



Statement

by

H.E. Mr. Fawzi Salloukh

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of Lebanon

on the

High-Level Meeting on the Midterm Comprehensive Global

Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action

for the Least Developed Countries

for the Decade 2001-2010

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**Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, New York 10017**

Madame President and Distinguished Representatives,

We appreciate the holding of a high-level meeting on the mid-term comprehensive review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed countries (LDCs) for the decade 2001-2010. We believe that this meeting should come up with additional ways and means to further promote the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed countries in a spirit of solidarity, partnership and continued cooperation.

We support the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and consider that it represents a global commitment towards fostering sustainable development, sustained economic growth, poverty eradication, and environment protection in the Least Developed countries (LDCs). We believe that the concerns and developmental needs of the Least Developed countries should be given due attention and consider that the Brussels Programme of Action reflects those needs. We further consider that the implementation of the seven commitments could only be achieved through cooperation between the Least Developed countries and their development partners. We also deem that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for the sake of the LDCs could best be realized through the full implementation of the seven commitments of the Brussels Plan of Action.

Furthermore, we support the efforts made by the LDCs in the identification of the 31 goals for the further implementation of the Programme of action for the Least Developed Countries for the decade 2001-2010, and we consider them an appropriate road map for the achievement of the commitments observed by the Brussels Plan of Action. We call on all concerned parties and the development partners of the LDCs to support the allocation of the appropriate means and resources needed for the full implementation of those goals.

We consider that a people-centered policy; sustained economic growth; sustainable development; poverty reduction; good governance at the national and international level; the rule of law; respect for all human rights; including the right to development; the peaceful resolution of armed conflicts; the investment in the health, education and social infrastructure; building institutional and human capacities; protecting the environment; and building productive capacities to allow for the LDCs to reap the benefits of globalization, mobilizing financial resources, and enhancing the role of trade in development are all very essential for the development and economic prosperity of the LDCs. To that effect, we strongly encourage the facilitation of the accession of the LDCs to the WTO, as we emphasize the need to grant some preferential treatment to the LDCs' products by providing duty-free and quota free access for all LDCs products in the market of the developed countries.

We consider that debt relief could help boost the economy of the LDCs and therefore call for more important initiatives towards additional debt relief.

We stress the importance of Official Development Assistance to the LDCs' development and call upon all concerned parties to strictly observe the targets of 0.15% and 0.2% of GNP as ODA to LDCs, as agreed on in previous fora.

We are deeply concerned by the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS pandemic that is depriving those countries of their young working force, thus impacting on their economic prospects. We consider that the human and social consequences are quite alarming, and therefore we call for a global concerted effort to combat this disease and other communicable diseases like tuberculosis and malaria.

Finally, we should all work in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity in order to help the Least Developed countries achieve a sustainable economic growth.