The Roundtable 1 on productive capacity, agriculture, food security and rural development took place on 27 May 2016. It was co-chaired by the Hon'ble Minister of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives of Bangladesh and the Hon'ble Minister of State of Public Administration of Sweden. It was an interactive session, where participants made substantive contributions.

2. The discussion highlighted that the four major global agendas adopted last year provide a comprehensive blue print for Sustainable Development. These need to be implemented in coherence with the IPoA. Revitalised and effective multi-stakeholder partnerships are required to ensure that LDCs are not left behind.

3. The discussion emphasized the importance of productive capacity building for structural transformation of LDC economies and the fundamental importance of agriculture, food security and rural development for the LDCs.

4. Delegations shared that there has been significant progress in the implementation of the IPoA. However, progress has not been even across the eight priority areas nor among all LDCs. Coherent policies and institutional approaches by the international community will enable LDCs to overcome the challenges.

5. Agriculture continues to be the principal means of livelihood and employment in all LDCs. Climate change continues to pose a serious threat to LDCs’ productivity, as well as to agriculture and food security and rural development.

6. Investment in agriculture to increase productivity, access to finance, and support for development of cutting edge technologies and high yielding varieties (HYV) - leveraging recent advancement in ICT, biotechnology, genetic engineering, amongst others - are required.
Development partners expressed their support to LDCs, highlighting their target to redouble climate support to LDCs, recommending integrated climate-smart agriculture approach, and the use of efficient agro-technologies.

7. Discussions highlighted the relationship between women’s role in agriculture production, land ownership, and gender equality. Participants shared that investing in gender equality will benefit all members of society, advocating for the removal of social and legal barriers to ensure equal access to decent and productive work.

8. As a result of declining productivity and in some cases premature deindustrialization, LDC economies are growing below their potential growth rates. Participants highlighted the need for product diversification, value addition and value retention, as well as effective participation of LDCs in regional and global value chains for a sustainable and inclusive growth rate.

9. The discussion highlighted that social protection is an important tool for social inclusion and poverty eradication. Effective social protection policies contribute to growth, productive employment, and decent work. The majority of LDCs have limited social protection programmes. Strong social protection floors can serve as a solid foundation for enhancing productivity.

10. The interactive discussion touched on the role of science, technology and innovation in eradicating poverty, removing constraints, unleashing structural transformation, and sustainable development. Participants welcomed the early operationalization of the Technology Bank for LDCs.

11. Delegates shared that ODA should play a catalytic role in attracting FDI and in mobilizing domestic resource. Investment in physical and soft infrastructure is essential. Mobilizing private investments and creating an enabling environment for the private sector through structural and regulatory transformation will be important.

12. Finally, on behalf of the Co-Chairs I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the panelists and participants for their thought-provoking and substantive contributions.

   Thank you, Madam President.