

**Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries
9–13 May 2011, Istanbul, Turkey**

**High Level Thematic Debate on Reducing vulnerabilities, responding to
emerging challenges, and enhancing food security in LDCs**

**Remarks by Richard Kinley, Deputy Executive Secretary
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Introductory points

- Thanks for invitation.
- Appreciate opportunity to participate in debate with distinguished presenters.
- Remarks will not look at vulnerabilities: floods, droughts, rainfall shifts, cyclones and storms, sea level rise. List is long and most in this room know them better than I do. Suffice to say that climate change is exacerbating vulnerability to climate change, and more so to LDCs, given their very limited capacity to respond to the adverse impacts.

Rather, I will focus on 3 themes characterized as reducing vulnerability through international cooperation:

- How work under the UNFCCC has supported LDCs
- How efforts to enhance action in support of LDCs are being expanded
- Looking at 2011 and beyond: what needs to be done?

Support to LDCs under the UNFCCC

Theme: LDCs have a privileged place in the Convention and in its implementation

The UNFCCC recognizes the challenge of adapting to climate change, particularly in the context of vulnerable and least developed countries (LDCs). The Convention maintains specific support to the LDCs through its Article 4.9, which commits Parties to:

“... take full account of the specific needs and special situations of the least developed countries in their actions with regard to funding and transfer of technology.”

This has proven a solid base on which to build. To respond to the urgent and immediate needs of the LDCs to adapt to climate change, an LDC work programme was established in 2001 under the Convention. The work programme supports LDCs on planning and implementing adaptation, capacity building and awareness on climate change. A special fund, called the LDC Fund, was established to support implementation of this work programme, and it is managed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). In addition, an LDC Expert Group was also established. It has worked to provide dedicated technical support and advice to LDCs since 2001 - Parties have extended its mandate for another 5 years till 2015.

Progress has been made both by the development partners and by the LDCs themselves in: generating and continuously increasing the level of awareness on climate change in LDCs; engaging experts, policy makers, communities and multiple stakeholders in the planning and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs); and strengthening human and institutional capacities to address climate change.

Donor countries have collectively pledged USD 320 million into the LDC Fund to date, enabling LDCs to engage in actions to implement the LDC work programme. 45 LDCs have now prepared their NAPAs. 43 of these have submitted NAPA projects to the GEF for funding under the LDC Fund .

NAPAs have delivered numerous benefits to the LDCs, including increased levels of awareness and capacity on climate change. NAPAs are today seen as a success story, and many countries beyond the LDCs have shown interest and even embarked on preparing and implementing similar plans.

Also, LDCs are today actively engaged in the climate change negotiations, spelling out their needs through the special support provided to them for their participation.

While giving you a positive assessment of the situation, I do not want to suggest the status quo is sufficient. Much more needs to be done. This leads me to my second main point.

Efforts to enhance actions in support of LDCs under the BAP and the Cancún Agreements

Theme: Decisions have been taken to enhance support to LDCs, with negotiations on details underway

The Bali Action Plan raised the priority attached to action on adaptation to climate change, and emphasized the need to continue to accord special attention to the LDCs. Driven by this, at the sixteenth Conference of the Parties that was held in Mexico in December 2010, Parties placed LDCs in the forefront of support mechanisms agreed there:

- LDCs have a special representation in the design phase of the Green Climate Fund.
- The Adaptation Framework contains special provisions to support LDCs on medium- and long-term adaptation.

Fast start finance from developed countries is starting to flow but more transparency is required.

Again, these new agreements are not sufficient, but they are a step forward and a great opportunity. The challenge is to maximize benefits to LDCs, which leads to my final point.

2011 and beyond: what needs to be done

Theme: 2011 is crucial year; governments need to be active in the climate change process, seeking compromise solutions that benefit all, but with special consideration for LDCs

The focus of negotiations for this year will be to lock in the gains achieved in Cancun and seek to resolve other pending issues. Of specific relevance to the LDCs are:

- Elaboration of modalities and guidelines for supporting LDCs to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (going beyond NAPAs).
- Realizing the Green Climate Fund and getting enhanced resources flowing.
- Ratcheting up the level of ambition on emission reductions.

LDC representatives need to be actively engaged throughout the negotiations process in order to advance their interests. The need for adaptation is clear, and Governments appear united in their resolve to assist LDCs to address adaptation sooner than later. LDCs need to build up their institutions to design and implement their adaptation plans, taking advantage of the fast start funding that is becoming available, and to ensure that such adaptation plans are properly integrated into their broader development plans, to ensure an effective response to climate change.

Thank you.

Launch the publication:

- The UNFCCC was tasked to coordinate a pre-conference event on “Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change and related environmental challenges, jointly with partner agencies including UNCCD, UNCBD, WMO, World Bank, UNESCO, UNDP and many others.;
- Together with the partner agencies, we produced a background paper, which is now available in hard copy at the back.
- The publication is available via our website at http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/publications/lcd_reducingvulnerability.pdf;
- Further details on UNFCCC support to the LDC-IV are available at <http://unfccc.int/5963>.

