Media Advisory
Review of Programme of Action for Euro-Asian landlocked developing countries to take place in Bangkok

ESCAP/UN-OHRLLS/UNECE Euro-Asian Regional Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024

11-12 February 2019, Bangkok, Thailand

WHAT: A Euro-Asian Regional Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 will take place in Bangkok. The meeting will review the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries (VPoA) in Euro-Asia, including identification of the major achievements, constraints experienced, emerging challenges and the opportunities presented.

WHO: The event is jointly organized by the UN Office of the High-Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS), the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). The Review will bring together senior government officials responsible for the implementation of the VPoA and related issues of transit, trade, transport, structural economic transformation and finance from the 14 Euro-Asian* landlocked developing countries, transit countries and development partners, in addition to representatives from the UN system, international and regional organizations, financial institutions, private sector.

Key speakers will include the High Representative of UN-OHRLLS, Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, and the Executive Secretary of UNECE, Ms. Olga Algayerova.

WHEN: Monday 11 - Tuesday 12 of February 2019.
WHERE: Conference Room 4  
The United Nations Conference Centre  
Rajadamnern Nok Avenue  
Bangkok 10200, Thailand

WHY: The event will review progress made by the LLDCs in achieving the priorities of the VPoA, including transport, trade facilitation and trade, structural economic transformation and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It will identify the challenges, share best practices, experiences and innovative approaches to accelerate the implementation of the VPoA and achievement of the SDGs in the region. The two-day event will formulate appropriate policy measures and action-oriented recommendations aimed at sustaining achievements in overcoming the special problems of LLDCs and accelerating the implementation of the VPoA and achievement of the SDGs.

Background:

Lack of territorial access to the sea, isolation and remoteness from world markets and high transport and transit costs impose serious constraints on the overall socio-economic development and trade competitiveness of the 32 landlocked developing countries (LLDCs). LLDCs have to pay more than double what coastal countries incur as well as require about double the time taken by transit countries to export and import their goods. The high trade costs erode the competitive edge of the LLDCs as well as the trade volumes resulting in an enormous negative impact on their overall sustainable development. Nearing the halfway in the implementation of the VPoA, the LLDCs exhibit mixed growth in gross domestic product which declined to 2.8% in 2016, down from 5.6% in 2014. The LLDCs continue to account for less than one percent of global merchandise trade and their exports remain undiversified and comprise mainly of primary commodities. Despite the continued efforts to expand and upgrade the transport infrastructure, inadequate quality and deficiencies in the physical infrastructure remain.

Further information:

Concept Note  
Euro-Asian Regional Midterm Review  
Mid-Term Review Website

*List of Euro-Asian LLDCs: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Nepal, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Uzbekistan.

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