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Statement by His Excellency Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations, on behalf of the Least Developed Countries, at the 2nd Intersessional Meeting of UNCSD (New York, 15 December 2011)

Mr. Co-chair,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Least Developed Countries. I associate myself with the statement made by the Republic of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I thank the Under Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Mr. Sha Zukang for his presentation this morning.

Mr. Co-chair,

The LDCs, attach high priority to this intersessional meeting of the upcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) as it provides us with an opportunity to exchange our views on the multi dimensional challenge of sustainable development in our countries. We are among the most vulnerable and as such one of the important stakeholders of this meeting. Therefore the discussions on the form and contents of the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference assumes special significance to us. We also look forward to a strong support for the participation of LDC delegations in all the preparatory process of the conference.

We believe that our whole exercise should pave a way towards framing up a forward looking, inclusive and result oriented outcome of the Rio+20 Conference. We should also have a holistic and integrated approach to the sustainable development in order to have a true reflection on it. The positive and sustainable impact on the livelihood of our people is key to our success. This is how we are looking at the conference.

We can contribute to its success by firstly, showing a renewed political commitment, secondly, formulating concrete action plans to deliver on Rio+20 commitments and thirdly, charting a new development paradigm for achieving sustainable human well-being and empowerment for present and future generations in an equitable and inclusive manner while also keeping in mind in particular the vital role women can play in environmental management and development, together with their full participation and gender perspective in the sustainable development process. This, what we believe, is the essence of the conference for us. We are ready to play our part in it.

Mr. Co-chair,

At a time when we are talking about a new course for sustainable development, the LDCs face disproportionate impact from multiple shocks stemming up from inner structural constraints and external crises such as food, fuel, financial and economic and climate change. This perspective is very important for us to keep in mind.

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Despite some modest achievements made since Stockholm and its successive conferences, there remains a big gap between commitments and their fulfilment. Today we face unprecedented, complex and ever more compounding challenges and we do so precipitously in the poorer countries. Despite their untiring efforts, the LDCs are unable to make substantial progress in all the three pillars of sustainable development in view of the incidence of poverty, and human, institutional and financial constraints. In this context, we should have a pragmatic and constructive analysis of achievements, constraints and lessons learned in order to enrich the discussions and accelerate the implementation of Sustainable Development Agenda more effectively and efficiently in the days ahead. The Conference and the whole process of its preparation should, therefore, ensure effective inputs from all, including from the LDCs.

We believe that in pursuing RIO+20 Agenda, we should keep the poverty alleviation and inter-generational human wellbeing at the centre of our objective. The concerns and aspirations of the LDCs should receive due priority here. The sustainable development in the LDCs requires scaled-up, continued and broad-based economic growth that is accompanied by speedy progress in all sectors of the economy. This calls for full, effective and timely implementation of all agreed commitments and plan of actions that affect them, together with an action-oriented follow-up process.

Rio+ 20 should focus among others on the following areas. LDCs should be ensured of universal access to affordable, reliable energy and related technologies, appropriate investment in water infrastructure, its management and sanitation, especially in the rural areas, financial and technical support for the enhancement of food and nutritional security and provision of high-yielding and climate resilient seed varieties and fertilizers as well as helping combat desertification and land degradation. Likewise, the LDCs also need investment in rural infrastructure; and support for sustainable development of forests and mountains and protection of biodiversity, sustainable use of marine resources, and protection from disasters and vulnerability of small islands, mountain countries, coastal countries and other vulnerable countries in the LDCs.

The landmark conventions UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD need to be effectively implemented and strengthened to promote sustainable development based on agreed principles. We are concerned at the slow pace of progress and non fulfillment of many objectives set out in these conventions. This must receive due priority in Rio+20.

Mr. Co-Chair,

We have just concluded COP 17 in Durban South Africa, with some modest achievements, even though we called for an ambitious outcome. Climate change disproportionately affects the socio-economic development of the LDCs, even though they contribute least to the problem. The adverse impacts of climate change have resulted in extreme weather events, affecting the livelihood of the people. LDCs are more exposed and vulnerable to the ever intense and frequent disasters resulting from the sea level rise and melting of glaciers.

There is no doubt that the responsibility for the development of every country rests primarily upon itself but the effective international cooperation is essential for the full achievement of its development goals. This is more so for the countries like LDCs. In this context, we underline the necessity to reinforce sustainable development globally through collective efforts based on shared goals and commitments in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities.

The outcome of the Conference should ensure providing additional, and predictable financial resources to support the sustainable development of LDCs, along with the sincere implementation of all ODA related commitments, including those contained in the IPOA. The international community should also take concrete steps to reducing and canceling debt and opening their

markets for all LDC products. Rio+20 should fully integrate the IPOA into its outcome document and underline renewed and scaled-up global commitment to achieve sustainable development.

We believe that a coherent and coordinated support for finance, technology transfer and capacity building for LDCs will be crucial to the success of the Rio +20.

Mr. Co-Chair,

With regard to the theme of a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, we are of the view that the green economy should offer new development and trade opportunities to all countries, and not become a green condition in international cooperation. The green economy should be a means to an end for sustainable development, poverty reduction and inclusive and equitable economic growth. Economic progress must be sustainable that reflect the scarcity value of natural resources; and ensures benefits to the true stakeholders.

The green economy should be used to promote and enhance the capacity in LDCs without constraining the policy space to pursue their own way of development in accordance with their own situations, and priorities. We should enhancing substantial transfer of new environmental and appropriate technology to LDCs with strong institutional support mechanisms primarily contributing to just transition, productivity enhancement, thus leading towards a low carbon, but high and equitable growth path. This should also the benefits to the indigenous people and local communities in an equitable manner. There is a need to radically change unsustainable production and consumption patterns, particularly in developed countries but also in urban centres of even developing countries as well.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The institutional framework for sustainable development should include improvement and strengthening of the relevant entities within the United Nations system that strongly support LDCs' sustainable development. The capacity of the state as well as other stakeholders needs to be enhanced, including by strengthening national and regional institutions in line with least developed countries' national development priorities. This should also ensure strengthened and effective voice and participation of LDCs in all international institutions and forums on development, as well as in decision- and rule-making and standard- and norm-setting areas affecting their development.

There is an emerging consensus to build coherence, coordination and improved service delivery systems into multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), intergovernmental bodies, the UN system and other international organisations. Implementation, integration and higher profile of sustainable development issues in order to provide stronger cooperation and support to vulnerable countries like LDCs should be ensured in Rio+20.

Mr. Chairman,

LDCs look forward to the convening of the RIO+20 with great expectation. We will assure you that we will contribute most positively to the constructive and forward looking discussions for the success of the conference.

Thank you.

