phase in the preparations for the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries. He considered that the Conference offered an opportunity to build upon efforts made to implement the Almaty Programme of Action by identifying gaps and challenges and exploring strategies for the effective advancement of the priorities of landlocked developing countries. He added that the outcome document should have a holistic approach and consider the full range of development challenges faced by those countries, focusing on structural transformation, enhancement of productive capacity, diversification and value addition, international trade and trade facilitation, transit issues, development and maintenance of infrastructure, regional integration and cooperation, and means of implementation with a view to formulating and effectively realizing the new programme of action. In conclusion, he emphasized that landlocked developing countries should ensure that their priorities were also effectively addressed in the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals.

31. The representative of Azerbaijan highlighted the importance of the Almaty Programme of Action in providing a valuable framework for meeting the special needs of landlocked developing countries, with a particular emphasis on the development of transit potential and the improvement of transport and communication routes. He drew attention to the various constraints deriving from the landlocked location of his country. He highlighted the significance of the benefits extended under the Generalized System of Preferences to landlocked developing countries and stressed that his country had not been qualified to benefit from preferential treatment by the European Union and Canada since February 2014, owing to its designation as an upper middle-income country for the past three years. That decision had negatively affected the economic diversification and non-oil export promotion efforts of the country. Reconsideration of the decision was deemed desirable.

32. The representative of the United States of America, while underscoring the progress achieved by landlocked developing countries in the social and economic arena, stated that it was important for the global community to hear from those countries with regard to their priorities. The Almaty Programme of Action process had been notable for its focus on core issues that affected the development of the landlocked developing countries, and he emphasized the need to preserve the strength of the landlocked developing country process alongside other continuing multilateral development discussions, including those relating to the post-2015 development agenda. He made three main recommendations. First, landlocked developing countries should pursue debt sustainability measures and an environment conducive to private sector growth, public-private partnerships and domestic and foreign resource mobilization. Second, attainment of access to functioning debt markets would enable landlocked developing countries to undertake the investment essential for economic diversification and expansion of productive capacity and to

connect with global markets. Landlocked developing countries would need to establish strong fiscal and stable positions to be able to mobilize diversified and stable tax revenue and to access external debt financing. Third, he encouraged innovative thinking regarding paths to structural transformation. While noting that it was important for landlocked developing countries to pursue conventional opportunities that were dependent on physical infrastructure and industrialization, he encouraged them to exploit economic opportunities that were less dependent on the geographical movement of goods, such as those available in the information and communications technology and service sectors. Noting that the Almaty Programme of Action reflected the significance of dialogue between the public and private sectors, emphasized the removal of trade barriers and recognized that bilateral and regional cooperation were key to promoting transit transport systems, he stated that more remained to be done and that the international community could usefully recommit itself to taking on those challenges.

33. The representative of China underlined the importance of the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries as an opportunity to build upon the achievements of the Almaty Programme of Action and to reach an international consensus on a renewed commitment to assisting the development of the landlocked developing countries. She reaffirmed her country's support for landlocked developing countries and pledged that it would participate actively in the Conference and its preparatory process. She expressed the hope that the review process of the Almaty Programme of Action would be transparent and that the practices and views of landlocked and transit developing countries would be taken into full account so as to provide a sound basis for the new programme of action. She emphasized that the new programme of action should set as a priority the promotion of solidarity and cooperation among countries with a view to achieving balanced and sustainable development and inclusive growth. Her country had been making vigorous efforts to support the development of landlocked developing countries within the framework of South-South cooperation, and would continue to provide assistance to those countries to the best of its ability in areas relating to people's livelihoods, such as food security, building of infrastructure, cultural activities, education, health care and clean water well drilling. She also expressed the hope that there would be further cooperation with landlocked developing countries and transit countries under the new strategic framework of the Silk Road economic belt and maritime Silk Road.

34. The representative of Turkey drew attention to the geographical challenges faced by the landlocked developing countries, indicating that it was important for the international community to provide assistance to promote accelerated development efforts in such countries, including measures aimed at building capacity and scientific and technological innovation. He highlighted the support provided by Turkey for the establishment of a technology bank for the least developed countries. Turkey would provide all possible support to the landlocked developing countries to enable them to realize the three principles of sustainable development: economic growth, social development and environmental protection.

35. The representative of Afghanistan expressed the belief that overcoming the challenge of landlockedness was very much reliant on a spirit of partnership and cooperation, in particular between landlocked and transit developing countries, both of which were crucial for achieving socioeconomic development objectives. Regional cooperation initiatives had been crucial for bilateral and multilateral

collaboration aimed at building and enhancing genuine partnerships for overcoming the impacts of landlockedness. Regional cooperation had provided opportunities to make optimal use of the resources of the region for the benefit of neighbouring countries; such cooperation brought down barriers and created borders with a human face. He underscored the need to provide more and greater opportunities through more and greater regional economic integration and cooperation in order to develop regional infrastructure networks, enhance competitiveness, increase imports and exports and maximize the benefits of trade facilitation and normalization.

36. The representative of Zimbabwe stressed that a broader and holistic approach was required to meet the special needs of the landlocked developing countries. He noted that the post-2014 programme of action should help the landlocked developing countries to better harness their trade potential and enable them to join global value chains. Other areas that should be addressed by the programme of action included enhancement of productive capacity; diversification and value addition; infrastructure development and maintenance; agricultural production, industrialization and manufacturing; and innovation, technology and entrepreneurship. He stressed that international support, in particular official development assistance, technical assistance and other forms of financial assistance, continued to be required.

37. The representative of Botswana underlined that there were numerous constraints to the economic growth of landlocked developing countries, including high transportation costs; lack of diversification in their economies; their vulnerability to external shocks, in particular to climate change; food insecurity; and drought, desertification and land degradation. He therefore underscored that the overall sustainability of their economies would require a robust new programme of action that would take over from the Almaty Programme of Action and take on new and emerging challenges. He recalled that the outcome of the Conference should also feed into the post-2015 development agenda in order to tackle the challenges of poverty reduction, employment creation and sustainable economic growth facing landlocked developing countries.

38. The representative of the Niger reiterated his country's commitment to the principles and objectives of the Almaty Programme of Action and expressed the wish that the new programme of action focus on infrastructure development and maintenance, trade facilitation, support for regional integration, strengthening of human and institutional capacities, and the setting up of efficient partnerships, in the context of a holistic approach that took into account opportunities and challenges. He emphasized that the new programme of action should be reflected in the post-2015 development agenda.

39. The representative of Japan highlighted that, while developing countries should take the primary responsibility for their development, their efforts should be complemented by strong and sustained commitments from global partners. He emphasized that Japan supported the adoption of a comprehensive approach in the new programme of action, but that its core concern should continue to be the unfinished business of trade and infrastructure. To solve the transit transportation problem, the efforts of entire regions that surrounded landlocked developing countries, in addition to those of the landlocked developing countries themselves, were necessary. In connection with the border transit problem, Japan welcomed the Bali package agreement, the implementation of which would contribute to a

significant reduction in the cost of customs clearing. He also emphasized that the new action plan should focus on the unaddressed challenges of governance and the rule of law.

40. The representative of the Republic of Moldova highlighted the priority areas from his country's perspective. He stated that continuing improvement of the transit infrastructure for road and rail transportation was important for the landlocked developing countries. The focus on the facilitation of border crossing was equally important and his country was implementing a green corridor project for the border crossing points and had activated bilateral cooperation for facilitation at the border, including joint border control. The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement was also important for the landlocked developing countries, as was enhanced regional integration. His country would sign an association agreement with the European Union on 27 June 2014; the agreement was aimed at establishing the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area between the European Union and the Republic of Moldova. His country also supported the development of the Black Sea transport corridors.

41. The representative of Bhutan noted that progress in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action had been uneven and that a holistic and results-oriented outcome was therefore both important and necessary. He suggested that the outcome document should include the priority areas of the Almaty Programme of Action, which remained valid and relevant. He stressed that there was a need to adopt a holistic and broader approach towards taking on the development challenges of landlocked developing countries. In that regard, structural transformation of their economies and building their productive capacities were key to their development, and should be included in the outcome document. He underscored that the new programme of action must focus on issues of direct relevance and benefit to the landlocked developing countries and that it should seek to tackle the specific challenges that they faced. In addition, the new programme of action must be underpinned by a strong and robust partnership that provided for strong international support measures from the international community. He emphasized that the programme of action should encompass the following specific areas: support for building productive or supply-side capacity in order to diversify and enhance the value of the exports of the landlocked developing countries; aid in the form of technology transfer, which would enhance productivity in the industrial sector; support for soft infrastructure skills, such as information systems and other trade promotion institutions; support for trade-related physical infrastructure, such as dry ports and improved connectivity through transit countries; promotion of entrepreneurship as an important area of intervention for the global community to build sustainable societies and economies in landlocked developing countries; simplification, standardization and harmonization of the procedures and documents for the exports of landlocked developing countries to developed and other developing nations; and removal of technical barriers to trade and provision of assistance in ensuring compliance with standards, which would contribute significantly towards increasing the trading opportunities of landlocked developing countries. He also emphasized that, given that the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries would be held before the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, it was important for the priorities of the landlocked developing countries to be highlighted.

42. The representative of Kyrgyzstan noted the challenges faced by the landlocked developing countries, which emanated from their geographical location. The Almaty Programme of Action had been aimed at dealing with those challenges and, although progress had been made in its implementation, a wide range of its aims had proved difficult to achieve and new challenges and threats had emerged. He stated that the following key areas should be included in the new programme of action: improvement of transport infrastructure; creation of a development fund for the landlocked developing countries; development of international corridors and dry ports; improved access to innovation and information and telecommunications technologies; simplification of trade procedures; diversification of the economy; and addressing of climate change issues.

43. The representative of Kazakhstan observed that landlocked developing countries had made important strides since they had begun implementing the Almaty Programme of Action. In view of the emerging challenges, however, there was a need for the international community to come up with new strategies that could support the full integration of those countries into the global economy and trading systems. In that context, she emphasized the need to accelerate access to global markets for the goods and services of landlocked developing countries.

44. The representative of Uzbekistan underlined that, during the past 10 years, Uzbekistan had worked extensively on the development of its transport and transit potential. It had actively participated in various regional programmes for the development of trade and transit. In particular, within the framework of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation programme, under the auspices of the Asian Development Bank, extensive work conducted on the development of economic corridors in Central Asia had contributed to the simplification of transit procedures. About 20 international transport corridors between Europe and Asia passed through Uzbekistan, connecting also the north and south of the Eurasian region. Uzbekistan was a member of 12 of the most important international conventions and agreements on the development and facilitation of transit and customs procedures. Work on accession to other conventions was continuing. He noted that effective cooperation with neighbouring countries was important for landlocked developing countries. The first railway in Afghanistan, which was 80 km in length, had been built by the State joint stock railway company in 2010. The railway was now operated by the Uzbek Railway Company on a contractual basis. Afghan experts on rail transport were currently being trained in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan was also ready to provide its rolling stock (locomotives and wagons) for the transportation of the export cargo of Afghanistan, the volume of which had recently been increasing. In concluding, he recommended that, in the preparation of materials for the Conference, best practice in the effective interaction between the two landlocked countries should be presented.

45. The representative of Kenya underlined that, as a transit country, Kenya welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. That progress notwithstanding, both the landlocked developing countries and their transit developing partners faced myriad challenges, including poor and ageing infrastructure, low productive capacity, low levels of industrialization and vulnerability to internal and external shocks. He stated that the new programme of action should forge synergies and complementarities in support of trade expansion and trade facilitation, deal with supply-side constraints, enhance value addition and increase economic diversification. He observed that regional integration among

States members of the East African Community had promoted intraregional trade and intraregional flows of foreign direct investment. In addition, the East African Community, among other things, had increased market opportunities, connectivity through transport, energy and information and communications technology networks, and cooperation among border agencies. He expressed confidence that the new programme of action would go beyond the narrow aspect of transit and trade and focus on other priority areas, as identified by the landlocked developing countries.

46. The representative of Lesotho recalled that the Almaty Programme of Action had been a significant landmark in the recognition of the special needs and problems of landlocked developing countries. She reaffirmed that the time had come to review the progress made in its implementation, to confront the challenges met and to move ahead with the lessons learned. She underscored the urgent need to solve the challenges of infrastructure development and maintenance, integration of the transport infrastructure of landlocked developing countries with the transit transport infrastructure of transit countries, promotion of integrated information and communications networks, and capacity-building.

47. The representative of Uganda, noting that the 10-year review of the Almaty Programme of Action provided a timely opportunity to assess the progress made and the challenges still being faced and to formulate a new action-oriented programme, said that there should be more attention and a greater focus on mobilizing resources for cross-border infrastructure, especially roads and railways, given that ease of movement and the cost of transport heavily affected the volume of trade. As a landlocked country, Uganda had encountered difficulties in attracting long-term financing for infrastructure. While some of the issues of concern to landlocked developing countries had been incorporated into the post-2015 discussion, Uganda considered that the new programme of action should take on the core challenges that they faced.

48. The representative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development underscored the need for landlocked developing countries to pursue deliberate and targeted policies aimed at enhancing their participation and gainful integration into regional and global commodity value chains, given the considerable potential in terms of growing demand and supply for specific commodities and products of export interest to them at the regional level. Effective participation in regional commodity value chains would provide a stepping stone for landlocked developing countries to participate in and link to global value chains. In view of the increasing importance of the commodities sector, landlocked developing countries should strive to define long-term visions that linked the commodity sector to national development strategies. By ensuring that the role of commodities was incorporated into national development strategies, landlocked developing countries would increase the likelihood of maximizing the potential of the sector in order to avoid a repeat of the jobless growth without structural transformation experienced during the previous decade. A more holistic approach that incorporated a development perspective and took into account the role and functions of commodities in economic growth and poverty reduction was required. He added that regional cooperation provided important avenues for landlocked developing countries to harmonize and coordinate policies in order to build their productive base, accelerate structural transformation and enhance their socioeconomic development. Particular attention should therefore be paid to a development-led

approach to regional integration, which required not only a coordinated set of policies to collectively address structural vulnerabilities but also greater provision of regional public goods, namely, hard and soft infrastructure, energy and telecommunications networks. In that context, regional development banks were particularly suitable sources of finance for key investment in regional public goods. In conclusion, he stated that a new programme of action should provide a comprehensive set of actions and commitments to tackle the development challenges of landlocked developing countries.

Annex

Attendance

States Members of the United Nations

Afghanistan, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Chad, China, Colombia, Cyprus, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Paraguay, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Singapore, Swaziland, Sweden, Tajikistan, Togo, Turkey, Uganda, United States of America, Uzbekistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe

Non-member States having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly

Holy See

State of Palestine

United Nations bodies

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Specialized agencies

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Intergovernmental organizations

European Union

Major groups

International Chamber of Commerce
