Media Advisory

African countries to meet in Marrakesh for review of programme of action for African landlocked developing countries

UNECA/UN-OHRLLS African Regional Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024
18-19 March 2019, Marrakesh, Morocco

WHAT: The African Regional Midterm Review meeting of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 will take place in Marrakesh. The meeting will review progress in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries (VPoA) in Africa, and identify 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 Commission for Africa (ECA). 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 16 African landlocked developing countries*, transit countries and development partners, in addition to representatives from the UN system, international and regional organizations, financial institutions, and private sector.

Key speakers will include the High Representative of UN-OHRLLS, Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa ‘Utoikamanu, the Executive Secretary of UNECA, Ms. Vera Songwe.

WHEN: Monday 18 - Tuesday 19 of March 2019.

WHERE: Barceló Palmeriae Marrakech Resort & Spa
Km 6, route de Fès
Bp 668 Guélix
40060 Marrakech
Maroc

WHY: The meeting will review progress made by Landlocked Developing Countries (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 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 point in the implementation of the VPoA, the LLDCs exhibit mixed growth in gross domestic product which declined to 4.5% in 2017, 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
African Regional Midterm Review
Mid-Term Review Website

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