

2nd United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to be speaking on behalf of the Hellenic Republic. I would like to begin my remarks by commending the active role of the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, H.E. Ambassador Acharya, both in sensitizing the international community to the multi-faceted challenges that the LLDCs face, as well as in promoting, within the UN, international cooperation aimed at addressing them efficiently. In addition, I wish to express my appreciation for his competent leadership that made possible the exemplary organization of this Conference.

I would also like to thank the Host country, Austria, for organizing this Conference in Vienna.

I also wish to express condolences for the loss of the President of Zambia, chair of the Group of the LLDCs.

I very much welcome the opportunity to address the Second Conference on LLDCs. This 10-year Review Conference on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action serves as an opportunity to reinforce our existing partnerships and forge new ones, in order to find effective and targeted remedies for the particular development challenges that LLDCs face.

I would like to stress the fact that mainly thanks to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, during the last decade, many

LLDCs have improved their macroeconomic environment and have become attractive business destinations for foreign investors.

However, progress has, most unfortunately, proven uneven and unsteady. LLDCs are still ranked amongst the poorest developing countries with the lowest growth rates. For this very reason, Greece considers many of them, including Afghanistan, Armenia, Ethiopia, Moldova and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as priority countries. The bilateral development aid, that my country has granted, reflects the importance we attach to LLDCs. Despite its budgetary constraints, Greece has offered the amount of 54.98 million EURO, in the form of development assistance to LLDCs, during the five-year period 2008-2012 .

Besides, it has to be noted that Greece, thanks to its infrastructures, may play a significant role in helping the European Landlocked Developing Countries to have access to the Mediterranean Sea. Greek mercantile marine, on the other hand, helps transporting goods as close as possible to many landlocked countries around the world.

Furthermore, in its capacity as a member state of the European Union, Greece has remained strongly committed to the development agenda and put special focus on the implementation of the Almaty Plan of Action, as a means to address the particular vulnerability considerations of landlocked countries.

Mr. Chairman, our efforts need to be fully aligned with the decisions of the UN global conferences in the field of development, including Rio+20. Furthermore, we should not shy away from examining future challenges, such as sustainable development in the post-2015 era, climate change, particularly in view of the threats posed by drought, land degradation and desertification.

In this regard, my country anticipates that this Conference will establish concrete deliverables such as: 1) the comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action; 2) the identification of effective international, regional and national policies in the fields of international trade, transit transport co-operation, energy efficiency and information and communications technology; 3) the reaffirmation of the global commitment to address the specific development needs and challenges faced by LLDCs and 4) the mobilization of international support to formulate and adopt a renewed development partnership framework applicable through 2024.

Finally, regarding the means of implementation (MOIs) of the new development agenda for LLDCs, Greece favours a functional mixture of different sources of financing, including domestic sources mobilization, enhanced South-South cooperation and triangular partnerships between South-South and North countries. In this context, we would also like to highlight the importance of the private sector's contribution. We strongly believe that it needs to mobilize its capacities, give priority to addressing non-tariff barriers to trade, build productive capacities, boost trade in services, and strengthen its resilience, so as to be able to respond to emerging challenges.

Mr. Chairman, the Hellenic Republic welcomes the Vienna Conference as an opportunity for continued, close consideration of the interests of landlocked developing countries and looks forward to engaging constructively in facilitating the implementation of a new ambitious Action Programme for LLDCs.

Thank you for your attention.