



Introductory Statement

By

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**At the pre-UNLDC IV Conference Event on:
“Reducing vulnerability due to Climate Change, Climate Variability and
Extremes, Land Degradation and Biodiversity Loss: Environment and
Development Challenges and Opportunities for LDCs”**

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Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, allow me to thank Mr. Diarra for his words and vision for the LDC IV Conference, which provides us with the goal line, and the main objectives of this pre-conference event.

Allow me also to sincerely thank Mr. Diarra and his office for arranging and hosting this gathering. I particularly thank you for the intensive work you and your colleagues have done to prepare for this and other events in this series, in preparation for the upcoming important meeting on LDCs. Climate change is a major concern for all LDCs, and the UNFCCC places great importance in its programmes for LDCs, based on the special reference in the Climate Change Convention to LDCs in Article 4.9.

Let me also thank you all in the audience for agreeing to participate and substantively contribute to this important exercise. I wish to acknowledge all the agencies that have worked with us tirelessly over the last year to prepare for this meeting. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the UNCCD and CBD Secretariats, World Bank and WMO for your active contributions to the planning of this meeting. Those of you that we have not engaged fully yet, we look forward to your inputs today and in the coming days as we finalize our inputs to the next intergovernmental meeting.

Dear colleagues,

As Mr. Diarra just said, we are gathered here to identify key priority areas under the general theme of *reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment*. The environment underpins development and livelihoods in LDCs more than for other countries. There are challenges but also many opportunities for a renewed and reinvigorated partnership framework in support of their development and transformation over the next decade.

The preparations thus far have identified a few such priorities as a starting point, and we hope by the end of the day, we would have collectively arrived at a succinct list of major priorities for LDCs, building on the many programmes that each of our agencies is nurturing. We have taken note of the many inputs from other events including the regional reviews, and we hope that the feedback and input that we will hear today from the senior policy makers gathered in this room, will help us focus on few but transformational activities.

The UNFCCC Secretariat has supported the LDC Expert Group for the last 10 years in helping LDCs design and implement their NAPAs, and related

capacity-building and outreach activities. 45 LDCs have successfully submitted their NAPAs, with more than 30 of them in advanced stages of project implementation. The LDC Expert Group has worked very effectively with the Global Environment Facility and its many agencies. The Expert Group is one best practice that we can offer this meeting as a very good way to ensure LDC matters are considered and supported with vigour under a Convention. I hope as one outcome of this meeting, we can also consider a similar group to support the major streams of work under the three Rio Conventions and the other important areas of work on disasters and climate extremes. There are other constituted bodies under the UNFCCC that also address LDC issues, including the Executive Board of the CDM in looking at measures to promote carbon projects in LDCs; the Consultative Group of Experts on NAI National Communications; the Expert Group on Technology Transfer and now the Adaptation Committee which is being defined.

The outcomes of the last Conference of Parties in Cancun last December, have laid out a strong basis for serious action on adaptation for LDCs and other vulnerable groups. Major progress was made in the following areas:

- Funding: the establishment of the Green Climate Fund;
- Technology: the establishment of a Technology Executive Committee;
- Adaptation: establishment of a process for LDCs to prepare national adaptation plans to address medium- and long-term adaptation needs (to supplement the existing NAPAs that address urgent and immediate needs);
- Also progress on REDD+ and in addressing regional distribution issues for CDM.

Recent meetings of the other environmental Conventions (UNCCD and UNCBD), have also made tremendous progress in outlining 10-year strategies.

The stage is set for substantial progress to be realized in developing a good programme for LDCs, and we hope that we can put our heads together today to identify and propose a strong strategic vision for LDCs to address their vulnerabilities related to the environment and climate change.

Our Executive Secretary, Ms. Christiana Figueres, attaches great importance to this event, and assures you of her full support and cooperation in making this a great success and important contribution to the LDC IV Conference.

Thank you.