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Enabling poor rural people  
to overcome poverty

## **IFAD action in support of least developed countries**

Executive Board — Ninety-third Session  
Rome, 24-25 April 2008

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For: **Information**

## **Note to Executive Board Directors**

This document is submitted for the information of the Executive Board.

To make the best use of time available at Executive Board sessions, Directors are invited to contact the following focal point with any technical questions about this document before the session:

**Imogen Wiles**

Media Adviser to Assistant President, External Affairs

telephone: +39 06 5459 2622

e-mail: [i.wiles@ifad.org](mailto:i.wiles@ifad.org)

Queries regarding the dispatch of documentation for this session should be addressed to:

**Deirdre McGrenra**

Governing Bodies Officer

telephone: +39 06 5459 2374

e-mail: [d.mcgrenra@ifad.org](mailto:d.mcgrenra@ifad.org)

## IFAD action in support of the least developed countries

### I. Background

1. The Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (A/CONF.191/11) for the decade 2001-2010 was adopted by the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) held in Brussels on 14-20 May 2001. The aim was to achieve substantial progress towards meeting the first Millennium Development Goal and its target of halving extreme poverty by 2015, by means of seven specific commitments:
  - (a) Fostering a people-centred policy framework;
  - (b) Good governance at both the national and international levels;
  - (c) Building human and institutional capacities;
  - (d) Building productive capacities to make globalization work for LDCs;
  - (e) Enhancing the role of trade in development;
  - (f) Reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment;
  - (g) Mobilizing financial resources.
2. The Brussels Programme of Action recognizes that the majority of poor people in most LDCs live in rural areas and depend on agriculture and related trade, services and processing activities for their livelihood.
3. Three United Nations General Assembly resolutions relevant to the Brussels Programme of Action were passed on 12 July 2001 (55/279), 24 December 2001 (56/227) and 20 December 2002 (57/276). The first served to endorse the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action. The second and third called, among other things, for organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations to mainstream the implementation of the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 within their programmes of work as well as in their intergovernmental processes.
4. As a consequence of these resolutions, in September 2003 the IFAD Executive Board approved a recommendation (EB 2003/79/R.33/Rev.1) to:
  - (a) continue giving special attention to LDCs in its programme and activities, and emphasize the effective implementation of the Brussels Programme within its mandate; and
  - (b) take careful account of the Brussels Programme of Action in formulating IFAD's programme/activities and in its intergovernmental processes, as called for in the United Nations General Assembly resolutions 56/227 of 24 December 2001 and 57/276 of 20 December 2002.
5. The Executive Board also noted that many of the commitments made by LDCs and their development partners in the Brussels Programme of Action were already being efficiently pursued by IFAD through the Strategic Framework for IFAD 2002-2006 and that, within its first 25 years of operations, IFAD had channelled 39 per cent of its financing to LDCs, comprising 46 per cent of its programme of work.

## II. Recent developments

6. On 19 December 2007, the General Assembly adopted a further resolution (62/203) on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. It called upon the organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations that had not yet done so to mainstream the implementation of the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action within their programmes of work, and to report on the progress made in its implementation, using quantifiable criteria and indicators to be measured against the goals and targets of the Programme of Action.
7. Resolution 62/203 was brought to the attention of IFAD by means of a letter dated 8 January 2008 from Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. In that letter, IFAD is requested to bring the aforesaid recommendations to the attention of the governing body and include them in IFAD's programme of work.

## III. IFAD's record on LDCs

8. Since 1978, a total of 359 projects in LDCs have been approved, equivalent to 47 per cent of all IFAD projects over the past 30 years. The value of these projects amounts to a total of US\$4.02 billion, equivalent to 40 per cent of IFAD financing for all projects. The combined total value of projects for LDCs including IFAD funds and cofinancing is US\$9.3 billion, equivalent to 35 per cent of the gross figure for all projects.
9. When the Executive Board last considered IFAD's role with regard to LDCs, in September 2003, IFAD financing for LDCs stood at US\$187.3 million. The Executive Board was informed that within its first 25 years of operation, IFAD had channelled 39 per cent of its development aid to LDCs, comprising 46 per cent of its programme of work. In 2001, the Executive Board approved a total of US\$159 million in loans for LDCs. In 2002, despite the slightly lower figure of US\$130 million due to a lower programme of work overall, the percentage of lending to LDCs was maintained (EB 2003/79/R.33/Rev.1, paragraph 5).
10. Since 2003, IFAD financing for LDCs has continued to increase, from US\$187.3 million in 2003, to US\$252.2 million in 2007, an increase of 35 per cent over 2003 and equivalent to 44.5 per cent of IFAD financing for all projects in 2007.
11. The table below provides a breakdown of the types of projects undertaken in LDCs over the past 30 years:

<i>Project type</i>	<i>IFAD approved funding in US\$</i>	<i>Percentage of total IFAD financing</i>	<i>Number of projects</i>	<i>Percentage of total number of projects</i>
Agricultural development	1 258 718	31	125	35
Credit and financial services	416 381	10	32	9
Fisheries	60 236	1	14	4
Irrigation	324 504	8	26	7
Livestock	133 951	3	16	4
Marketing/storage/processing	129 596	3	8	2
Programme loans	130 733	3	9	3
Research/extension/training	193 089	5	18	5
Rural development	1 372 888	34	111	31
<b>Total<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>4 020 096</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>a</sup> Totals may not add up due to rounding.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

12. IFAD continues to devote substantial attention to LDCs as it strives to enable poor rural people to overcome poverty. IFAD has maintained its share of financial support for LDCs and in 2007 increased its financing for LDCs by 35 per cent compared to 2003, in line with growth in its programme of work overall.
13. A copy of United Nations General Assembly resolution 62/203 adopted on 19 December 2007, and a copy of the letter from Cheick Sidi Diarra dated 8 January 2008, are attached hereto for information.

TO: IFAD

FROM: OHRLLS

DATE: Tue Jan 8 2008 15:06 EST

# United Nations Nations Unies

HEADQUARTERS SIEGE, ROOM S-770, NEW YORK, NY 10017

TELEPHONES: (212) 963-9470, 963-9078 - FACSIMILE: (212) 963-0419

Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries,  
Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

(OHRLLS)

2008 JAN 8 15:06 REF 00359/2008/UN-OHRLLS/ZE

8 January 2008 15:06

Dear Mr. Båge,

On 19 December 2007, the General Assembly adopted resolution 62/203 (see attachment) on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

Operative paragraphs 13 to 19 of the resolution contain specific recommendations to the United Nations system and international organizations on strengthening the implementation of the Programme of Action of the Least Developed Countries during the remainder period, with the view to achieving its goals and objectives by the agreed time. I would appreciate it if these recommendations are brought to the attention of the governing body and included in the work programme organization/agency.

Should your organization/agency have any questions or need addition information, please contact Ms. Zamira Eshmambetova at telephone number: (917) 367-5225, fax number (917) 367-3415, e-mail [eshamambetova@un.org](mailto:eshamambetova@un.org).

Yours sincerely,



Cheick Sidi Diarra  
Under-Secretary-General  
and  
High Representative

Mr. Lennart Båge  
President  
International Fund for Agricultural  
Development (IFAD)  
Rome, Italy

United Nations

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**Sixty-second session**

Agenda item 57 (a)

**Groups of countries in special situations: third United Nations  
Conference on the Least Developed Countries****Report of the Second Committee\****Rapporteur:* Ms. Tamar **Tchitanava** (Georgia)**I. Introduction**

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 57 (see A/62/422, para. 2). Action on sub-item (a) was taken at the 25th and 33rd meetings, on 8 November and 7 December 2007. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/62/SR.25 and 33).

**II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/62/L.24 and  
A/C.2/62/L.58**

2. At the 25th meeting, on 8 November, the representative of Pakistan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" (A/C.2/62/L.24), which read:

*"The General Assembly,*

*"Recalling the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,*

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\* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in three parts, under the symbol A/62/422 and Add.1 and 2.

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“*Recalling also* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular paragraph 15 thereof, in which the Heads of State and Government undertook to address the special needs of the least developed countries,

“*Recalling further* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

“*Recalling* its resolutions 61/211 of 20 December 2006 and 61/1 of 19 September 2006,

“*Reaffirming* its resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006 on the follow-up to the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit, including the Millennium Development Goals and the other internationally agreed development goals,

“*Taking note* of the Ministerial Declaration of the high-level segment of the 2004 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council on the theme ‘Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010’,

“*Taking note also* of the Istanbul Declaration on the Least Developed Countries: Time for Action, adopted at the Ministerial Conference of the least developed countries held in Turkey on 9 and 10 July 2007 on the theme ‘Making globalization work for the least developed countries’,

“*Reaffirming* that the Programme of Action constitutes a fundamental framework for a strong global partnership, whose goal is to accelerate sustained economic growth, sustainable development and poverty eradication in the least developed countries,

“1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;

“2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on his advocacy strategy on the effective and timely implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;

“3. *Recalls* the contributions made in the lead-up to the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, including the Cotonou Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 as an initiative owned and led by the least developed countries;

“4. *Reaffirms its commitment* to the Declaration adopted by Heads of State and Government and heads of delegations participating in the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, in which they recommitted themselves to addressing the special needs of the least developed countries by making progress towards the goals of poverty eradication, peace and development;



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“5. *Remains concerned* about the insufficient and uneven progress achieved so far in the implementation of the Programme of Action, and stresses the need to address areas of weakness in its implementation in a timely and efficient manner;

“6. *Stresses* that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, can be effectively achieved in the least developed countries through, in particular, the timely fulfilment of the seven commitments of the Programme of Action;

“7. *Reaffirms* that progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action will require effective implementation of national policies and priorities for the sustained economic growth and sustainable development of the least developed countries, as well as strong and committed partnership between those countries and their development partners;

“8. *Underscores* the fact that, for the further implementation of the Programme of Action, the least developed countries and their development partners must be guided by an integrated approach, a broader genuine partnership, country ownership, market considerations and results-oriented actions;

“9. *Urges* the least developed countries to strengthen the implementation of the Programme of Action through their respective national development framework, including, where they exist, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

“10. *Urges* development partners to fully implement, in a timely manner, commitments in the Programme of Action and to make further efforts to increase their financial and technical support to the implementation of the Programme of Action;

“11. *Encourages* the United Nations Resident Coordinator system, the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors and other development partners to assist the least developed countries in translating goals and targets of the Programme of Action into concrete actions in the light of their national development priorities;

“12. *Invites* the organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations that have not yet done so to mainstream the implementation of the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action within their programmes of work as well as in their intergovernmental processes and to undertake within their respective mandates multi-year programming of actions in favour of the least developed countries;

“13. *Stresses*, within the context of the annual global reviews, as envisaged in the Programme of Action, the need to assess the implementation of the Programme of Action sector by sector, and in this regard invites the United Nations system and all relevant international organizations, consistent with their respective mandates, to report on the progress made in its implementation using quantifiable criteria and indicators to be measured against the goals and targets of the Programme of Action and to participate

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fully in reviews of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

“14. *Also stresses* the crucial importance of integrated and coordinated follow-up, monitoring and reporting for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

“15. *Requests*, in this regard, the Secretary-General to ensure, at the Secretariat level, the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system to facilitate coordinated implementation as well as coherence in the follow-up to and monitoring and review of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, including through such coordination mechanisms as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the United Nations Development Group, the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs and the Inter-agency Expert Group on the Millennium Development Goals Indicators;

“16. *Reiterates its invitation* to the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, and other relevant multilateral organizations, to provide full support to and cooperate with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States;

“17. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to include the least developed countries in all his reports in the economic, social and related fields to ensure the monitoring of their development in a broader context and prevent their further marginalization in the world economy;

“18. *Expresses its concern* about the insufficiency of resources in the trust fund established for the participation of the least developed countries in the annual review of the implementation of the Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council;

“19. *Reiterates* the critical importance of the participation of Government representatives from the least developed countries in the annual review of the Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures to ensure, from the regular budget of the United Nations, the participation of two representatives from each least developed country in the annual review of the implementation of the Programme of Action;

“20. *Decides* to hold a fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries towards the end of the current decade, in accordance with paragraph 114 of the Programme of Action, to make a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action and to decide on subsequent actions, and, in this regard, invites Member States to consider hosting that conference;

“21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures for the implementation of the advocacy strategy;

“22. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit an annual analytical and results-oriented progress report on the further implementation of the Programme of Action, and reiterates its request that he make available

adequate resources, within existing resources, for the preparation of such a report.”

3. At its 33rd meeting, on 7 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled “Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries” (A/C.2/62/L.58), submitted by the Rapporteur of the Committee, on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.24.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

5. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.58 (see para. 8).

6. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Pakistan (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China); Portugal (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union and Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; and Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine); and Bangladesh (on behalf of the Group of the least developed countries) and Serbia (see A/C.2/62/SR.33).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.58, draft resolution A/C.2/62/L.24 was withdrawn by its sponsors (see A/C.2/62/SR.33).

### **III. Recommendation of the Second Committee**

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

#### **Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* the Brussels Declaration<sup>2</sup> and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,<sup>3</sup>

*Recalling also* the United Nations Millennium Declaration,<sup>4</sup> in particular paragraph 15 thereof, in which the Heads of State and Government undertook to address the special needs of the least developed countries,

*Recalling further* its resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields,

*Recalling* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> A/CONF.191/13, chap. I.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., chap. II.

<sup>4</sup> See resolution 55/2.

<sup>5</sup> See resolution 60/1.

*Recalling also* its resolutions 61/211 of 20 December 2006 and 61/1 of 19 September 2006,

*Reaffirming* its resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006 on the follow-up to the development outcome of the 2005 World Summit, including the Millennium Development Goals and the other internationally agreed development goals,

*Taking note* of the Ministerial Declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2004 of the Economic and Social Council on the theme “Resources mobilization and enabling environment for poverty eradication in the context of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010”,<sup>6</sup>

*Taking note also* of the Istanbul Declaration on the Least Developed Countries: Time for Action,<sup>7</sup> adopted at the Ministerial Conference of Least Developed Countries held in Istanbul on 9 and 10 July 2007 on the theme “Making globalization work for least developed countries”,

*Reaffirming* that the Programme of Action constitutes a fundamental framework for a strong global partnership, whose goal is to accelerate sustained economic growth, sustainable development and poverty eradication in the least developed countries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;<sup>8</sup>

2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the advocacy strategy on the effective and timely implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010;<sup>9</sup>

3. *Welcomes* the contributions made in the lead-up to the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010,<sup>2</sup> including the elaboration of the Cotonou Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010<sup>10</sup> as an initiative owned and led by the least developed countries;

4. *Reaffirms its commitment* to the Declaration<sup>11</sup> adopted by Heads of State and Government and heads of delegations participating in the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, in which they recommitted themselves to addressing the special needs of the least developed countries by making progress towards the goals of poverty eradication, peace and development;

5. *Remains concerned* about the insufficient and uneven progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action, and stresses the need to address, within the time frame set by the Programme of Action, areas of weakness in its

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<sup>6</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/59/3/Rev.1)*, chap. III, para. 49.

<sup>7</sup> A/62/216, annex.

<sup>8</sup> A/62/79-E/2007/63 and Corr.1.

<sup>9</sup> A/62/322.

<sup>10</sup> A/61/117, annex I.

<sup>11</sup> See resolution 61/1.

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implementation and the continued precarious socio-economic situation in some least developed countries through a strong commitment to the objectives, goals and targets of the Programme of Action;

6. *Welcomes* the continued economic progress of many least developed countries, which has led to the fact that a number of countries are proceeding towards graduation from the list of the least developed countries;

7. *Stresses* that the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, can be effectively achieved in the least developed countries through, in particular, the timely fulfilment of the seven commitments of the Programme of Action;

8. *Reaffirms* that progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action will require effective implementation of national policies and priorities for the sustained economic growth and sustainable development of the least developed countries, as well as strong and committed partnership between those countries and their development partners;

9. *Underlines* the fact that, for the further implementation of the Programme of Action, the least developed countries and their development partners must be guided by an integrated approach, a broader genuine partnership, country ownership, market considerations and results-oriented actions encompassing:

- (a) Fostering a people-centred policy framework;
- (b) Ensuring good governance at both the national and international levels as essential for the implementation of the commitments embodied in the Programme of Action;
- (c) Building human and institutional capacities;
- (d) Building productive capacities to make globalization work for the least developed countries;
- (e) Enhancing the role of trade in development;
- (f) Reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment;
- (g) Mobilizing financial resources;

10. *Urges* the least developed countries to strengthen the implementation of the Programme of Action through their respective national development framework, including, where they exist, poverty reduction strategy papers, the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

11. *Urges* development partners to fully implement, in a timely manner, commitments in the Programme of Action and to exercise individual best efforts to continue to increase their financial and technical support for its implementation;

12. *Also urges* development partners to continue to support the efforts of countries graduating from the list of the least developed countries in order to better promote their further integration into the world economy, to sustain their development process and to avoid any disruption therein, including within the framework of the smooth transition strategy;

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13. *Encourages* the United Nations Resident Coordinator system, the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors and other development partners to assist the least developed countries in translating goals and targets of the Programme of Action into concrete actions in the light of their national development priorities;

14. *Invites* the organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations that have not yet done so to mainstream the implementation of the Brussels Declaration<sup>1</sup> and the Programme of Action within their programmes of work as well as in their intergovernmental processes and to undertake within their respective mandates multi-year programming of actions in favour of the least developed countries;

15. *Stresses*, within the context of the annual global reviews, as envisaged in the Programme of Action, the need to assess the implementation of the Programme of Action sector by sector, and in this regard invites the United Nations system and all relevant international organizations, consistent with their respective mandates, to report on the progress made in its implementation using quantifiable criteria and indicators to be measured against the goals and targets of the Programme of Action and to participate fully in reviews of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

16. *Also stresses* the crucial importance of integrated and coordinated follow-up, monitoring and reporting for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

17. *Requests*, in this regard, the Secretary-General to ensure, at the Secretariat level, the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system to facilitate coordinated implementation as well as coherence in the follow-up to and monitoring and review of the Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels, including through such coordination mechanisms as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the United Nations Development Group, the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs and the Inter-agency Expert Group on the Millennium Development Goals Indicators;

18. *Reiterates its invitation* to the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, and other relevant multilateral organizations, to provide full support to and cooperate with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States;

19. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to include the least developed countries in all relevant reports in the economic, social and related fields in order to ensure the follow-up of their development in the broader context of the world economy and contribute to preventing their further marginalization;

20. *Expresses its concern* about the insufficiency of resources in the trust fund established for the participation of the least developed countries in the annual review of the implementation of the Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council;

21. *Reiterates* the critical importance of the participation of Government representatives from the least developed countries in the annual review of the

Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council, expresses, in this regard, its deep appreciation to those countries that have made voluntary contributions to the special trust fund established for this purpose by the Secretary-General, invites donor countries to continue to support the participation of two representatives from each least developed country in the annual review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, including by contributing in an adequate and timely manner to the special trust fund, and requests the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to mobilize the necessary resources in order to ensure that the trust fund is adequately resourced;

22. *Recalls* paragraph 114 of the Programme of Action on holding a fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries towards the end of the current decade and, in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to prepare a note during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly outlining the modalities of such a conference, including its preparatory process, and also, in this regard, invites Member States to consider hosting that conference;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take appropriate measures for the implementation of the advocacy strategy,<sup>8</sup> in coordination with all relevant stakeholders;

24. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit an annual analytical and results-oriented progress report on the further implementation of the Programme of Action and to make available adequate resources, within existing resources, for the preparation of such a report.

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