



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. THANA DUANGRATANA, SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF THAILAND, AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE COMPREHENSIVE HIGH-LEVEL MIDTERM REVIEW OF THE ISTANBUL PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (Antalya, Turkey, 27 May 2016)

Mr. President,

1. I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

2. At the outset, please allow me to express, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, our gratitude to the Government and the people of Turkey for hosting and organising the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the Decade 2011-2020. We appreciate the warmth and hospitality provided to all delegations by the Government and the people of Turkey.

Mr. President,

3. With 47 out of 48 countries officially listed as LDCs being members of the Group of 77, we cannot overemphasize how important this Comprehensive Midterm Review is for the Group.

4. The Group of 77 and China are of a strong view that this Midterm Review comes at a crucial moment in time. In embarking on our journey during the second half of this decade to implement the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, we have, at the backdrop, our commitments made during the course of 2015, namely the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the third International Conference for Financing for Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework for Combating Climate Change (UNFCCC). We must bear in mind our common objective of eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions in our endeavour towards sustainable development for all, in particular, for the LDCs during the deliberations over the next three days.

5. As we gather here today, we must take stock of where we are in terms of the implementation of the IPoA in a comprehensive manner. In doing so, we must aim to address the obstacles and the emerging challenges that have become barriers in the development efforts of the LDCs; to identify ways and initiatives that can help us to overcome these challenges; and to overall refocus and redirect our efforts with adapted methods of work to ensure that LDCs, a key constituency of the Group of 77, can reach the target of graduation at the soonest.

Mr. President,

6. Many LDCs are still heavily dependent on official development assistance (ODA). After the worrisome trend of declining ODA for several years, we are encouraged by the recent rebound in ODA to LDCs. The Group of 77 and China further call on all development partners to provide 0.20 per cent of their GNI to LDCs, as committed. We also call on the developed countries to allocate 50 per cent of their ODA to LDCs.

7. The Group of 77 and China would like to express its appreciation to the Government of Turkey

for also hosting the United Nations Technology Bank for LDCs in Gebze which will be fully operationalized by 2017. In this regard, we voice our support to the LDCs' request for allocating 0.1 per cent of ODA for LDCs to this Technology Bank for its sustainability.

8. With the global trade share of LDCs on the decline, the Group is of the view that fulfilling the commitments of the WTO Ministerial Decisions for duty-free, quota-free market access for all products from all LDCs and LDC friendly rules of origin regime are urgently needed to reverse this situation. In addition, fulfilling those commitments will also contribute towards the achievement of IPoA target of doubling the share of LDCs in global export. In this regard, it is important that at least 50 per cent of the Aid for Trade by development partners is allotted to LDCs.

9. In this regard, the Group of 77 and China call for the lifting of and total elimination of unilateral economic measures imposed on developing countries including on the LDCs, which have negative impacts on the development and prosperity of those countries and adversely impact the efforts towards their graduation.

10. We are also concerned at the minimal representation of LDCs in the global economic and financial architecture. Without effective and meaningful participation of LDCs at the decision-making platforms of international financial institutions, they will never be able to overcome their marginal situation and merge in the global economic and financial scenario in a substantive manner.

Mr. President,

11. The Group of 77 and China would like to take this opportunity to express its strong and unequivocal commitment to the LDCs. Through South-South Cooperation initiatives, the Group demonstrates the strong support to the LDCs in areas such as human and productive capacity-building, technical assistance and exchange of best practices, particularly on issues relating to health, education, professional training, agriculture, environment, science and technology, trade and investment, among others. With strong support from all of us, and with coordinated actions, we are confident that the LDCs will be able to overcome their structural weaknesses. In this light, we are hopeful that half of the LDCs will meet the graduation criteria by 2020, as was envisioned during the Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs in Istanbul in 2011.

Mr. President,

12. The Group of 77 and China would like to once again express our solidarity with our LDCs friends and our commitment to provide support to them in their efforts in the implementation of the IPoA as well as the 2030 Agenda in order to make their development gains sustainable, inclusive and meaningful.

I thank you.