

Side Event:

Towards an integrated approach to the implementation of the IPoA: Perspectives from African and Arab LDCs

Co-organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN ECA), the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), the African Union (AU), and the Government of Turkey

1:15-2:45pm, Saturday, 28 May 2016
Antalya, Turkey

I. Background

The Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)

At the Fourth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (UN-LDC IV) held in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2011, the global community agreed on a comprehensive and ambitious global compact in support of the LDC development agenda. Known as the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA), this compact rests on the fundamental tenets of mutual accountability and enhanced international cooperation and seeks to guide national, regional and global efforts to overcome the structural challenges faced by the LDCs in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and ensure that at least half the number of LDCs meet the criteria for graduation from the LDC status by 2020.

The UN General Assembly will hold the comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in June 2016, in Antalya, Turkey, for a period of three days.

The Specific Case of Conflict Affected Countries

Conflict has resulted in severe loss of life, displaced thousands of families and disrupted livelihoods. At minimum, conflict has reduced the quality of life, compromised the capabilities of people to lead the lives they choose with dignity and severely undermined sustainable opportunities for development. The impact of conflicts in the Middle East and Africa, are evident at various levels, crossing borders, while generating spillover effects that are threatening security as well as socio-economic development of neighboring countries and beyond.

Cognizant of the severe constraints to LDC graduation posed by conflict, this side event will highlight the exacerbated vulnerabilities of conflict-affected African and Arab LDCs which account for 1/3 of LDCs globally. **Exacerbated by political instability, conflict affected LDCs are facing daunting challenges related to their structural vulnerabilities.** As a result, these countries fall significantly short of the criteria for graduation from the LDC category. Despite positive developments in other LDC's, meaningful socio-economic changes are still slow and uneven. Windows of opportunity for socio-economic advancements, even though present in the last four years, have failed to deliver sustainable results.

II. Objective

The objective of the side event is to provide a platform for African and Arab LDCs to brainstorm and craft concrete proposals on an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation of the IPoA. It will also provide a platform for all stakeholders to critically assess progress and challenges encountered by conflict affected LDCs while attempting to construct the building blocks for resilience and post-conflict transformation.

The proposed side event will:

1. Provide an overview of progress towards the IPoA;
2. Propose a unified framework for reviewing progress on the IPoA that takes into account recently adopted continental and global frameworks;
3. Propose measures for the coherent integration of the continental and global frameworks in national planning frameworks;
4. Propose measures to support the implementation of flagship projects of the first Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063;
5. Explore options for seizing opportunities to maximize benefits through special support measures for conflict affected LDCs; and
6. Highlight a critical set of priorities which would facilitate progress of conflict affected LDCs towards the sustainable development goals.

III. Participation

Participants will include: Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Planning and Finance from African and Arab LDCs or other senior policy-makers, representatives from civil society, the private sector and academia.

- **Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya**, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
- **Mr. Maged A. Abdelaziz**, Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Africa
- **His Excellency Mr. Mevlüt Cavuşoğlu**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey
- **His Excellency Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad, on behalf of the African Union
- **His Excellency Mr. Khaled Al-Yemany**, Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations in New York
- **His Excellency Dr. Kamal Aldeen Hassan**, Minister of International Cooperation of the Republic of Sudan
- **His Excellency Mr. Samura M.W. Kamara**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Sierra Leone
- **Ms. Kaba Saran Daraba**, Secretary General of the Mano River Union
- **Dr. Abdalla Hamdok**, Chief Economist and Deputy Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
- **His Excellency Mr. Erastus J.O. Mwencha**, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission
- **Mr. Tarik Alami**, Director, Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division, ESCWA