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Office of the Special Adviser on Africa

Statement

by

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at the

2nd UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

5 November 2014, Vienna, Austria

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Ministers, Deputy-Ministers,
Distinguished Heads of Delegations,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to deliver this statement of behalf of Mr. Maged Abdelaziz, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

We wish to express our sympathies to the Government and People of the Republic of Zambia on the passing on of their late president Mr. Michael Sata.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

We would also like to express our profound gratitude to the Government and People of Austria for their hospitality and excellent facilities made available to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Vienna.

We wish to commend Under-Secretary General and High Representative Mr. Gyan Acharya and his team for their tireless efforts in the organisation of this conference.

Mr. Chairman,

The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa attaches great importance to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries. Half of all Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) are in Africa. These countries face severe development challenges and constraints. On top of the common development impediments that face many developing countries, landlocked developing countries on the African continent face additional obstacles arising from their lack of direct territorial access to the sea, coupled with remoteness and isolation from world markets. These countries rely on their neighbouring countries to reach global markets – a majority of which are themselves underdeveloped, with highly inadequate and dilapidated infrastructure.

Through the adoption of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2003, the international community pledged to support African LLDCs in addressing their special development challenges through ODA, FDI and Aid for Trade, among others. Though progress has been made in the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action over the last decade, evidence shows that African LLDCs receive less external resources than LLDCs in other regions. This is regrettable, given the mammoth development challenges facing them.

As called for in the African Union's Agenda 2063 which is to be adopted at the forthcoming Summit of the African Union in January in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, increased international resources will be needed to help African LLDCs address their development challenges, including the huge deficit in infrastructure.

Mr. Chairman,

Infrastructure development and regional integration, which were recognised as priorities in the Almaty Programme of Action are also important priorities in the African Union's Agenda 2063. African countries, including LLDCs have made considerable progress in the last ten years in scaling up investment in infrastructure, including regional infrastructure projects necessary for regional integration. According to the NEPAD Agency, the bulk of the funding for investment in infrastructure has come from domestic sources, with traditional partners and the New Emerging Development Partners contributing roughly 40 per cent.

Despite this progress, substantial amount of resources will be required to close the funding gap. According to the World Bank, rough \$90 billion will be needed per annum over the next 10 years to close the infrastructure deficit. Therefore, the New Programme of Action should include a strong commitment from the international community to support infrastructure development in African LLDCs. This will be critical to helping African LLDCs overcome their disadvantages associated with their geographic isolation.

Mr. Chairman,

As underscored in previous United Nations conferences, an effective follow-up and monitoring will be crucial to the successful implementation of commitments made here at Vienna. At the global level, the United Nations has an important role to play in monitoring the implementation of the new Programme of Action. We recognise the importance of using existing monitoring mechanisms, including the United Nations Monitoring Mechanism (UNMM) established by the General Assembly resolution 66/293 of October 2012 to monitor

implementation of commitments made towards Africa's development and, which is vested in the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa.

Over the last ten years, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa has provided vital support to OHRLLS in the follow-up and implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action as well as the commitments of the Istanbul Programme of Action. We intend to continue to support them in the follow-up and implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action.

The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa will utilise the Inter-Agency Task Force on African Affairs which it convenes at the principal level to ensure a coherent and coordinated follow-up and implementation of the new programme of Action for the LLDCs.

I thank you for your attention.