

Statement by Mr. Uttam K. Shahi, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Nepal, at the panel during the sixth session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Agenda item 5 – Implementation of the mandate and programme of work

‘Discussion on least developed countries and the right to development’

Palais des Nations, Geneva

11:00 – 13:00, 2 November 2022

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Mr. Moderator, Chair of Expert Mechanism

Excellencies, distinguished delegates

Good Morning!

At the outset, allow me to thank for incorporating this important topic in the agenda item of the sixth session of the Expert mechanism on the right to development. It is my honour to share the panel on this relevant and timely issue as we are celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the adoption of the declaration on the right to development.

Since the adoption of the declaration in 1986, right to development has been incorporated in several international human rights instruments. It is recognized by the 1992 Rio Declaration, 1993 World conference on human rights, Millennium declaration, Paris climate agreement and also in the agenda of sustainable development goals 2030.

The article 1 of the declaration of the right to development recognizes the right to development as an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized.

Also, the declaration of the right to development recognises development as a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population.

In this spirit, Nepal believes that all human rights including the right to development are universal, indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing and merit equal emphasis.

We also believe that the effective realization of the right to development is interlinked with timely achievement of the sustainable development goals.

The COVID pandemic, climate change, armed conflicts, economic meltdown, among others have been impacting the progress made by LDCs in all sectors including the

human rights. These setbacks have posed challenges in operationalizing the right to development and have questioned the timely achievement of SDGs.

The key challenges including rising poverty, lack of energy, export marginalization, soaring debt, climate vulnerability, digital divide have posed structural impediments to the sustainable development in the LDCs.

The socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic due to the containment measures were new challenges faced by LDCs. Nepal has a negligible contribution to the Green House Gas emissions; however, we are one of the most vulnerable country due to the global warming and climate change. The melting of glaciers, extreme rainfall, drought, degrading ecosystem, low agricultural productivity and natural disasters such as floods, landslides, have been posing serious threat.

Given such daunting challenges, the road to graduation for LDCs is not easy. However, Nepal is determined to graduate from the LDC status in 2026.

Distinguished delegates,

The first part of the fifth UN Conference on LDCs held in March this year, adopted the Doha Programme of Action (DPOA) for LDCs for 2022 to 2031.

This guiding document provides a clear pathway for both the LDCs and development partners to achieve accelerated economic development in LDCs in the true spirit of leaving no one behind.

The DPOA recognizes the multiple structural challenges of LDCs for their economic transformation and secures renewed commitments from the development partners to support the LDCs through, inter alia, fulfilling all internationally agreed goals and targets related to respective official development assistance commitments, market access, debt relief, technology transfer, technical assistance and capacity-building.

It is evidently clear that the success of DPoA depends on the solidarity and cooperation among the LDCs and the development partners.

Against this backdrop we view that, there must be synergy between climate action, recovery package from COVID-19, DPoA implementation and SDGs attainment. Likewise, special attention should be given to the countries in the graduation pipeline and those that have recently graduated to ensure their smooth, sustainable, and irreversible graduation. The development partners must meet their commitments to spend 0.15-0.20% of GNI as ODA to LDCs.

Further the support to LDCs by continuing the existing facilities and flexibilities, particularly in the trade sector would support the smooth transition while also addressing the human and institutional capacity constraints of LDCs.

The DPoA has reaffirmed states commitment to enhancing efforts from COVID-19 to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement.

The DPoA has committed to taking more tangible steps to support the least developed countries and to reach the furthest behind first while leaving no one behind. It has also demonstrated the collective commitment for the sustainable development of LDCs. It has also highlighted its Six key focus areas.

In view of this, it gives the sense that the agenda of the right to development is relevant and tied up with the implementation of the DPoA. DPoA also is in line with the states obligation under the 1986 declaration to act collectively to adopt international policies for realizing the right to development.

The UN mechanisms on the right to development including the Expert mechanism have been working to promote the implementation of the Right to development worldwide.

Regarding the role of Expert Mechanism, we underscore their significant role in highlighting the sustained support and solidarity required for LDCs to attain the targeted graduation and ensure the smooth and sustainable graduation while aligning it with the agenda of the right to development.

This would enrich states efforts to attain sustainable development goals as well as the aim of DPoA to enable an additional 15 least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2031.

Lastly, I take this opportunity to wish all success for the second part of the LDC conference being held in March 2023 in Doha and also for the upcoming World cup.

Thank you for your kind attention.