

Statement
by the Representative of the Republic of Korea
at the Second UN conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

November 4, 2014

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary General,

Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

The Republic of Korea welcomes this opportunity to take part in the Second UN Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries. On behalf of my government, I thank the Republic of Austria for hosting this ten-year review of the Almaty Programme of Action. I would also like to express my appreciation to the representatives of States and the UN Secretariat for their contributions in drafting the new Programme of Action for landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) for the next decade.

Mr. President,

The First UN Conference on LLDCs held ten years ago in Almaty has succeeded in raising awareness of the challenges facing landlocked developing countries and placing measures to address their special needs high up on the development agenda. It has also built broader consensus on the necessity of establishing differentiated strategies and international partnerships for LLDCs.

As reported in the ten-year review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action submitted by the Secretary-General in July, notable progress has been made in strengthening cooperation between LLDCs and transit countries to promote their trade opportunities. Transport infrastructure in LLDCs and transit countries has improved with an increased influx of key financial resources such as ODA and FDI. As a result, economic growth and trade volume in 32 LLDCs have shown encouraging signs of improvement.

However, as we consider a new Programme of Action, we need to further reflect upon the wide disparities among LLDCs, given that only a few LLDCs account for most of the improvements while others do not enjoy the same results. Moreover, in most of the LLDCs, the relative share of manufacturing continues to decline while dependence on natural resource-based commodities remains high, preventing their effective and meaningful participation in the global value chain.

In this regard, the Republic of Korea welcomes international efforts to draft a new Programme of Action for LLDCs from 2014 to 2024 based on a thorough assessment of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. While the Almaty Programme of Action put strong emphasis on infrastructure and transit issues, the new Programme of Action is expected to propose more comprehensive objectives.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea has learned the hard way that connectivity is one of the promising conditions for prosperity. In the 1950s, our nation was not fully connected to the continent or the sea. Efforts to increase exports were compounded

by the lack of modern port facilities, and even today, Korea does not have territorial access to the Eurasian Continent due to the division of the Korean Peninsula.

From the 1960s, Korea began building infrastructure and institutions to enhance connectivity utilizing FDI and ODA. One of the major tasks of the UNDP office established in 1963 in Seoul was to modernize the Busan port. In the 1970s, having been transformed into an export-oriented economy with the help of increased connectivity, Korea took its first economic leap.

Taking our experience into account, I would like to reiterate my government's willingness to take part in international efforts to increase connectivity for LLDCs. The Korean government signed the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports, which had been adopted by UN ESCAP member states in 2013. We will continue to cooperate with member states to strengthen the logistics network in the region.

On this occasion, I would also like to mention the Eurasia Initiative, President Park Geun-hye's administrative scheme to link the energy and logistics networks across the Eurasian continent. As part of related measures, the Silk Road eXpress (SRX) that would connect rail and road networks from Korea's Busan to Europe, once established, is expected to promote the common prosperity of the Eurasian region by increasing its geo-economical value as a logistics hub.

Mr. President,

Korea's cooperation with LLDCs goes beyond enhancing geographical connectivity. Korea contributes to LLDCs' trade facilitation by increasing the

efficiency of immigration and customs clearance systems. Our government has also provided ODA to build a single window system for customs clearance and e-immigration. These measures will help LLDCs mitigate relatively high transaction costs and enjoy greater market access.

The Republic of Korea renders financial and technical support for LLDCs' structural transformation using information and communications technologies. As part of such efforts, Korea continues to deepen ICT cooperation with LLDCs in Africa, including Rwanda. Despite its remoteness from the sea, Rwanda is poised to become an ICT hub, connecting itself to the region and beyond.

Mr. President,

Although the primary responsibility for national development falls on the individual governments of LLDCs, their endeavors for the eradication of poverty and economic growth require coordinated international support. Accordingly, it is imperative that developed countries, international organizations, the private sector and LLDCs forge a global partnership to reflect LLDCs' development priorities in the Post-2015 development agenda. Furthermore, improving development effectiveness as suggested in the principles of the Busan Global Partnership is critical.

The Korean government renews its determination to do what it can to create an environment conducive to the development of LLDCs. Moreover, Korea welcomes that the international community has likewise reaffirmed its commitment to address the special needs and problems of the landlocked developing countries. We will further strengthen our partnership with LLDCs in order to help them reach

their potential, achieve development undeterred by geographical constraints, and enhance the livelihood of 450 million people in the post-2015 era.

Thank you. /END/