BRAZIL

High Level Mid-Term Review of the Istanbul Programme of Action

27-29 May, 2016

Antalya, Turkey

Statement by Brazil

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(Please check against delivery)
Mr. President,

At the outset, I wish to congratulate the government and people of Turkey for the successful organization of this midterm review of the Istanbul Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries and for the warm reception we have enjoyed in Antalya.

I would like to thank the Permanent Representatives to the UN of Benin and Belgium, who have so ably guided member States during the consultations that led to the adoption of the outcome document before us this week, as well as the delegation of Bangladesh, who coordinated negotiations on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I would also like to express my Government’s gratitude, through his Excellency Gyan Chandra Acharya, for the important work of the OHRLLS in support not only of LDCs, but also of SIDS and LLDCs.

When member-States agreed on the Istanbul Program of Action in 2011, Least Developed Countries had just experienced a decade of solid growth and positive trends in development indicators. The Program laid out an ambitious and comprehensive agenda structured around eight priority areas that were meant to galvanize international cooperation and launch LDCs forward on a path to development.

Since then, LDCs have been hit hard by the global economic and financial crisis and by the end of the global commodity boom. Save for some exceptions, they have struggled to recover. While there has been some progress in a limited set of areas, much more than half the work remains to be done. LDCs have seen their efforts stumble on many obstacles, such as their weak institutional capacity and narrow export bases, recent health emergencies and natural disasters, but also the lack of a development friendly international enabling environment and of adequate international support, particularly through Official Development Assistance.

This mid-term review of the Istanbul Program of Action constitutes an opportunity to renew and strengthen our resolve to supporting the development of the LDCs in light not only of the goals set in the IPoA, but also of the transformative agenda adopted by the United Nations General Assembly last September. The outcome document adopted this week lays down the basis for this endeavor, as it takes stock of the progress achieved and sets out the challenges to be addressed in the coming years.

Brazil welcomes the steps taken to operationalize the Technology Bank by 2017, and we thank the Government of Turkey for their generous offer to host the Bank. We hope that procedures can be finalized expeditiously in order to deliver on this important milestone. Brazil is also encouraged by the progress achieved towards the adoption of investment promotion regimes for LDCs, another urgent priority for those countries.

Brazil further welcomes the mainstreaming the gender perspective throughout the outcome document before us. Gender equality is not only a moral imperative, but also an economic driver and an essential condition for achieving inclusive and equitable sustainable development.

Mr. President,
Enabling half of the LDCs to graduate by 2020 will only be possible if there is a strong commitment at the international level to create the conditions necessary for the development of LDCs. All stakeholders must live up to their promises. Developed countries, in particular, in light of their differentiated responsibility, must take concrete steps to deliver on their ODA commitments.

Efforts must also be intensified to reform global economic and financial governance in order to set enabling conditions for sustainable development. This includes tackling debt sustainability, tax evasion, profit shifting and illicit financial flows, all of which sap LDCs of crucial and scarce resources. The private sector must clearly commit to more responsible production and investment in order to truly fulfill their role in promoting economic growth, social inclusion and sustainable development.

In the area of trade, while we welcome the recognition of the importance of the multilateral trading system in responding to the unique realities of least developing countries, we are disappointed that no reference could be made to the need for effective trade reform in agriculture, including the elimination of trade distorting agricultural subsidies.

Agriculture continues to be a main economic activity in LDCs and an essential source of income and employment. Domestic and export subsidies in developed countries saturate markets with artificially low priced products and drive farmers in developing countries out of business.

Much also remains to be done in the area of science and technology. LDCs face significant challenges in capacity building, technical cooperation, technology transfers and increased access to broadband, vital elements to enable them to achieve productivity gains and structural transformation of their economies.

Mr. President,

Brazil has been a staunch supporter of and a long time provider of technical cooperation to LDCs through the Brazilian Agency for Cooperation (ABC), which provides demand-driven technical cooperation inspired by the principles of solidarity, non-conditionality, country ownership and shared responsibility.

Initiatives have been carried out in areas such as agriculture, food security, education, and health, not to mention humanitarian assistance, through which Brazil has provided contributions in kind to countries in need in Latin America, Africa and Asia. Among the main activities, I would like to highlight the recent plan to establish a technical training school in Port-au-Prince, Haiti; various capacity building projects involving training of health ministry officials on HIV/Aids prevention in Congo, Zambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and São Tomé e Príncipe; as well as the well known Cotton-4 project, developed together with Benin, Burkina Faso, and Mali. Multilaterally, Brazil, India and South Africa have also made an important contribution through the IBSA fund, which to date has benefited 14 countries, most of which LDCs.
Around 70% of Brazilian imports from LDCs already enjoy duty-free quota-free access to the Brazilian market. The Brazilian Government continues to take the necessary steps, including through relevant legal measures, to increase this access.

Mr. President,

We now have only five years to deliver on the promise of the IPoA of promoting structural transformation in LDCs and propelling them into graduation. In leaving no one behind, we must concentrate on those furthest behind, particularly in Africa, where two thirds of the world’s least developed countries are located. Brazil stands ready to participate actively in this process.

I thank you, Mr. President.