Session 2: Fundamental Transit Policy Issues

* Eritrea participated in most of the previous LLDCs meetings because of solidarity among poor countries and also with the conviction that it is mutually beneficial to have cooperation between transit and landlocked states;
* The challenge for LLDCs of being landlocked is often compounded by the fact that their transit neighbors are faced with similar infrastructural, human resource and technical challenges.
* Hence, as it has been reiterated on several occasions, addressing the challenges of LLDCs requires more than tackling the limited matters related to port and transit service. It requires a more comprehensive approach for meaningful regional integration, robust international partnerships on infrastructural connectivity, enhancing technical and human capacities to address the bottlenecks regarding transit time and trade facilitation.
* The normalization of the relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia and the high-level regional cooperation agreements signed since then has provided an impetus to implement the Vienna Programme Action in the Horn of Africa and regional economic regional integration.
* The countries in the region are already moving towards concretizing those agreement. Eritrea and Ethiopia formed high-level joint committees that is working towards harmonizing policies and streamlining procedures regarding border crossings, ports and trade. Visa for nationals is abolished. Transport has been harmonized nationals from both countries between the two countries without a need for changing driving license or plate.
* High level discussion has also been held to open new corridors for South Sudan through Eritrea
* One area that needs to be enhance joint planning and implementation of regional infrastructural programs within the context of regional economic integration.