



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MRS. DIEDRE MILLS,
PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 55:
GROUPS OF COUNTRIES IN SPECIAL SITUATIONS, IN THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 10 November 2005)**

Mr Chairman,

On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for the Reports submitted to facilitate our discussion on the agenda item concerning Groups of countries in special situations and the High-Representative for presenting the Reports. We welcome the opportunity to review the implementation of the Brussels and Almaty Programmes of Action in favour of the least developed and landlocked developing countries, respectively. The commitment to fully and effectively address the concerns of these groups of countries was reaffirmed by Heads of State and Government at the High-level Plenary Meeting of September. We are therefore mandated to give further impetus to the action to be undertaken in this regard.

Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

Mr Chairman,

The Secretary-General's Report contained in document A/60/81 which was also the subject of discussions during the substantive session of the ECOSOC in July indicates that despite significant progress by some LDCs, as a group they continue to fall short of the goals of the Brussels Programme of Action and its objectives of eradicating poverty. This is particularly striking in what has been a momentous year for the review of the major outcome of UN conferences and summits.

The three major obstacles to further progress as identified in the Report are country ownership, capacity and resources. All three are inextricably linked – the preparation of national development strategies is dependent on the extent to which concerned countries have the requisite expertise and resources to prepare and fully implement such strategies. It is clear, as noted in paragraph 71 of the Report, that there is an urgent need to strengthen the partnership between the LDCs and their development partners. Developed partners need to expeditiously fulfill their commitments on ODA, trade, technology and debt relief to enable LDCs to achieve the goals of the Brussels Programme of Action. There have been positive developments in recent months but there is still scope for further action. Developed countries that have not yet done so should reach the 0.20 per cent target of their GNI as ODA to the LDCs and all development partners should align their support to the national development strategies of the LDCs, aimed at achieving the goals and targets as contained in the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

Such actions are necessary for the full and beneficial integration of LDCs in the world economy. If the current incidence of poverty continues to increase unchecked we run the risk of not achieving the objectives of the BPOA. The forthcoming WTO Ministerial Meeting provides an important opportunity for real action to be taken to address the needs of the LDCs in the multilateral trading system. Special attention will have to be given to the issue of duty-free and quota-free access to all products originating from all LDCs to the markets of developed countries and to ensuring that the principle of special and differential treatment permeates the negotiations and final outcome of the deliberations in Hong Kong. We expect the international community to support measures and initiatives aimed at strengthening the productive capacities and accelerating economic growth and sustainable development of Least Developed Countries which are impeded by various structural and supply-side constraints. We also emphasize the importance, in the context of strengthening and the achieving of universality of the World Trade Organization membership, accelerating the accession process for LDCs applying to the WTO.

We believe that there is a critical role for the UN development system to play in advancing the specific time-bound and measurable goals of the Brussels Programme of Action to be able to measure progress in planning, policymaking, institutional reform and resource mobilisation. We support recommendations aimed at advancing this objective through an integrated and coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of major UN conferences and summits. We look forward, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/244 and paragraph 114 of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, to the comprehensive review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action during the sixty-first session of the General Assembly in 2006. As we suggested during the consideration of the issue during the substantive session of the ECOSOC in July, the Secretary-General should undertake consultations with Member-States, the UN System and all

relevant stakeholders, with a view to assisting the LDCs in preparing their reviews at national and regional levels. While we acknowledge the positive steps to date, we also recommend that the methodological structure of the annual progress report be further improved with a greater focus on results, performances and analyses to provide a more practical assessment of the progress achieved by the LDCs and their development partners.

Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action

Mr. Chairman,

The particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries continue to merit special attention. Against this background, the Almaty Programme of Action takes on particular importance. It provides a much needed global framework for partnership to undertake specific actions aimed at establishing efficient transit transport systems in these countries.

The significance of undertaking necessary action in this regard is magnified when one considers that landlocked developing countries are generally among the poorest of developing countries, with the weakest growth rates and social development records. The dire circumstances of these countries are well known- they face mounting debt problems, limited foreign direct investment, increased marginalization in world trade and excessive transaction costs due to their lack of access to the sea, remoteness and isolation from world markets.

The Secretary-General's Report (A/60/287) provides a comprehensive overview of the many activities being undertaken in accordance with the Almaty Programme of Action. Such positive developments are welcomed. It is obvious, however, that much more needs to be done to achieve the objectives of the Programme of Action. These are clearly reflected in the conclusions and recommendations reflected in paragraphs 70 to 77. Reducing transaction costs and the establishment of efficient transit transport systems require closer and more effective cooperation and collaboration at national, regional and international levels. We are particularly pleased, therefore, with the recommendation in paragraph 74 of the need for the UN system to intensify efforts on a methodology to measure the progress in establishing efficient transit transport systems.

Further progress will also be dependent on the provision of adequate resources both through increased ODA to landlocked developing countries and voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund established to facilitate the follow-up to and implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action. We call on donor countries and the international financial and development institutions to make such contributions.

Another important dimension of addressing the needs of landlocked developing countries is that of making the multilateral trading system more responsive to their particular concerns and needs. These have been fully elaborated in the Asuncion Platform for the Doha Development Round adopted in Paraguay in August 2005. It draws attention to the need to address issues concerning trade facilitation, market access, capacity-building and small and vulnerable economies. We expect that the concerns of landlocked developing countries will be fully addressed in the forthcoming WTO Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong.

Before concluding Mr Chairman, I wish to recognize the efforts of the UN Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, in particular Mr Anwarul Chowdhury, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative, in increasing awareness to the special needs of these countries. We request the Office, in accordance with its mandate, to further mobilize and coordinate international support and resources, including through comprehensive advocacy strategies to further the objectives and goals of the respective Programmes of Action.

Thank you.