

**Statement by Ms. Sewa Lamsal Adhikari, Deputy Permanent Representative,
Permanent Mission of Nepal to the United Nations at the 6th Session of Open
Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals under the theme, “Needs of
countries in special situations, LDCs, African Countries, LLDCs, and SIDs
as well as specific challenges facing the middle-income countries”,
New York, 12 December 2013**

Mr. Co-Chair,

I am delivering this statement in my national capacity. I associate myself with the statements by Fiji, Benin and Lao PDR on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, LDCs and LLDCs respectively. My delegation congratulates both the Co-Chairs for providing excellent guidance to the meeting. We thank the panelists for their comprehensive presentation and the Technical Support Teams for providing the concept notes.

Mr. Co-Chair,

LDCs comprise the poorest, most vulnerable and weakest of countries. Despite some socio-economic progress, LDCs are most off-track in meeting the MDGs by 2015 due to their deep-rooted structural constraints and unique vulnerabilities. LDCs lack the capacity and resources to deal with the economic, social and environmental challenges they face.

Sluggish economic growth, extreme poverty and inequality, illiteracy and diseases dwarf their development efforts. They are most disproportionately affected by, and also least equipped to deal with, the challenges emanating from climate change and environment degradation. LDCs are left far behind in the path to prosperity and development.

The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPOA) clearly sets the priorities for action in order to deal with the challenges faced by LDCs. These areas include, among others, enhancing productive capacity in terms of building infrastructure, increased access to energy, development of science, technology and innovation, and private sector development, agriculture, food security and rural development, trade, human resource development, resilience building, and mobilization of enhanced level of resources. As we have clear roadmap provided by IPOA, it is high time to focus on those priorities and integrate them into the SDG framework and ensuring adequate, predictable and continued international support in all possible areas.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Let me also touch upon the challenges of LLDCs in brief. Despite the progress made in implementing the priorities of the Almaty Programme of Action, the LLDCs continue to face higher transport and trade transaction costs, high commodity dependence, limited productive capacities, and declining value addition in agriculture, manufacturing and service sectors. It is more so with the countries emerging from the conflict, such as Nepal.

These factors undermine their ability to achieve structural transformation and inhibit their effective and meaningful participation in the global economy including trade, which is an engine of economic growth. In addition, the external shocks as well as the multiple challenges including the financial and economic crisis and climate change have further aggravated their problem.

It is the moral obligation of the international community to strengthen their assistance in a sustainable and predictable manner through a genuine partnership to overcome the LLDCs' vulnerabilities and structural barriers, and build resilience. Nepal looks forward to a comprehensive ten-year review conference of the Almaty Programme of Action next year to critically consider where we stand in its implementation vis-à-vis the special needs and challenges faced by the LLDCs. The outcome document contain a comprehensive and action-oriented framework that would help achieve the internationally agreed development goals for LLDCs, including the MDGs.

Mr. Co-Chair,

The SDGs should address all three dimensions of sustainable development and should be built on the residual work of the MDGs and its lessons. The economic dimension of the SDGs should focus mainly on addressing productive capacity building, infrastructural development, technology transfer, renewable energy, trade and transit facilitation, private sector development and economic and financial shocks. The social dimension should ensure accessibility, affordability and quality of education and health services with particular focus on women empowerment and youth through vocational and technical training. The environmental dimension should address climate change in terms of a definite goal for reducing global emissions and disaster risk reduction. All the goals, targets and indicators should have the LDC and LLDC focus, with special emphasis on those emerging form conflicts, among them.

In conclusion, we do underline that the issues and concerns of LDCs and LLDCs deserve priority attention in the SDG framework which should be build on the MDGs. The SDG framework should duly reflect in its all dimensions the special development needs and priorities of the most vulnerable and mountainous LDCs and LLDCs which are also emerging from conflict, such as Nepal. Since we cannot truly meet any international goal without taking LDCs and LLDCs fully on board, any global agenda would lose legitimacy in the absence of its inclusiveness, comprehensiveness and coherence vis-à-vis the special needs and requirements of LDCs and LLDCs.

I thank you.