

MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

22nd Annual Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries

New York, 21 September 2023

PP1 We, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and heads of delegation of Landlocked Developing Countries, met at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 21 September 2023, in the margins of the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly *From Vienna to Kigali: Building momentum towards a new decade of action for prosperity and transformation of LLDCs* ,

Reaffirming the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, adopted by the Second UN Conference on LLDCs held in Vienna, Austria in December 2014, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and provides a comprehensive plan of action to address the special challenges and needs of Landlocked Developing Countries arising from their landlockedness, remoteness and geographical constraints in a more coherent manner and that its full, effective and timely implementation is crucial for the attainment of the SDGs,

Reaffirming further the Political Declaration of the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024, adopted by the General Assembly on 5 December 2019,

comprehensive review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and to formulate and adopt a renewed framework for international support to address the special needs of landlocked developing countries and to strengthen partnerships between the Landlocked Developing Countries and Transit Countries and their Development Partners,

Recalling further the UN General Assembly resolution 77/329 adopted on Further modalities of the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries and noting the date of the Conference, two sessions of the intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Conference, and the organizational session thereof,

Taking note with appreciation of the Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the Decade 2014-2024 in preparation for the third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries,

Noting with great concern that while progress has been achieved in some indicators across the priority areas, significant gaps persist between the goals and targets set out in the VPoA and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and *further concerned* that the fragility and the highly uncertain global socio-economic outlook, persisting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, geopolitical tensions and current multiple crises, which increase pressure on inflation, energy and food prices, and financing, as well as disruptions in supply chains and elevated trade costs, which constrain the ability of LLDCs to achieve the priorities of the VPoA and SDGs,

Concerned about the economic, social and environmental impacts of climate related disasters in LLDCs, as well the impacts of disasters in transit countries that affect the economies of LLDCs,

1. We **reaffirm** our commitment to addressing the special needs and challenges of the LLDCs and we note with great concern that during the implementation period of the VPoA, LLDCs suffered disproportionately high human and economic losses from disasters as well as the cascading and compounding impacts of the multiple crises affecting the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development;
2. We **underscore** that the new programme of action for LLDCs should be an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and should be an accelerator to achieve the SDGs and therefore look forward to a highly ambitious, comprehensive, action-oriented and forward-looking outcome at the third UN Conference on LLDCs;
3. We **acknowledge** that the last half of the implementation period of the VPoA was marked by the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, that stalled or reversed socio-economic development gains that had been achieved by LLDCs, and we **recognize** that the pandemic impacted this progress in LLDCs due to, inter alia, weak healthcare systems,

6. We **take note with satisfaction** the ongoing preparations for the third UN Conference on LLDCs and we welcome the convening of the three regional review meetings held in preparation for the Conference held for the Africa region in Gaborone on 29 and 30 May 2023; for the Latin America region in Asuncion on 27 and 28 July 2023; and for the Euro-Asia region in Bangkok on 22 and 23 August 2023. We **endorse** the outcomes adopted at the three regional review meetings, which are contained hereby

implementation of the VPoA and to support the preparatory processes towards the Third UN Conference on LLDCs, including the participation of LLDCs in the session of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee and the Third UN Conference on LLDCs;

12. We **stress** that, in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should continue to ensure the coordinated follow-up to, effective monitoring of, and reporting on the implementation of the Programme of Action, for LLDCs;
13. We **welcome** the appointment of Ms. Rabab Fatima, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States as Secretary General of the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries;
14. We **further welcome** the election of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee of the third UN Conference on LLDCs and we commit to working closely with the Bureau in the preparation of the outcome for the Conference;
15. We **underscore** the important role of the revitalized Group of Friends of LLDCs and call for their active participation and support in the preparations for the Third UN Conference on LLDCs and at the Conference;
16. We **strongly encourage** the Secretary-General and the Member States to strengthen the OHRLLS including by allocating additional post and non-post resources to the subprogramme responsible for landlocked developing countries to enable it to effectively carry out the mandate including, to enable it to provide substantive support to LLDCs in their pursuit to meaningfully engage in the intergovernmental discussions and implement the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs and the new programme of action for LLDCs and the 2030 Agenda;

17. We **take note** of the Secretary-Gener

responsibilities of the Office have increased significantly in their scope and complexity.

We therefore strongly **encourage** the Secretary-General and the Member States to