



**Statement by Her Excellency Mrs. Matsepo Molise Ramakoa,
Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations
of the Kingdom of Lesotho,
on behalf of the Group of the Landlocked Developing Countries
at the High-Level Political Forum session on
Mobilizing International Solidarity, Accelerating Action and Embarking on
New Pathways to Realize the 2030 Agenda and Respond to COVID-19:
African Countries, Least Developed Countries and Landlocked Developing
Countries**

9 July 2020, New York, virtual platform

Madam Chair (*Ms. Mona Juul, President of ECOSOC*),
Distinguished panelists,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a singular honour and privilege for me to address you today on behalf of the 32 Member States of the Landlocked developing countries within the framework of the 2020 High-level Political Forum. Although the world as we know it today does not allow us to meet physically but through virtual means, we continue with our work.

We firmly believe that the main theme of this year's **High Level Political Forum (HLPF)**, *Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development*, underlines the utmost importance of the multilateral actions taken in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its negative socio-economic and humanitarian impacts. The most vulnerable of our citizenry, in particular in the LDCs, LLDCs and African states will be the most affected and will be further left behind.

Madam Chair,

It would be recalled that the Midterm Review of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs held in December 2019 revealed that one third of the population of LLDCs is still living in extreme poverty and economic growth of LLDCs had declined over the five year review period.

The Review also revealed that the participation of LLDCs in global trade remained below 1%. While the proportion of people using the Internet in developed countries is

more than three times that in LLDCs. Prevalence of moderate or severe food insecurity increased to almost 51% in 2017 compared to world average of 25%. The LDCs and LLDCs are already experiencing declining FDI inflows since 2011

Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen,

To keep our recovery efforts attuned, joint urgent actions from LLDC Governments, the UN resident-coordinators and UN regional offices as well as IFIs and private sector are needed.

As IMF estimates that developing countries have lost a record amount of more than 100 billion dollars. We therefore need the UN to assist us to enhance the business and investment environment to attract back and incentivize the new public and private investors.

In summary assistance would:

- expand social protection and humanitarian programmes to help prevent vulnerable groups from falling deeper into poverty;
- strengthen food supply chains, and promote measures to facilitate affordable food supplies.
- strengthen development interventions that address the root causes of extreme poverty, food insecurity and humanitarian crises.

Cognizant of the fact that ODA to LLDCs fell by 4.1% in real terms in 2018, we call on Development partners to increase ODA to LLDCs, but not at the expense of humanitarian efforts and other bilateral channels of cooperation.

Madam Chair, I would like to reiterate that we have only five years left to implement the Vienna Programme of Action. We need to accelerate international actions. In this vein, the Secretariat of OHRLLS, upon request from the LLDC Member States has prepared together with many other UN entities, the UN Roadmap on Accelerated Implementation of the VPoA.

Just this morning we had a chance to discuss the Roadmap thoroughly. It is a well balanced detailed document, which will help LLDCs to better understand how different UN agencies will assist in the implementation of the VPoA and Agenda 2030 in order to achieve set targets and get more coordinated practical deliverables. It is our hope that we will fully implement it for better results in the next five years.

I thank you.