Statement by IRENA
at the High-Level Midterm Review on the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen
All Protocol observed:

Landlocked Developing Countries face a range of challenges in pursuit of sustainable development. Energy is one of them and was rightly highlighted as a priority area in the Vienna PoA. A number of delegations have made reference to it in their statements today.

In this regard, the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the VPoA notes that while the average proportion of the population with access to electricity in LLDCs has increased, from 49.5 per cent in 2014 to 56.3 per cent in 2017, LLDCs still lag behind the world average of 88.8 per cent. Renewable energy can help LLDCs to decisively tackle this energy access gap. Since 2014, the business case underpinning renewables has continued to strengthen, and renewables now represent the lowest-cost source of new power generation in most parts of the world.

The Political Declaration adopted today recognises the opportunity at hand and calls for the accelerated deployment of renewable energy in LLDCs. However, it also points to a number of barriers such as the slow pace of completion of power projects and the lack of sufficient investments.

The International Renewable Energy Agency (RENA) is fully committed to support the efforts of LLDCs in overcoming these barriers and in harnessing the vast benefits of renewables which are key to the implementation of global sustainable development and climate objectives. IRENA is already doing so through a number of tools such as Renewables Readiness Assessments (RRAs) and Roadmaps reports (REmap) which respectively identify conditions and technology pathways for countries, regions and the world to scale up renewables. RRAs have been carried out successfully in 9 LLDCs. Furthermore, policy advice and capacity building are carried out through several regional action plans in regions such as Central Asia and Central Africa. It is also worth noting that projects in four LLDCs received concessional loans from the IRENA-ADFD Facility which supports renewable energy projects in developing countries.

IRENA is now moving towards further strengthening its support to countries on the ground to mobilise investments and scale up projects, through new partnerships and initiatives.

The Climate Investment Platform initiative announced at the Climate Action Summit last September, brings together initially IRENA, UNDP and Sustainable Energy for All, in coordination with the Green Climate Fund, as well as many other partners, to support countries in enhancing their NDCs and to facilitate access to de-risked financial resources. It should begin operations next January.
Finally, IRENA is also moving to strengthen its cooperation with the United Nations in support of LLDCs. Last September, the Director-General of IRENA and the UN High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDSs signed a Memorandum of Understanding to step up cooperation regarding the implementation of the energy component of the VPoA.

We look forward to working with LLDCs towards accelerating their transition to a sustainable energy future.