



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

23 May 2016

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to transmit herewith a letter, dated 20 May 2016, from H.E. Ms. Bénédicte Frankinet, Permanent Representative of Belgium and H.E. Mr. Jean-François Régis Zinsou, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Benin, the co-facilitators of the inter-governmental consultations on the preparatory process of the comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

In this regard, I am honoured to share with Member States a copy of the draft outcome document (attached to the co-facilitators letter), for endorsement at the comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in Antalya, Turkey, 27-29 May 2016. Please note that draft outcome document, as agreed ad referendum, is now under silent procedure until 24 May 2016, at 12:00 pm New York time.

I thank all delegations for their active participation in and valuable contribution to the consultations. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my thanks, and that of my Office, to the co-facilitators for ably facilitating the consultations on the draft outcome document.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mogens Lykketoft', written in a cursive style.

Mogens Lykketoft

To all Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



20th May 2016

Excellency,

We have the honour to refer to the letter of 5 November 2015 from the President of the General Assembly informing you about our appointment as co-facilitators to conduct inter-governmental consultations of the General Assembly's midterm review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of Istanbul, to be held in Antalya, Turkey, on 27, 28 and 29 May 2016.

With reference to the Outcome document for the Comprehensive High-Level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, please find attached a copy of the draft document, which has been negotiated by Member States in a series of informal meetings. This draft of the Outcome document is subject to silent procedure until 24 May 2014 at 12:00 pm, New York time.

We wish to convey our deep gratitude to colleagues for their constructive engagement throughout consultations in order to find a compromise. We hope that this draft can be accepted by all Member States so that we can realize this important Review for the Least Developing Countries and their development partners.

Please accept, Excellency, assurances of our highest consideration.

H.E. Mrs. Bénédicte Frankinet
Co-Facilitator
Permanent Representative of Belgium
to the United Nations

H.E. Mr. Jean-François Régis Zinsou
Co-Facilitator
Permanent Representative of Benin
to the United Nations

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Draft Political Declaration
Comprehensive High-level Midterm review of the Implementation of the
Istanbul Program of Action
for LDCs

1. We, the Heads of State and Government and High Representatives participating in the Comprehensive High-level Mid-term Review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the decade 2011-2020, gathered here in Antalya from 27 to 29 May 2016, to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, to share best practices and lessons learned and identify obstacles and constraints encountered and actions and initiatives needed to overcome them, as well as new challenges and emerging issues to reaffirm the global commitment to address the special needs of the LDCs made in Istanbul and to further strengthen the global partnership for development for LDCs in all priority areas of the Istanbul Program of Action in order to ensure the timely, effective and full implementation of the Programme of Action during the remainder of the Decade, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development supports and complements it and helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, the Paris Agreement adopted by Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.
2. We recognize the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review as an opportunity to highlight the concrete measures, initiatives, partnerships and actions that various stakeholders have taken to date to support the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and to launch other concrete measures, initiatives and partnerships, individually or collectively, that have the potential to further progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action, building on the momentum of recent and relevant United Nations meetings, agendas and conferences, and the decisions contained therein.
3. We recognize that over the past few decades the world has witnessed remarkable socio-economic progress with most of the goals and targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) achieved globally. However, not all countries have fully shared in this global progress. Performances among LDCs were mixed. The majority of LDCs, which constitute the poorest and most vulnerable group of countries, were not able to achieve most of the MDGs. Many LDCs have adopted stronger policies, strengthened governance, achieved substantial gains in reducing the prevalence of extreme poverty, and improved health and education outcomes. Progress towards the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals was slowest in the LDCs in conflict and post-conflict situations; these countries require context-specific approaches, including targeted national policies and international support.
4. We recognize that despite many challenges and constraints, the LDCs represent an enormous human and natural resource potential for world economic growth, welfare, prosperity and food and energy security. Therefore, a strengthened global partnership that effectively addresses the special needs of the LDCs, including their children, youth and women will contribute to the cause of peace, prosperity, poverty eradication and sustainable development for all.
5. We reaffirm our commitment to full, effective and timely implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action. We also reaffirm our commitment to the full and timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda and our support for mainstreaming it into

the LDCs' national development policies and programmes. We also reaffirm our determination to mobilize the means required to implement this agenda through a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development, in a spirit of global solidarity, focused in particular on the eradication of poverty and promotion of inclusive growth and the implementation of social protection systems, particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable.

I. State of progress and lessons learned in the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action

6. We note that many LDCs have made considerable progress in achieving positive and sustainable development outcomes, in spite of significant challenges and constraints. For many LDCs, growth performance and prospects have been good on a sustained basis. Most LDCs have significantly increased domestic resource mobilization and use for sustainable development. National ownership and leadership at the country level is essential for sustained progress in all priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action.
7. We are concerned that, in the context of the overall slowdown in the international economy, the group of LDCs is experiencing a slowdown of their economies with growth rates falling from 5.1% in 2014 to an estimated 4.5% in 2015¹, which is significantly lower than the growth rate achieved during 2001-2010 and falls far short of the sustainable development goal target of at least 7% of GDP growth per annum in the near term, LDCs that are highly dependent on commodity exports have seen a pronounced decline in their export earnings and GDP growth.
8. We recognize that many LDCs continue to face multiple structural challenges and constraints, including, inter alia, narrow production and export bases, stagnant trade and investment flows, diminishing productivity growth, weak land and natural resource governance, and widespread poverty, hunger and malnutrition. These longstanding challenges are compounded by new and emerging challenges such as climate change, increased incidences of natural disasters and public health emergencies, conflicts, declining commodity prices, and rising capital outflows. Without a structural transformation that tackles institutional and capacity constraints, LDCs will remain vulnerable to various economic, social, and environmental shocks.
9. Continued robust external support, including through Official Development Assistance, is necessary to complement domestic resources and national policies and programs to effectively assist each LDC to address these important issues. We further recognize the important contribution of the existing preferences extended to LDCs.
10. We recognize that swift action in areas related to productive capacity, infrastructure and energy, agriculture, food security and nutrition and rural development, economy, trade and investment, good governance at all levels, and human development, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, financing for development, science, technology and innovation, migration and remittances, and resilience building are necessary to realize Istanbul Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda promise of leaving no one behind.
11. **General objectives, goals and targets:** We recognize that while the LDCs have made significant efforts towards achieving the objectives, goals and targets of the Istanbul Programme of Action, a lot still remains to be done by LDCs and their

¹ WESP 2016

development partners. There is a need to foster progress across all sectors. We reaffirm our commitment to give special attention to LDCs in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

12. **Graduation:** We congratulate those LDCs that have graduated and welcome that many LDCs are meeting the criteria for graduation and many others have expressed their aspirations to graduate. We note with concern that, since the Least Developed Countries category was established in 1971, only four countries have officially graduated. Based on current trends, concerted and revitalized efforts will be required to enable half of the LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020, as foreseen in the Istanbul Programme of Action. Particular attention should be given to the smooth transition of countries graduating from LDCs status, consistent with their transition strategy, taking into account each country's particular development situation.
13. **Productive capacity:** We recognize that increasing productive capacity leads to inclusive economic growth and social development, and is vital to the achievement of sustainable development and for building resilience. During the last five years, limited progress was achieved in production diversification and value addition as well as effective participation of the LDCs in regional and global value chains, which are critical for these countries in reversing their marginalization, building productive capacities, accelerating structural transformation and generating full and productive employment and decent work for all with quick impact on poverty eradication. This situation requires strategic policy interventions at the sub-national, national, regional, and international levels as well as at the sectorial level. In this regard, regional cooperation and integration can play a catalytic role.
14. **Infrastructure and energy:**

14.1. We stress that the development of sustainable and resilient physical infrastructure, promotion of sustainable industrialization and fostering innovation are important prerequisites for sustained economic growth and sustainable development. A significant amount of investment and technology development is essential, including through public private partnerships, innovative financing, and regional integration, and supported by appropriate and transparent national policies, practices, institutions and regulations that foster a strong investment climate. Enhanced financial and technical support by development partners for infrastructure development and management in LDCs as well as continued support for LDC efforts to strengthen the underlying investment climate, promote science, technology and innovation, facilitate the transfer of relevant skills, knowledge and technology for the development of infrastructure under mutually agreed terms also remain crucial for infrastructure development in LDCs.

14.2. We emphasize that the acute energy gap faced by LDCs is a severe constraint for their structural transformation. Access to energy is often not provided because of lack of finance, technology, infrastructure for generation and supply of energy, appropriate regulation and economic and technical skills. Skill development as well as improvement of the capacity of local enterprise to deliver quality product and services on an economically sustainable basis are also important to establish inclusive energy systems that also reach rural areas and the poorest part of the population. Addressing these issues will be crucial in providing access to affordable, reliable sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030. Such access is a key development enabler and multiplier, which can foster private sector development, strengthen productive capacity building, expand trade, and promote access to better social services and food security. Ensuring technological progress is also key to finding lasting solutions to both economic and environmental challenges, such as

providing productive employment and decent work for all and promoting energy efficiency.

15. Agriculture, food security and nutrition and rural development:

15.1. We acknowledge that progress in the development of the agricultural sector and related industries, which employs more than half of the population in most of the LDCs, is critical for sustainable development.

15.2. We recognize that low agricultural productivity and availability and affordability of safe food remain major challenges in many LDCs. Two hundred and ten million people in the LDCs, predominantly in rural areas, do not have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. Moreover, LDCs are urbanizing rapidly and the proportion of urban residents who experience hunger and malnutrition is growing. The agriculture sector in LDCs continues to be affected by structural factors such as insufficient public and private investment in physical infrastructure, in research and agricultural extension services, limited access to markets, lack of secure land tenure – particularly for small holder farmers and women –, limited capacity building, slow progress in regulatory and policy reforms, in scientific and technological development, lack of access to financial services, including insurance, poor investment climate, inadequate support to enhance the situation of women in rural areas, trade restrictions and distortions in world agricultural markets, public stockholding in a manner which adversely affect food security, as well as periodic economic shocks such as price fluctuations. We note that less than 7 per cent of total ODA going to LDCs is allocated to agriculture. Furthermore, agriculture development has been suffering from the adverse impacts of climate change, and extreme weather events, less predictable weather patterns, soil degradation, salinity intrusion, sea level rise and coastal erosion, declining water availability and degrading water quality due to increasing frequency of droughts and floods, and soil and water contamination. We reaffirm our commitment to work together to address these challenges in the LDCs. We also note that integrated water resource management and inter-sectorial approaches among water, food, and energy to increase synergies and manage trade-offs are essential.

16. Economy, trade and investment:

16.1. We are concerned that the growth rates of LDCs have fallen since 2011 and we emphasize the importance of reversing this trend. As identified by the Istanbul Programme of Action, trade and investment are major drivers of economic growth, employment generation, and structural transformation. The challenge is also one of fostering inclusive growth, including through the empowerment of all women and girls and achieving gender equality, while promoting sustainable development, as the pace of reduction in poverty has not been commensurate to the economic growth rate.

16.2. We note some improvement in market access for LDCs products in some developing countries during the last five years. We express our concern that LDCs' exports remained highly concentrated in a few primary products vulnerable to commodity price volatility and to exogenous economic and environmental shocks. The share of LDCs in world exports remained stagnant, standing in 2014 at 1.1 per cent and dropping to 0.97 per cent in 2015, a level that is far behind the objective of doubling the LDCs' share of global exports by 2020, mentioned in the Istanbul Programme of Action. We acknowledge that a universal, rules based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system is key to promoting export diversification, trade and economic growth.

16.3. We are concerned that the share of the LDCs in global Foreign Direct Investment inflows remains virtually unchanged from 2013 at 1.9 per cent while the Foreign Direct Investments in the LDCs remains concentrated in a small number of mineral-rich economies. We stress that economic diversification and a positive enabling environment for investments at all levels as well as stronger and more focused policies and measures by the LDCs, home countries of foreign direct investment, international organizations and other stakeholders can substantially increase foreign direct investment flows to the LDCs in the coming years.

16.4. We recognize that full and productive employment and decent work for all remains a central objective of macroeconomic and fiscal policies so that the benefits of growth reach all people, especially the poor, with a focus on mutually supportive strategies that lead to the rapid expansion of productive employment in LDCs and optimize the contribution of women and youth to economic growth and poverty reduction.

17. Good governance at all levels, and human development:

17.1. We recognize that, the promotion and protection of human rights, good governance, transparency, democratic participation rule of law at national and international levels, human development, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are essential to achieving peace, prosperity and sustainable development in LDCs. Since the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the LDCs have made some progress in these areas, yet considerable efforts are still needed. Several LDCs have joined the Open Government Partnership, and we welcome their commitments to making their governments more open, accountable, and responsive to citizens. Forty-two LDCs have become parties to the UN Convention against Corruption. Substantial progress towards achieving education for all at the primary level has been made including gender parity for one third of the LDCs. Nearly 20 percent of all parliamentarians in the LDCs are women. We also recognize that the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if women and girls continue to be denied the full realization of their human rights and opportunities.

17.2. We recognize that qualified and skilled human resources can make important contributions to sustainable development in the LDCs. While much progress has been made towards achieving education for all at the primary and secondary level, much more remains to be done to ensure that the over 24 million children of primary age not in school and the over 22 million adolescents of lower secondary age also out-of-school in the LDCs have access to quality education. Strengthened efforts by LDCs and their development partners are also needed to ensure that education is of good quality and that it provides all learners with the skills needed to access employment and decent work.

17.3. We also note that greater efforts are also needed to better engage and empower youth. Youth need opportunities to learn, work and participate in decision-making process and to contribute to building inclusive and peaceful societies that are free from violence. Particular efforts are needed to ensure that all youth, including girls, enjoy access to lifelong learning opportunities and equal access to quality education at all levels – early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education, as well as technical and vocational training. In this regard, we note with concern the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to, retention in and conclusion of secondary schools.

18. Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls:

18.1. We recognize that further efforts are needed to remove the barriers that women and girls face regarding gender-based violence, access to safe learning environments, quality education, criminal justice systems, health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health, safe drinking water and sanitation and equal rights with men to economic opportunities such as employment, decent work, equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, entrepreneurship, participation in trade, access to and ownership over productive resources, including land and other forms of property, credit, inheritance, natural resources and appropriate new technology. Women and girls are also more vulnerable to climate change impacts. We must work to strengthen our attention to the full and effective participation of women and girls in decision-making at all levels as well as the elimination of discrimination, all forms of violence and harmful practices against women and girls, including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

18.2. We reaffirm that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of the human rights of all people are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. We reiterate the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies.

19. Financing for development:

19.1. We recognize that significant additional domestic public resources, including at the sub-national level, supplemented by international assistance as appropriate, will be critical to realizing sustainable development and achieving the sustainable development goals. The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development goals and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda acknowledge the centrality of domestic resource mobilization underscored by the principle of national ownership and the important contribution of private investment, including FDI for the achievement of sustainable development. While the LDCs have made considerable efforts to mobilize domestic resources and attract private investment, further progress is needed.

19.2. We note that, as a result of cooperation between the United Nations, G20, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, there has been international progress in identifying and addressing the Base Erosion and Profit Shifting challenges for developing countries and ensuring that all countries, including the LDCs, can take advantage of increases in tax transparency and exchange of information, such as by implementing the new international standard of Automatic Exchange of Information.

19.3. We are also concerned by the impact that Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) are having on draining resources away from the LDCs. IFFs have an adverse impact on domestic resource mobilization and on the sustainability of public finances. The activities that underlie IFFs, such as corruption, embezzlement, fraud, tax evasion, safe havens that create incentives for transfer abroad of stolen assets, money laundering and illegal exploitation of natural resources are also detrimental to development. We emphasize the importance of working together including through increased international cooperation to stem corruption and identify, freeze and recover stolen assets, and return them to their countries of origin, in a manner consistent with UNCAC.

19.4. We recognize that international public finance plays an important role in complementing the efforts of countries to mobilize public resources domestically. For the LDCs as a group, Official Development Assistance remains the largest source of external financing. The decline in Official Development Assistance going to the LDCs during the last years was a worrisome trend and the level of 0.09 per cent of GNI

attained in 2014 remained below the relevant 0.15-0.20 per cent target to which many developed countries have committed. In that context, we take note of the four per cent real term increase in bilateral ODA to LDCs in 2015, and the projection that the proportion of ODA to LDCs will continue to rise in 2016-2019, suggesting that developed countries are reversing the decline in ODA to LDCs in line with the commitment by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development at its High Level Meeting in 2014 to reverse the declining trend of Official Development Assistance to the LDCs. We note with concern that foreign direct investment to LDCs has remained constant as share of world FDI and concentrated in a few countries and sectors. We also note the growing importance of remittances.

19.5. We welcome the recent decision by the IMF Board to increase access to its concessional resources by 50% for the poorest and most vulnerable countries.

19.6. We acknowledge the debt distress and sustainability challenges faced by some LDCs. We recognize that the long-term sustainability of debt of LDCs depends on, inter alia, economic growth, the mobilization of domestic and international resources, the export prospects of debtor countries, sustainable debt management, sound macroeconomic policies that also support job creation, and sound public financial management at all levels, transparent and effective regulatory frameworks and overcoming structural development problems.

20. **Science, technology and innovation:** We recognize that the Istanbul Programme of Action recommends that the LDCs and development partners make concerted efforts to build science, technology and innovation capacity so the LDCs can find and harness innovative solutions to sustainable development challenges and promote endogenous capacity for research and development to address the structural impediments the LDCs face to achieve sustainable development. Despite the importance of science, technology and innovation for promoting positive development outcomes, the LDCs have not made significant progress in this field since the adoption of the Istanbul Programme of Action. We are concerned that fewer than seven percent of households in the LDCs have access to the Internet, and that many LDCs lack affordable access to ICTs and that, for the majority of the poor the promise of STI remains unfulfilled, and we emphasize the need to effectively harness technology to bridge the digital divide. In this regard, we stress the growing importance of science, technology and innovation for promoting positive development outcomes including in LDCs.

21. **Resilience building:**

21.1. We are deeply concerned that due to significant capacity constraints, the LDCs are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, sea-level rise, coastal erosion, salinity intrusion, glacier lake outburst floods, ocean acidification and rise in frequency as well as by impacts of natural and man-made disasters, which further threaten food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. We are deeply worried that increase in global temperature, sea level rise, ocean acidification and other climate change impacts can seriously affect coastal areas and low-lying coastal LDCs. We are further concerned that women and girls are often disproportionately affected by the impact of climate change and other environmental issues.

21.2. We note that the Istanbul Programme of Action highlights the vulnerability of LDCs to a variety of shocks and disasters, as well as climate change, and emphasize that these vulnerabilities threaten to undermine many of the development gains the LDCs have made over the last decade. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction has recognized higher vulnerability and risk

levels of LDCs, which often exceed their capacity to respond to and recover from disasters. We reiterate that such vulnerability requires strengthened international cooperation and ensuring genuine durable regional and international partnerships to improve LDCs resilience. We also note the importance of adopting and implementing national and local disaster risk reduction strategies and plans aimed at preventing the creation of risk, the reduction of existing risk and the strengthening of economic, social, health and environmental resilience. We welcome that many LDCs have communicated Intended Nationally Determined Contributions and designed and implemented national disaster risk reduction strategies embedded in national development plans with focus on preventive measures and multi-stakeholder approach. However, their efforts have limited success so far given their capacity and resource constraints, including at the subnational level. Although most LDCs have developed some forms of social protection programmes, coverage tends to be very limited.

21.3. In this regard, we acknowledge the importance of addressing these vulnerabilities and are taking steps in various multilateral forums to build resilience to many of the “multiple crises and other emerging challenges” described in the Istanbul Programme of Action, such as the International Development Assistance Crisis Response Window from the World Bank, which helps countries respond to natural disasters and other crisis, the LDCs Fund to which donors announced contributions amounting to \$ 248 million during the 21st Conference of the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, or initiatives at the IMF such as the temporary waiver of interest rates on Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust loans and the provision of grants for debt relief under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust also play an important role building the LDCs resilience. Measures at both national and international levels need to be enhanced to mitigate and manage risks, and address the vulnerability of LDCs to various kinds of shocks and crises.

21.4. We recognize that LDCs in conflict and post-conflict situations and those experiencing political instability, or which have a State unable to deliver basic services, have specific structural challenges and require context-specific approaches, including targeted national policies and international support measures to address these challenges and to support peace building, state building activities and sustainable development. We take note of the principles set out in the New Deal by the Group of Seven Plus, countries that are, or have been, affected by conflict.

21.5. We take note of the Ministerial meeting on Productive Capacity Building held in Cotonou Benin from 28-31 July 2014, Ministerial meeting of the Asia Pacific LDCs on Graduation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda held in Kathmandu from 16-18 December 2015 and the Ministerial Meeting on Structural Transformation, Graduation and the Post-2015 Development Agenda held in Milan, Italy from 8-10 June 2015.

II. Looking forward and recommendations

22. General recommendations:

22.1. Planning at both the national and international levels is necessary to realize the concrete objectives contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action. We encourage LDCs to continue to integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action into their national and sectorial development plans and their development partners to continue to integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action into their national cooperation policy frameworks, programmes and activities, as appropriate.

22.2. We reiterate the principles that guide the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action: Country ownership and leadership, an integrated approach, genuine partnerships, result orientation, peace and security, development and human rights, equity, voice and representation, and balanced role of the State and market considerations.

22.3. We welcome that the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction underscore that the most vulnerable countries, including LDCs, deserve special attention and reflect the concerns and aspirations of LDCs and we recall the decision contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that effective linkages will be made with the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant UN Conferences and processes, including on LDCs. We underline the importance of strong synergy in the implementation of the recently adopted agendas and the Istanbul Programme of Action at the national and sub-national levels and encourage the coordination and the coherence in the follow-up of their implementation.

22.4. We also recognize that genuine, effective and durable multi-stakeholder partnerships can play an important role in advancing sustainable development. We will encourage knowledge sharing and the promotion of cooperation and partnerships between stakeholders, including between governments, firms, academia and civil society, in sectors contributing to the achievement of the sustainable development goals and in support of country-driven priorities and strategies. At the same time, we commit to pursue an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors to make the global partnership for sustainable development more effective.

22.5. We encourage national statistical capacities in LDCs to be strengthened, with the support and cooperation of the international community in order to increase significantly the use and availability of high quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by sex, age, geography, income, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, which are necessary for an efficient policy making and an effective follow-up and review. We encourage LDCs to carry out a stocktaking exercise to assess current statistics and data availability for implementation of the SDGs and Istanbul Programme of Action at the national and local levels, identify data gaps and build statistical capacity to ensure that data for statistics and monitoring of the SDGs are available and reliable. Development partners and relevant international organizations should, and the partnerships are encouraged to, provide international cooperation, including through technical and financial support to LDCs in this endeavor.

23. **Productive Capacity Building:** We recognize the importance of building productive capacity as a critical enabler for the development and graduation of LDCs and call upon LDCs and their development partners to ensure enhanced focus on policies and means to address productive capacity building. We further recognize that private capital flows particularly FDI play a complimentary and catalytic role in building and strengthening productive capacity in LDCs. We call upon LDCs to continue to strengthen the underlying investment climate and development partners to continue to provide enhanced financial and technical support to LDCs to develop productive capacities, including for enhancing the management capacity of LDCs. We note that International Financial Institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank provide capacity development to LDCs through direct technical assistance and training for country authorities and we invite them to further strengthen such support, responding to the demands and needs of the LDCs, within the framework of existing commitments, in accordance with their national development policies and strategies.

24. Graduation:

24.1. We recall UNGA resolutions 59/209 of 20 December 2004 and resolution 67/221 of 21 December 2012 on a smooth transition for countries graduating from the category of least developed countries. We underscore that LDCs' efforts towards graduation are underpinned by their ownership and leadership, as the primary responsibility for development lies with the countries themselves, but they need to be supported by concrete and substantial international partnership measures in a spirit of mutual accountability for development results.

24.2. We urge both LDCs and their development partners to undertake more concerted and ambitious efforts to achieve the aim of the Istanbul Programme of Action of enabling half the LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020. It is also important that graduation be seen, not as a cut-off point, but as a resolute move towards better and sustained economic development and virtuous and inclusive structural transformation. We emphasize that a successful transition needs to be based on a national smooth transition strategy, elaborated by each graduated country. We encourage development and trading partners, and the United Nations system to continue their support for the implementation of LDC transition strategies as well as of smooth transition for graduated countries and to avoid any abrupt reductions in either ODA or technical assistance provided to the graduated countries.

24.3. We invite development and trading partners to consider extending to the graduated country trade preferences previously made available as a result of LDC status, or reducing them in a phased manner in order to avoid their abrupt reduction, on a bilateral basis.

24.4. We recognize the importance of the reviews by the Committee for Development Policy of the graduation criteria for LDCs. We recommend these reviews be comprehensive, taking into account all aspects of the evolving international development context, including relevant agendas.

25. Infrastructure and energy:

25.1. We recall the goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action to increase total primary energy supply per capita in LDCs to the same level as other developing countries; significantly increase the share of electricity generation through renewable energy sources by 2020; and enhance capacities in energy production, trade and distribution with the aim of ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030. We recognise that financing for infrastructure and universal access to modern energy, including at sub-national level, remains a major challenge for LDCs.

25.2. We also stress that special attention should be given to LDCs throughout the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All (2014-2024), as well as within the framework of the Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All initiative, and the recently held Sustainable Energy for All Forum and the Global Infrastructure Forum with a view to ensuring the realization of the objective of access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030 and to addressing the infrastructure needs of LDCs.

25.3. We call upon the development partners to continue to support LDCs' efforts to develop the energy sector in generation, distribution and energy efficiency, including in renewable energy, other clean energy sources and natural gas, inter alia, through enhanced financial and technical assistance and by facilitating private sector investment, in accordance with national priorities and needs. We underline that

increasing substantially the share of renewable energy in the energy mix and increasing energy efficiency can support energy access in LDCs. Supporting off-grid solutions for the access to electricity is an effective and efficient way to improve the energy access situation of poor. We will work to provide adequate support and facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services to LDCs.

25.4. We will imbed resilient and quality infrastructure investment plans in our national sustainable development strategies, while also strengthening domestic enabling environments. We reaffirm our commitment to provide enhanced financial and technical support for infrastructure development in line with least developed countries' sectorial and development needs and priorities and use concessional funds, where appropriate, to catalyse and leverage other sources of funding for infrastructure development and management. We will provide technical and financial support for LDCs to translate plans into concrete project pipelines, as well as for individual implementable projects, including for feasibility studies, negotiation of complex contracts, and project management.

25.5. We recommend that all forms of finance, tools and mechanisms-domestic resources, private finance, ODA grants and other forms of international development cooperation, public-private partnerships, concessional and non-concessional loans, blended finance, special-purpose vehicles, non-recourse project financing, risk mitigation instruments, pooled funding structures and other innovative approaches-be utilized. We invite the Development Finance Institutions and the development partners to play a larger and more coordinated role in investing in infrastructure projects in LDCs, mitigating and sharing risks and ensuring guarantees.

26. Agriculture, food security and nutrition and rural development:

26.1. We support the Secretary-General's zero hunger initiative and recommend increasing sustainable and responsible investment, both domestic and international in sustainable agriculture and food security, sustainable use of water resources, including through international public and private cooperation in rural and urban infrastructure, nutrition, secure land tenure, agricultural research and extension services, access to markets and to finance, especially for small holder farmers, building irrigation facilities, technology development and transfer on mutually agreed terms, the promotion of resilient and sustainable agricultural practices and reducing food loss and waste. We reaffirm the commitment to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, and to increase the economic benefits to LDCs that are Small Island Developing States and Coastal Countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism by 2030.

26.2. We furthermore commit to supporting strong economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national, regional and local development planning, including through an integrated approach to sustainable water management and strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage. We will also endeavour to increase investments for effective actions to improve people's diets and nutrition, including in emergency situations, with particular emphasis on supporting access to safe drinking water and sanitation services.

26.3. We recall our commitment to empower women in agriculture, including through women's access to and control over land and other productive assets.

26.4. We reaffirm the need to undertake necessary measures at national and international levels to increase the agriculture productivity of LDCs. We take note of

the existing regional frameworks on emergency food reserve mechanisms and recognize the importance of food security in emergency situations and the need for building resilience. In this regard, we invite the international community to consider enhancing such cooperation at the regional level, particularly for LDCs. We will continue to explore ways to improve the effectiveness of food reserve mechanisms for dealing with humanitarian food emergencies or as a means to limit price volatility in LDCs. We recognize that commodity diversification and value addition as well as effective participation of LDCs in regional and global value chains and in international trade in agricultural products is a critical aspect of the efforts of these countries in reversing their marginalization, building productive capacities, accelerating structural transformation and generating full and productive employment and decent work for all with quick and sustainable impact on poverty eradication.

26.5. We reiterate our commitment to protect, restore and sustainably use terrestrial and water related ecosystems, including forests, halting biodiversity loss, and tackling land and soil degradation and desertification. This would generate multiple benefits including food security, improving living conditions of affected populations, eradicating poverty and contributing to peace and security while enabling LDCs to effectively mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. We will also promote sustainable consumption and production patterns including efforts to reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses.

27. Trade and investment:

27.1. We reaffirm the pre-eminence of the WTO as the global forum for trade rules setting and governance. We acknowledge the contribution that the rules-based multilateral trading system has made to the strength and stability of the global economy. We reaffirm the value of the WTO's consistent practice of taking decisions through a transparent, inclusive, consensus-based, Member-driven process.

27.2. We take note of the pledge by the WTO Members to strengthen the multilateral trading system so that it provides a strong impetus to inclusive prosperity and welfare for all Members and responds to the specific development needs of developing country Members, in particular the least-developed country Members.

27.3. We reaffirm our commitment to significantly increase the share of LDCs' trade in global trade with the aim of doubling the share of LDCs' exports in global exports by 2020, including by broadening LDCs' export base.

27.4. In that regard, we urge LDCs and their development partners to make use of existing initiatives and programs such as the relevant WTO Ministerial decisions on Duty-free and Quota-free market access for LDCs and on preferential rules of origin for LDCs, as well as aid for trade. We will increase aid for trade support, in particular for LDCs; and we will strive to allocate an increasing proportion of aid for trade going to LDCs, provided according to development cooperation effectiveness principles. We also welcome additional cooperation among developing countries to this end. We encourage LDCs to mainstream trade in their national development plans. With this in mind, we welcome the extension of Enhanced Integrated Framework (EIF) into Phase Two and, as the EIF implements the reforms agreed as necessary for its continuation, we urge members to contribute to the timely replenishment for effective implementation without any disruption of EIF between 2016 and 2023.

27.5. We urge WTO members to continue their efforts to accelerate the accession of all least-developed countries engaged in negotiations for WTO membership and welcome the 2012 guidelines for the accession of LDCs to the WTO.

27.6. We call upon all partners who are WTO members to implement all of their Ministerial decisions, especially those that are of benefit to the LDCs. We also call upon development partners to continue to provide concrete support to the LDCs for the diversification of their export base, including into dynamic sectors of world trade and in meeting the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and the Technical barriers to trade (TBT) requirements to assist them to increase their share in world trade and enhance domestic value added for exports.

27.7. We reaffirm our joint commitment to promote strategic and regulatory frameworks for foreign direct investment and other resource flows to LDCs that include vital policy areas such as infrastructure development, trade and trade facilitation, research and development and the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms.

27.8. To further investment promotion, we also recommend to establish national regulatory and policy frameworks that allow businesses to innovate, invest, and transform technology into employment and inclusive economic growth. We also call for greater LDCs commitment and scaled-up international support for regional integration in order to expand markets, to promote trade facilitation by implementing the WTO trade facilitation agreement, cross border infrastructure development, regional value chains and regional cooperation, all of which will contribute to regional stability and progress. Effective partnerships between and among governments, the private sector and civil society are particularly useful in addressing complex and inter-related challenges.

27.9. We recall the decision contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action and reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 67/220 to adopt, expand and implement investment promotion regimes for the LDCs. We welcome the decision contained in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for LDCs and the offer to provide financial and technical support for project preparation and contract negotiation, advisory support in investment-related dispute resolution, access to information on investment facilities and risk insurance and guarantees such as through the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency.

27.10. We recognize that stronger and more focused policies, activities and strategies by LDCs, the home countries of FDI, international organizations and other stakeholders, as appropriate, can help substantially increase FDI flows to LDCs. We encourage LDCs to continue to strengthen the underlying investment climate and to establish and maintain national level investment promotion facilities, and we encourage development partners to continue to support capacity building in LDCs aimed at improving their abilities to attract FDI.

27.11. In that regard, we invite the Secretary-General in his capacity as the Chair of the CEB to include the issue of investment promotion regimes for LDCs in the agenda of the Board, with a view to enhancing the overall effectiveness of the UN system support that can contribute to enhancing the flow of FDI to LDCs and the ability of LDCs to attract FDI. We further invite ECOSOC, at its next annual forum on financing for development follow-up, to discuss adopting and implementing investment promotion regimes for LDCs, pursuant to the relevant resolutions on this matter, including resolution 69/313 on the AAAA of the 3rd International Conference on Financing for Development and the mandate of the annual forum on FFD follow-up set out therein. We recall that the forum's intergovernmentally agreed

conclusions and recommendations will be fed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the HLPF.

27.12. We call on UNCTAD to continue to help LDCs attract and benefit from FDI, including through its Investment Policy Framework for Sustainable Development, its Investment Policy Reviews, Investment Guides and other investment promotion activities. We encourage LDCs to make more use of these programmes and call on development partners to continue funding them on a voluntary basis. We also invite other relevant UN agencies and international organizations to continue their support to LDCs in the area of investment promotion, as appropriate and in line with their respective mandates.

27.13. LDCs are also encouraged to utilize existing trade and investment support mechanisms. The World Bank, the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) offer several such programs that address risk insurance and guarantees as well as technical and advisory support for investment-related negotiations and dispute resolution.

28. Good governance at all levels:

28.1 We recall the objective of Istanbul Programme of Action of enhancing good governance at all levels, by strengthening democratic processes, institutions and the rule of law; increasing efficiency, coherence, transparency and participation; protecting and promoting human rights; and reducing corruption, and strengthen least developed country Governments' capacity to play an effective role in their economic and social development. Furthering participation, empowering civil society, youth and women, and strengthening collective actions will contribute to eradication of poverty and achieving sustainable development. In this context, we encourage broad LDC participation in partnerships and other international conventions and initiatives, as appropriate, such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and EITI. We also take note of the work of the Open Government Partnership. We further call on LDCs, that have not yet done so, to make domestic legislation consistent with their particular obligations as members or States parties to all relevant international agreements they are party to.

28.2 We recognize that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security, and that peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development. In this regard, we acknowledge that the development challenges posed by conflict not only impede, but can reverse decades of development gains. We thus call on LDCs, with the support by development partners, as appropriate to build necessary resilience to address the root causes of conflict in their countries and regions. We call on the international community to support LDCs, in conflict and post-conflict situations and in particular those suffering from internal and cross border violence, especially the threat coming from violent extremism and international terrorism with the view of achieving the realization of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development. We will also take measures to ensure that women have a role in peacebuilding and State-building;

29. Human and social development, children and youth:

29.1. We acknowledge that quality education and skills development provide the foundation for lifelong learning and broader human development. We therefore support the global commitment to provide quality education to all in LDCs including the poorest and most vulnerable, through to the end of secondary school and reaffirm the commitment to enhance technical, vocational and tertiary education and training, ensuring gender equality in access. We also reaffirm that investment in

human resources and institutional capacities are required to ensure a diversified and resilient economy, based on a wide range of sectors, to reduce country's economic volatility and enable countries to reap the demographic dividend. Technical, vocational and skills development programmes need to take into account the needs of local firms and generate skilled human resources which can also help them to invest in the necessary technologies for advancing in the value chain. We will continue our efforts to make further progress in ensuring gender balance in secondary and tertiary enrolment and completion. In this regard, we reiterate our call to development partners to continue to provide and encourage, as appropriate, higher education institutes to allocate scholarships and placements for students and trainees from LDCs, in particular in the fields of science, technology, business management and economics.

29.2. We recognize that today's generation of people under the age of 25 is the largest ever in history. Girls and boys, young women and young men, are key agents of change in creating a better future, and when empowered, they have great potential to advocate on behalf of themselves and their communities. We will promote and protect the rights of children and youth, ensure more opportunities for their meaningful participation and work towards ending all forms of violence and abuse against children and youth, including exploitation, trafficking, torture and other harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage. We call upon all countries to promote the engagement of children and youth as active members of the global community, now and later in life, and that no one is left behind. We call on LDCs to develop policies and programmes for supporting youth access to secondary and higher education, vocational training and productive employment and healthcare services, especially to young women and girls. We call on development partners to provide financial and technical assistance to support least developed countries' formal and non-formal education systems, policies and programmes that provide economic opportunities and productive employment to youth; and promote youth exchange programmes, including through virtual campuses and other networking mechanisms.

29.3. To enable all people to benefit from growth, we will include full and productive employment and decent work for all as a central objective in our national development strategies.

30. **Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls:** We reaffirm the essential role of gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and the realization of their human rights, full and productive employment and decent work in achieving sustainable development. Women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, health, including sexual and reproductive health, access to finance and economic opportunities and resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment and decent work, leadership and decision-making at all levels. We will work for a significant increase in the investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions, including criminal and civil justice systems, in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at all levels. We will continue supporting the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, including through the engagement of men and boys.

31. **Financing for development:**

31.1. We recognise LDCs' efforts to enhance domestic resource generation, and we commit to support efforts by LDCs to enhance their revenue mobilization , economic growth, product diversification and domestic value addition; to broaden the tax base and continue efforts to integrate the informal sector into the formal economy in line with country circumstances; and to enhance revenue administration

through modernized, progressive tax systems, improved tax policy and more efficient tax collection and administration. We are committed to reducing corruption and increasing transparency at all levels. We reaffirm our commitment to work to substantially reduce illicit financial flows by 2030 in order to help LDCs to mobilize resources.

31.2. We reiterate that an important use of international public finance, including ODA, is to catalyse additional resource mobilization from other sources, public and private. In this regard, we take note of efforts such as the Addis Tax Initiative. We also take note of the "Platform for Collaboration on Tax" by the IMF, OECD, UN and WBG.

31.3. We welcome the work of the Committee of Experts on Intergovernmental Cooperation on Tax Matters, including its subcommittees.

31.4. We recognize that private business activity, investment and innovation are major drivers of productivity, inclusive economic growth and job creation and that private international capital flows, particularly foreign direct investment, along with a stable international financial system, are vital complements to national development efforts.

31.5. We reiterate that the fulfilment of all ODA commitments remains crucial. ODA providers reaffirm their respective ODA commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of ODA/GNI and 0.15 to 0.20 percent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries. We are encouraged by those few countries that have met or surpassed their commitment to 0.7 per cent of ODA/GNI and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries. We urge all others to step up efforts to increase their ODA and to make additional concrete efforts towards the ODA targets. We welcome the decision by the European Union which reaffirms its collective commitment to achieve the 0.7 per cent of ODA/GNI target within the time frame of the 2030 agenda, and undertakes to meet collectively the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries in the short term, and to reach 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries within the time frame of the 2030 Agenda. We encourage ODA providers to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries.

31.6. We are encouraged by those who are allocating at least 50 per cent of their ODA to LDCs.

31.7. We stress the need for the international community to remain vigilant in monitoring the debt situation of the least developed countries and to continue to take effective measures, preferably within existing frameworks, when applicable, to address the debt problem of those countries, including through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief, debt restructuring and sound debt management, as appropriate for the multilateral and bilateral debt owed by the least developed countries to creditors, both public and private. We also reiterate our commitment to work through existing initiatives such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). We reaffirm the importance of transparency in debt management.

31.8 We also recognize the significant potential of multilateral development banks and other international development banks in financing sustainable development and providing know-how.

31.9. We encourage LDCs, with support from the international community, to develop their capacities to track financial transactions, administer taxation, facilitate customs, investigate and prosecute offences to contribute for the success of efforts

to deal with illicit financial flows. We further encourage international cooperation on tax matters.

31.10. We encourage the use of and improved access, including by women and micro-sized business, to innovative tools, as appropriate, such as mobile banking payment platforms and digital payments, and recognize the role that this can have in promoting financial inclusion as well as in reducing costs, increasing transparency, improving the speed and security of payments, and opening up new markets.

31.11. Therefore we call for support for those partnerships and global alliances, such as the Better than Cash Alliance and its institutional secretariat, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), that expand the reach and adoption of such tools in support of the 2030 Agenda and the Istanbul Programme of Action.

31.12. We welcome continued efforts to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of development cooperation and other international efforts in public finance, including adherence to agreed development cooperation effectiveness principles. We will align activities with national priorities, including by reducing fragmentation, accelerating the untying of aid, particularly for least developed countries and countries most in need. We will promote country ownership and results orientation and strengthen country systems, use programme-based approaches where appropriate, strengthen partnerships for development, reduce transaction costs, and increase transparency and mutual accountability. We will make development more effective and predictable by providing least developed countries with regular and timely indicative information on planned support in the medium term.

31.13. We commit to pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors in support of these actions.

32. South-South and triangular cooperation:

32.1. We recall that South-South cooperation has an important role in least developed countries' development through its contribution to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

32.2. South-South cooperation is an important element of international cooperation for development as a complement, not a substitute, to North-South cooperation. We recognize its increased importance, different history and particularities, and stress that South-South cooperation should be seen as an expression of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South, based on their shared experiences and objectives. It should continue to be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit.

32.3. We welcome the increased contributions of South-South cooperation to poverty eradication and sustainable development. We encourage developing countries to voluntarily step up their efforts to strengthen South-South cooperation, and to further improve its development effectiveness in accordance with the provisions of the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. We also commit to strengthening triangular cooperation as a means of bringing relevant experience and expertise to bear in development cooperation.

33. Migration and Remittances:

33.1. We recognize the positive contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development. We also recognize that international migration is a multidimensional reality of major relevance for the development of countries of origin, transit and destination, which requires coherent and comprehensive responses. We will cooperate internationally to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration involving full respect for human rights and the humane treatment of migrants regardless of migration status, of refugees and of displaced persons. Such cooperation should also strengthen the resilience of communities hosting refugees, particularly in developing countries. We underline the right of migrants to return to their country of citizenship, and recall that States must ensure that their returning nationals are duly received.

33.2. We will work towards reducing the average transaction cost of migrant remittances by 2030 to less than three per cent of the amount transferred. We are particularly concerned with the cost of remittances in certain low volume and high cost corridors. We will work to ensure that no remittance corridor requires charges higher than five per cent by 2030, mindful of the need to maintain adequate service coverage, especially for those most in need.

33.3. We recognize that remittances from migrant workers are typically wages transferred to families, primarily to meet part of the needs of the recipient households and cannot be equated to other international financial flows. We will work to ensure that adequate and affordable financial services are available to migrants and their families in both home and host countries. Combining remittance receipts with broader access to other financial services can increase the impact of remittances on growth by facilitating savings and investments. We will take measures to promote productive investment of remittances, such as in micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, ensuring to engage women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries.

33.4. We will support national authorities to address the most significant obstacles to the continued flow of remittances, such as the trend of banks withdrawing services, to work towards access to remittance transfer services across borders. We will increase coordination among national regulatory authorities to remove obstacles to non-bank remittance service providers accessing payment system infrastructure, and promote conditions for cheaper, faster and safer transfer of remittances in both source and recipient countries, including by promoting competitive and transparent market conditions.

34. Science, technology and innovation:

34.1. We reaffirm our commitment to support LDC efforts to improve their capacity to develop, access and utilize critical technologies. We acknowledge that an enabling environment and relevant legal frameworks can give firms confidence to invest in advanced technologies and establish research partnerships in LDCs and provide incentives for local firms to develop or adapt their own technologies. We encourage LDCs, with support from the international community, to enhance investment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education and enhance technical, vocational and tertiary education and training, ensuring equal access for women and girls and encouraging their participation therein. We also encourage development partners to enhance support for LDC efforts to create a successful environment for developing, attracting and utilizing new technologies and building domestic capacity and knowledge base, including through financial and technical assistance and transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms.

34.2. We reaffirm our commitment to fully operationalize the Technology Bank for LDCs, in view of its potential to foster productive capacity, structural

transformation, poverty eradication and sustainable development. In this regard we take note of GA Resolution 70/216, which outlined the necessary steps to launch and operationalize the Technology Bank, funded by voluntary contributions, by 2017, and to ensure continued support for the LDC Technology Bank from all relevant stakeholders. We will avoid duplication and promote synergies between the Bank and the Technology Facilitation Mechanism launched in Addis Ababa and close cooperation on both technical and administrative matters with the UN Inter-agency Task team on Science, technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. We welcome the progress made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations towards appointing the members of the Governing Council of the Technology Bank and establishing a Trust Fund with the flexibility necessary to attract voluntary funding from Member States and other stakeholders. We emphasize that additional details about, inter-alia, the specific activities the Technology Bank will undertake, how these activities will be evaluated, and the members of the Technology Bank's Governing Council will help mobilize voluntary assistance. We invite the Governing Council, with the assistance of appropriate technical experts, as needed, and in consultation with the Member States, to draft a legal Charter to be adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, as appropriate, before the end of 2016 and to elaborate other detailed operational and policy documents necessary for the operationalization and sustainable functioning of the Technology Bank.

34.3. We stress that generous and sustained support will be crucial to ensure the success of the Technology Bank. We welcome that Turkey will host the Technology Bank for LDCs in Gebze and call upon the Government of Turkey to continue its support to the Bank. We urge developed and developing country partners, as well as international organizations, foundations and the private sector to provide voluntary financial and technical assistance to the Technology Bank to ensure its effective operations.

34.4. We recognize the importance of ensuring access of poor and excluded households and localities to adapted technologies that can facilitate entry to new markets and provide renewable energy sources, waste management, and clean water.

35. Resilience building:

35.1. We emphasize that building resilience at the national level as well as the subnational, community and individual levels is critical in sustaining hard-won development gains and accelerating progress towards achieving the development aspirations set in the Istanbul Programme of Action. More investment in the capacities and institutions of local authorities, building livelihoods, inclusive and rapid growth, disaster preparedness, application of ICTs and Science and Technology, social protection and good governance will contribute to strengthening resilience in an effective manner.

35.2. We welcome the Paris Agreement which establishes the global goal on adaptation of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change and recognizes that adaptation is a global challenge faced by all and takes into account the urgent and immediate needs of those developing country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

35.3. We welcome the fact that the Paris Agreement can play an important role in the transformation to low greenhouse gas emission and climate-resilient societies and help build resilience and reduce vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change, taking into account the urgent and immediate needs of those developing

country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

35.4. We call for effective delivery on climate change commitments and access for LDCs to all relevant climate change-related funds, as applicable.

35.5. We welcome the decisions of the Board of Green Climate Fund that aim for a 50:50 balance between mitigation and adaptation over time on a grant-equivalent basis and a floor of fifty per cent of the adaptation allocation for particularly vulnerable countries, including LDCs. We welcome the recent pledges to the LDCs Fund at the COP21 in Paris and call upon the developed countries to continue to provide support to vulnerable countries, including LDCs, to address their adaptation needs. We encourage other Parties to provide or continue to provide such support voluntarily.

35.6. We stress the importance of developing and implementing holistic disaster risk reduction strategies integrated at all levels in line with the Sendai Framework and to support national and local capacity for disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, recovery and rehabilitation. In this respect, we call for continuing the work in relevant institutions to support efforts by LDCs to build their national capacity to respond to various kinds of shocks including through funds and other tools.

35.7. We urge both development partners and LDCs to make full use of various context-specific programmes and instruments that are already in place. In some instances resilience programs may require country-level pooled funding mechanisms that provides assistance and reduces transaction costs to a particular LDC.

35.8. We underline the need to reduce the vulnerability of the least developed countries to economic, natural and environmental shocks and disasters, as well as climate change, and to enhance their ability to meet these and other challenges by strengthening their resilience, and in this regard stress that it is important that all countries and other actors work together to further develop and implement concrete measures on an urgent basis at the national and international levels so as to build the resilience of the least developed countries to withstand economic shocks and mitigate their adverse effects, to withstand and overcome the adverse effects of climate change, to enhance sustainable growth and protect biodiversity and to withstand natural hazards in order to reduce the risk of disasters, as agreed upon in the Istanbul Programme of Action.

35.9. We renew our resolve to fulfil our commitments to further implement the Istanbul Programme of Action and underscore the urgency of finding additional solutions to the major challenges facing LDCs in a concerted manner. We recognize that the way forward for crisis mitigation and resilience building requires that coordinated, balanced and integrated actions be taken at all levels, including through the strengthening of existing initiatives, with the aim of building the resilience of LDCs in overcoming their vulnerabilities.

35.10. We decide to undertake an in-depth analysis on crises mitigation and resilience building for LDCs, at national and international levels with a view to building and further strengthening the crises mitigation and resilience in LDCs and we request the GA to determine the parameters of this analysis at its 71st Session.

35.11. We stress the importance to work on conflict prevention and peacebuilding to promote social cohesion and empowering LDCs to become inclusive and resilient to external and internal shocks that could result in new cycles of violence. Conflict prevention measures with adequate early warning and risk

assessment tools can assist to avoid, or at least mitigate adverse impacts of, shocks. We express our commitment to take early action to prevent extreme violence and armed conflict by supporting and strengthening of core governance institutions, strengthening national capacities for conflict prevention and management of ongoing tensions, with civil society and marginalized communities, including women and youth, facilitating dialogue and consensus building and mainstreaming of conflict prevention and early warning in development within the UN system through conflict analysis and assessments.

35.12. We note that women and girls, especially those belonging to the poorest segments of the society, are among those who are impacted disproportionately during and in the aftermath of crises and disasters. We reaffirm our commitment to put in place gender-responsive policies and actions to address crises and disasters, including through ensuring women's full, equal and effective participation and leadership in decision-making, building their capacity for preparedness and resilient livelihoods.

36. UN System support:

36.1. We reiterate that the OHRLLS should continue to fulfil its functions to assist the Secretary-General for the effective follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the Programme of Action and the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system, with a view to facilitating the coordinated implementation of and coherence in the follow-up and monitoring of the Programme of Action for the least developed countries at the country, regional and global levels, and to assist in mobilizing international support and resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action for least developed countries. To this end, it should continue its awareness-raising and advocacy works in favor of LDCs in partnership with the relevant parts of the United Nations, as well as with parliaments, civil society, the media, academia and foundations, and to provide appropriate support to group consultations of least developed countries.

36.2. We reiterate our request to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to ensure the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system to facilitate coordinated implementation and coherence in the follow-up and monitoring of the Programme of Action at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels. The coordination mechanisms available, such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the United Nations Development Group, should be broadly utilized and the inter-agency consultative group should be kept active in this regard.

36.3. We reiterate the importance of effective linkages in the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant United Nations conferences and processes, including on least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries.

36.4. We reiterate our invitation to the governing bodies of the United Nations funds and programs and other multilateral organizations, and international financial institutions, to contribute to implement the Istanbul Programme of Action and to integrate it into their work programs, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates. These organizations are invited to participate fully in reviews of the Programme of Action at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels. We are concerned that the share of expenditure for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system in the LDCs is declining. We invite the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations development system and other multilateral organizations to prioritize allocations to LDCs, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates.

36.5. We reiterate that treating LDCs as a group on the basis of their low per capita income, human asset development and economic vulnerability remains the fundamental premise for especial measures in their favour, and that wider recognition of LDC status could stimulate and facilitate better integration of the Istanbul Programme of Action into development policies. We invite the CDP to look into the reasons and consequences of the non-application of the LDC category by some UN development system organizations and include its findings on this matter in its annual report to the ECOSOC.

36.6. We recommit to broadening and strengthening the voice and participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making and norm-setting and global economic governance. We invite the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision and other main international regulatory standard-setting bodies to continue efforts to increase the voice of developing countries in norm-setting processes to ensure that their concerns are taken into consideration. We reiterate that more effective representation of least developed countries in decisionmaking at the global level could improve the international environment for the development of the least developed countries. We also reiterate that the international economic system and architecture should be inclusive and responsive to the special development needs of least developed countries, ensuring their effective participation, voice and representation at all levels.

37. Fifth UN Conference on LDCs: We encourage the General Assembly to consider holding the 5th UN Conference on LDCs in 2021.