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REPORT OF THE  
COMMISSION  
ON THE  
STATUS OF THE  
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES  
IN THE  
MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA  
FOR THE  
PERIOD 2019-2021  
18 FEBRUARY 2021

in

The Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (IPoA) is coming to an end. The overarching goal of the IPoA was to overcome the structural challenges faced by least developed countries (LDCs) in order to eradicate poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category. The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (UNLDC-V) will be held from 23 to 27 January 2022 in Doha, Qatar, and will be preceded by a comprehensive preparatory process based on national, regional and global reviews of the IPoA. This conference is closely related to ESCWA's work as a new programme of action for LDCs will be adopted. This new programme will be designed to cover the remaining 10 years of the 2030 Agenda's implementation period. It is therefore of particular importance to each LDC member of this regional commission, as well as to donors of development assistance. The conference is expected to conduct a comprehensive review and assessment of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) in each of the LDCs, as well as at sub-regional and regional levels. Best practice, lessons learned and challenges faced will also be shared in order to produce a comprehensive 10-year strategy to enable LDCs to graduate from this category and achieve the sustainable development goals. The strategy will be built upon a solid foundation of national ownership and leadership as well as the promotion of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development among LDCs. The results of these large-scale reviews will enhance the work of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee (PrepCom).



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1. The Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (IPoA) is coming to an end. The overarching goal of the IPoA was to overcome the structural challenges faced by least developed countries (LDCs) in order to eradicate poverty and to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. The Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (UNLDC-V) will be held from 23 to 27 January 2022 in Doha, Qatar, and will be preceded by a comprehensive preparatory process based on national, regional and global reviews of the IPoA.
2. This conference is closely related to ESCWA's work as a new programme of action for LDCs will be

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6. The meeting began with opening remarks by Mr. Tarik Alami, the Cluster Leader on Governance and Conflict Prevention at ESCWA, delivered on behalf of Dr. Rola Dashti, the Executive Secretary of ESCWA. Mr. Tarik Alami stressed the importance of the regional meeting for discussing the key challenges and structural shocks that prevented the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, as well as for setting national priorities for LDCs for the next decade (2021-2030), and for discussing the options available for sustainable development and peaceful transition in countries affected by armed conflict. He explained that with the 2011-2020 decade - the implementation period for the IPoA - coming to an end, ESCWA had launched a work stream of regional assessments that included a report entitled "Arab LDCs: Development Challenges and Opportunities". The report included monitoring and analysis of Arab LDCs.







somewhat weak. The government was also working with partners to strengthen the humanitarian support line in order to provide the necessary support. He said that there were still obstacles to the development process,



resources that could not be found elsewhere in the region, and it was important to use these resources in a sustainable manner. The Bank had focused on partnership, with the Arab Coordination Group providing a lot to these States through the coordination of efforts. Attention must also be paid to the effectiveness of development. Platforms could be created to share information, to participate in development work on the ground and to reflect on the mechanisms for such work. In terms of finance and loans, efforts were being made in this area, but there were some challenges. Solutions to these challenges needed to be found to enable these States to obtain new loans. For example, it was important to consider blended financing, and not to overlook the role of the private sector, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic.

22. Mr. Abdullah Al-Musaybeih, of the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, said that the main problems included funding gaps and a lack of coordina

Reconstruction Program for Yemen confirmed that there was a clear intention to unite efforts to work together for the benefit of the development process of the four States.

29. Mr. Karam Karam of ESCWA added that the main challenge was to transform these recommendations into a realistic model and realistic programmes that could form the next decade. A semi-sustainable mechanism and a flexible platform were needed that could transform these recommendations into concrete programmes.

30. Mr. Eli Oudeika, a representative of Mauritania, added that the idea of mixed

Sudan, Somalia and Yemen, in addition to a range of regional and international development funds and organizations.

38. The agenda and organization of work were adopted as follows:

<b>18 Feb 2021</b>
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The Islamic Republic of Mauritania

Mr. Eli Oudeika  
General Director of the Politics and Strategies of  
Development  
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Promotion of  
Productive Sectors

Mr. Mohamad Teghre  
Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Promotion  
of Productive Sectors

The Republic of the Sudan

Mr. Omer Mustafa Hassan Ahmad  
Director of International Organizations  
Department  
Ministry of Trade and Supply

The Federal Republic of Somalia

Mr. Moussa Mohamad Othman  
Director of Planning Department, Ministry of  
Planning

Mr. Hassan Muhammad Ali  
Deputy Director of the Arab Affairs Department  
at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and  
International Cooperation

The Republic of Yemen

Dr. Waed Abdullah Abdul Razzaq Badheeb  
Minister of Planning and International

International Islamic Charitable Organization

Eng. Badr Saud Al-Sumait  
General Director of the International Islamic  
Charitable Organization

Saudi Fund for Development

Professor Abdullah bin Isa bin Muammar  
Director of Developmental Monitoring

Eng. Bandar bin Abdullah Al-Obaid  
Project Manager - Operations Department

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

Ms. Fekitamoeloa Utoikamanu, Under-Secretary-  
General of the United Nations and High  
Representative of the Least Developed  
Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries  
and Small Island Developing States

Mr. Mohamed Abdel Alim  
Senior Economic Affairs Officer

Ms. Aniket Ghai

World Bank

Ms. Marina Wes  
Country Director, Egypt, Yemen and Djibouti,  
Middle East and North Africa

Ms. Tania Meyer  
World Bank Resident Representative: Yemen

World Health Organization

Ms. Ivana Milovanovic  
Director of External Relations

Food and Agriculture Organization

Ms Angélica Jácome  
Director of the Office of Small Island Developing  
States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries  
(LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries  
(LLDCs)

Ms. Irina Buttoud  
FAO representative in the Islamic Republic of  
Mauritania

Mr. Etienne Philippe Peterschmitt, FAO  
Representative for the Republic of Somalia  
Mr Kayan Jaff  
Senior Partnership and Resource Mobilization  
Officer

Mr Khaled El Taweel  
Coordinator, Office of the General Director

Mr Matthew Keil  
Coordinator, Office of the General Director

United Nations Capital Development Fund  
(UNCDF)

Mr. Edoardo Tancion

Permanent Representative of Qatar to the United  
Nations

Mr. Ahmed Saif Al-Kuwari

Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the  
United Nations

Mr. Hassan Al Hussein Mo ono10.9(e)( N)4.6tt-1.6(7.2(d )JT

