

Civil Society Statement at LDC5

From Commitments to Action

(Summary as delivered by Chantal Umuhoza at the closing session of LDC5)

Your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Civil society organizations (CSOs) from around the world, in particular from LDCs and other developing countries, gathered at the Civil Society Forum of the LDC5 Summit and expressed their tanks to the government of Qatar for the hospitality that made it possible and the UN OHRLLS for partnering with civil society in its organization.

The participants explored a variety of issues of particular concern to LDCs and expressed commitment to engage with the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) and contribute to its robust monitoring and accountability.

Many CSOs participating in the Forum are rooted in local communities and derive strength and credibility from the diverse interests represented. Many of the constraints to an LDC's ability to achieve sustainable development and sustainable peace are exacerbated by external factors, and civil society actors working nationally and locally are committed to working with colleagues in LDCs as well as regionally and globally.

In their deliberations, CSOs expressed concern about the abundance of false solutions or unfulfilled promises for LDCs. They called for respect of human rights and fundamental principles for the sustainable development of LDCs, primary amongst them the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities.

Many gaps remain between the goals and aspirations of LDCs and implementation. The DPoA "note[d] with concern that the LDCs remain marginalized in the world economy and continue to suffer from extreme poverty, inequality and structural weaknesses".

Not only is the international community failing to reduce this marginalization, monetary and fiscal policies foster it. LDCs have only 3.5% voting rights at the International Monetary Fund, while they hold 24% of the votes in the UN General Assembly. The Bretton Woods Institutions and global financial system were designed when most of today's LDCs were still colonies. Many CSOs support the calls for a new Bretton Woods.

Multilateral trade rules create some exemptions for LDCs, but the terms of their integration into international markets remain unfair. .

Further, the regulatory power of LDCs is often curtailed in the expansion of the digital economy. Trade agreements force LDCs to agree to free data flows, facilitate tax evasion by digital companies, and the moratorium on customs duties for e-transmissions perpetuates structural injustices.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the unjust response to it have further marginalized the ability of LDCs to protect their residents and exposed the inequitable allocation of life-saving vaccines and treatments.

And support is woefully lacking as LDCs must adapt to the damaging impact of the climate crisis, a crisis they carry little or no responsibility for creating.

Some of the lasting solutions will come from building on LDC strengths. As the CSO Forum heard: “Farmers, pastoralists, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples and local communities use agroecology to steward their land sustainably, produce nourishing food that celebrates cultural heritage, strengthens local markets and economies and helps solve the climate crisis.”

They add that: “LDCs face particular challenges due to limitations of finance, capital equipment, and infrastructure. A large part of their economic production and distribution depends heavily on human labour, paid and unpaid, and takes place in small farms, households, and small and medium enterprises.

“As in much of the world, both paid and unpaid work are deeply gendered, with women and girls having major responsibilities for the care work that is essential to human survival. At the same time, migration has often been a part of economic subsistence, engaging entire families and communities. Climate change, deforestation and land and water degradation and pollution push people to migrate, even as it becomes riskier and more fraught with threats and fear of violence. During the present time of multiple and interlocked crises, the pandemic of violence against women and girls is more pernicious than ever.”

“Building an “economy that actually cares” is a matter of ratcheting LDCs and all developing countries from the low road to the high road to sustainable development. The low road is one created by policies of enforced austerity, deregulation, and the undermining of human rights. The high road is one that protects and promotes human rights and human development for all to catalyze national socio-economic and structural transformation. **This is the high road that LDCs need, want, and deserve.**”

Thank you,

I am submitting the full statement of the Civil Society Forum in writing for inclusion in the conference proceedings.

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Financial Architecture & Policy Reforms

The current international financial architecture does not work for LDCs. A key example is the OECD’s recent two-pillar tax agreement which allocates most taxing rights to rich countries. CSOs believe that LDCs should rather build their house on their own pillars, and refuse the biased policy advice by IMF and World Bank, which has driven them into the debt trap.

In order to support tax mobilization and fight capital flight, fair global tax rules are needed. CSOs welcome and support the initiatives by LDC governments, in particular those from Africa, to create a UN Tax Convention. The Convention should create a space where all countries

have a seat at the negotiating table, with the ultimate objective to create fair tax rules and ensure tax transparency for all countries.

The G20's "Common Framework" has failed LDCs. It is not able to organize timely and fair debt restructurings. The CSOs promote the **establishment of a multilateral legal framework under the auspices of the UN that would comprehensively address unsustainable and illegitimate debt, including through extensive debt cancellation**: Current ad-hoc international initiatives to address the debt resolution are insufficient and existing debt sustainability assessments inadequate, as they disregard human rights, gender equality or climate investment needs. The United Nations, with the core mandate to address critical global issues, and the fact that it is neither debtor nor creditor itself, is the only inclusive multilateral and democratic space that has the legitimacy and competence to discuss and agree a multilateral legal framework to prevent and address sovereign debt crises;

The CSOs support a **UN Tax Convention to comprehensively address tax havens, tax abuse by multinational corporations and other illicit financial flows**: Following the approval by consensus of the Africa Group's UNGA Second Committee proposal in November 2022, it is essential to urgently begin intergovernmental negotiations to strengthen inclusive and effective tax cooperation at the United Nations. Unless the failures of the international tax system are urgently addressed, countries around the world will continue to lose billions of public revenue dollars. This will increase the already unsustainable debt levels, worsen income and wealth inequality and undermine governments' abilities to respond to the crisis, while also decreasing the public revenue base of developing countries.

The CSOs advocate for **terminating Investor-State-Dispute-Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms**: UN member states should elaborate a multilateral agreement for a coordinated and permanent termination of ISDS mechanisms that has empowered transnational corporations to sue governments in confidential tribunals on a range of issues including debt, tax and increasingly climate action;

Regulation of credit rating agencies (CRAs): United Nations should lead on further supervision and regulation of credit rating agencies (CRAs) by convening a universal, intergovernmental commission with a mandate to examine needed international institutional innovations, including in the UN, required to correct and avert the adverse impacts of CRAs on international finance;

The CSOs urge a review of the **development outcomes of public-private-partnerships, blended finance and other financing mechanisms established to promote a 'private finance first' approach to infrastructure and public services**. The COVID-19 pandemic has provided a stark reminder of the importance of universal, timely, affordable, gender-responsive, high quality and accessible public services, as well as sustainable infrastructure. The inadequacy of development models that prioritize private profit and financialization to fulfil public needs, goes against human rights and enables excessive profiteering out of humanitarian emergencies and disasters has been fully exposed;

Finally, CSOs demand **the implementation of the official development assistance (ODA) commitments to fulfil and exceed the 0.7% target for ODA in the form of unconditional grants**. As the ambitions of Agenda 2030 are further away, it is vital to make sure that the long-standing commitments to delivering international development assistance, including ensuring quality and effectiveness, are realized and to secure commitments to make up for more than 50 years of broken commitments, in addition to future targets for ODA flows.

Food Systems & Agroecology

LDCs have enormous natural resource wealth. In contrast to high-tech industrialized agriculture that depends on imported inputs and fossil fuels to build monocrop production systems, agroecology offers a science-based, holistic, and locally owned approach to the structural transformation of farming and food systems outlined in the Doha Plan of Action for LDCs

This is the main message emerging from a panel that discussed the challenges that face LDC agriculture, the promise of agroecology, and the importance of investing in agroecological practices to build food sovereignty. Four working groups discussed women's empowerment, farmer seed systems, national experiences of agroecology, and the international shocks that undermine food system resilience.

The gathered CSOs welcomed the Doha Program of Action's (DPoA) commitment to move from potential to prosperity by investing in people. They want to see this public investment include supporting the capacity of rural communities to end hunger, malnutrition and poverty. Where most governments and private sector focus on the lacks that LDCs have somehow to fill, CSOs promoting agroecology see LDCs as having wealth that needs cultivating, including in knowledge and natural resources. The panel emphasized the importance of protecting that wealth and promoting resilient communities of small-scale farmers, pastoralists, fisher folks, consumer groups, territorial markets and agri-food related small and medium enterprises.

Speakers challenged the notion that LDCs are "left behind" by the global economy. In fact, they are much more heavily integrated into world markets than any other group of countries, but on deeply unequal terms. Those terms reflect patterns of colonial exploitation that date back hundreds of years, but also new and updated systems of exploitation, including deeply unfair rules around both public and private debt servicing and very high levels of corporate concentration in global commodity trade. Global finance rules trap LDCs in a vicious cycle of having to find foreign exchange to pay for imported food, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs, which pushes ever more land into cash crop production for export at the cost of biodiverse, resilient ecosystems. The cycle diverts resources away from diverse local food production and distribution systems, from public investment on social programs, including education and health, from tools to support adaptation to climate change, and from tools to reduce risk and vulnerability to international market shocks.

There is compelling evidence that through techniques such as agroforestry, green manures, vermi-composting, cover crops, minimum tillage and other regenerative techniques, agroecology improves the carbon content of soils, dramatically increases water holding capacity of the soil and resistance to drought and tempers the effect of high temperatures. Inter-cropping techniques reduce insect damage. Increases in the production, processing and consumption of diverse locally produced food fosters nutritious diets and reverses the erosion of food cultures and ensures the right to food. This in turn strengthens people's immune systems against infectious diseases, including COVID-19 and overcomes micronutrient deficiencies. Moreover, reducing dependence on external inputs reduces farmers' costs and is better for long-term soil health than reliance on synthetic fertilizers. Public procurement programs are another important tool to create markets for smallholders practicing agroecology while supporting school feeding and nutrition initiatives.

CSO participants expressed their concern about the proposed significant increase of African land under industrial agriculture. Wherever large-scale land acquisitions occur, civil society bears witness to the failure to gain community consent, failure to compensate, forced evictions of indigenous people, women's loss of access to productive land and other natural resources, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, and land degradation, all leading to starvation, hunger and increased malnutrition.

The CSOs denounced top-down, Public-Private Partnerships as an approach to agricultural development and the imposition of genetically modified crops in LDCs and across the global South. They lamented the failure of many government leaders to see beyond the colonial narrative that agriculture in LDCs can only be modernized by adopting the practices of the Global North. LDCs have their own resources and know-how to produce and distribute healthy food using effective, low-cost, chemical free inputs, regenerating the soil sustainably and fostering farmer control of localized seed systems.

"This conference propagates the idea that African farmers don't produce enough food because they don't use enough chemical fertilizers," said AFSA General Coordinator Million Belay. "The implication is that only if we pump our farms full of agrochemicals, we will grow more food. In the end that means polluting the soil, endangering the health of farmers and consumers, robbing people of their right to healthy, culturally appropriate and nutritious food, and increasing vulnerability to climate change. It also ignores the many ways in which innovative farmers and researchers have developed soil amendments that are safe for environment and for those working in farm sector."

The CSOs called on LDC governments and donors to redirect funding away from failed "green revolution" approaches and false solutions, such as carbon markets and biodiversity offsets for agriculture, and instead, support agroecological transitions to ensure food sovereignty through proven alternatives that reduce the need to import expensive, fossil fuel-based agrochemicals, to help meet the sustainable development goals (UN Agenda 2030) of LDCs. Combining indigenous knowledge, farmer-driven and science-based innovations, our knowledge of ecosystems' natural processes and infrastructures that support territorial markets,

agroecological food systems are the best way to build adaptive capacity and reduce climate harm, while ensuring food and nutrition security in our communities.

CSOs called upon the governments to engage with them and to incorporate farmers' voices into the agricultural policies so that agroecological practices can be enhanced in the LDC countries.

Informality, Care and Migration

The challenges of informal labour, unpaid or poorly paid care work, and violations of the human rights of migrant workers require actions to promote progressive structural transformation by multilateral institutions, governments, private corporations, and society at large. Such actions are relevant and essential, for example, for women fish workers in the Pacific, community health workers on the frontlines of the global pandemic, or migrant domestic workers.

LDCs face particular challenges due to limitations of finance, capital equipment, and infrastructure. A large part of their economic production and distribution depends heavily on human labour, paid and unpaid, and takes place in small farms, households, and small and medium enterprises. As in much of the world, both paid and unpaid work are deeply gendered, with women and girls having major responsibilities for the care work that is essential to human survival. At the same time, migration has often been a part of economic subsistence, engaging entire families and communities. But growing challenges of climate change, deforestation and land and water degradation and pollution mean that migration for employment has become more and more essential to more and more people, even as it becomes riskier and more fraught with threats and fear of violence.

Many participants expressed concerns in numerous countries about the lack of security for communities in large areas, resulting in the migration of people in search of safety. This not only impacts on the lives and welfare of those forced to flee, but also those in communities where the migrants seek refuge.

During the present time of multiple and interlocked crises, the structural drivers of the pandemic of violence, particularly against women and girls, are more pernicious than ever.

Social protection needs are therefore great, but LDCs have considerable challenges in meeting them. Needs for fair and non-discriminatory wages, workplace safety and effective regulation, pensions and protection against disability, old age and illness, recognition of and fair compensation for care work as a public good, and the need for affordable and people-friendly transport and other infrastructure, finance, and markets confront the harsh realities of unfair global trade practices and taxation systems, 'odious debt', and austerity policies that shrink already limited fiscal space. The hopes and aspirations of young people for quality education, employment and opportunities are especially vulnerable to these harsh realities.

This plenary addressed these realities and highlighted what can be done through fairer policies, financing, laws, and institutions. Addressing unequal burden of care work is the responsibility of LDC states, developed states, IFIs, donor organizations and corporations. These challenges have to be addressed at multiple levels:

- * Accountability for human rights commitments can be effectively advanced through the work of Treaty Bodies, UPRs and Special Procedures.

- * Trade agreements can be either harmful or beneficial to workers' rights. They should catalyze positive changes for informal and care workers by supporting fair wages, decent working conditions and an enabling environment for SMEs to create jobs.

- * Intra and inter-regional migration of workers can be a win-win strategy for both sending and receiving countries provided the workers involved are covered by legal protection, decent work conditions, including adequate social protection, freedom from violence, and rights to health and education.

- * Governments must invest long term in refugee integration, beyond daily survival to social protection and decent work.

- * Policies towards the private corporate sector should move from promoting corporate social responsibility as charity to corporate social accountability through legally binding regulatory reforms e.g. contractual work with parental leave, providing living wage, payment of social security, care facilities.

- * Unpaid care work, mostly done by women and girls, must be reduced and redistributed by governments, as well as recognized in constitutions and laws.

- * Effective infrastructure for care services can be built through networks that link and coordinate across the different care services, as well as connecting care services with the rest of the economy.

Building an “economy that actually cares” is a matter both of protecting/promoting human rights for all workers, especially for women and girls, as well as ratcheting LDCs and LMICs generally from the low road to the high road to development. The low road is one created by policies of enforced austerity, deregulation, and disintegration of workers human rights. This road is one in which too many countries are currently mired. The high road is one that protects and promotes human rights and human development for all, and thereby creates high quality workforces that can catalyze national socio-economic and structural transformation. This is the high road that LDCs need, want, and deserve.

Planetary Health & Peoples' Health

People across the globe face an unprecedented 'polycrisis' or multiple crises. This is especially true for the citizens of LDCs, whose countries are denied the tools and resources to be able to protect them, unlike those in rich countries.

The CS Forum noted that those who are most impacted by crises be it climate, inequality and poverty, a health pandemic, ecosystem collapse and breaches of planetary limits, or environmental and human rights injustices associated with the extraction of the material resources, are the ones who bear the least responsibility for causing these crises and have the least ability to shape the solutions and responses to these crises.

Responsibility for these crises have been primarily fuelled by unsustainable consumption and extractivist logics that benefit the global North, who maintain and underpin their dominant economic, social, and political systems at the expense of others.

Speakers noted that despite the various goals set by different UN fora – including the SDG's, there has not only been a failure to meet those most basic goals but that without a concerted and determined set of actions that address the structural reasons for why these basic rights are being denied to both the citizens of the LDC's and also many others in the global South, then the DPoA will continue to fail to deliver.

The first step to addressing this is the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR) which is the cornerstone of the Rio Declaration of 1992, and the subsequent Conventions on Climate, Biodiversity, Agenda 21 and should shape all policies on sustainable development.

The Civil Society Forum reiterated that the goal of 'no one left behind' can only be met if the international community ensures that all of its policies are aligned to the goal that 'everyone has the right to live with dignity and in harmony with the planet'. This requires the richest countries to recognize their legal, moral and political responsibility to do their fair share of action based on the fundamental principle of CBDR to tackle the climate crisis. Participants noted with alarm that rather than commit to real zero emissions goals by 2030, the richest countries continue to seek to colonize the remaining carbon budget for 1.5c and are banking on unproven, risky technologies such as 'net-zero' and 'offsets' which allow the richest countries to continue to pollute. All international fora must also respect the moratorium on geo-engineering agreed at the UN Convention on Biodiversity.

It was noted that the IPCC AR6 Report set out clearly that many of the vulnerabilities faced by the poorest as climate impacts worsen are due to structural inequities between the richest in the world and the poorest. The models of neocolonialism are causing that vulnerability and without action on trade, tax, debt as part of a wider reform agenda of the global financial architecture those vulnerabilities will not be addressed.

Participants supported the call by the IPCC that a global compact on poverty and climate must go hand in hand, recognizing that for LDC countries their priorities remain addressing poverty, adaptation and loss and damage. The right to a clean and healthy environment can only be realized when social and economic rights such as the right to a living wage, social protection, universal public services are met.

The CS Forum expressed alarm that LDC countries and the global South in general who are rich in both natural resources and biodiversity are denied the benefits of these resources.

Proposals on conservation and the financialization of nature do not respect the rights of local communities including indigenous peoples to control their own territories and will fail to preserve the planet. Policies such as land rights must be at the cornerstone of plans to protect the health of our planet.

However, the Forum noted that due to both historical and present policies many LDC countries are left with little choice but to agree to exploit their natural resources. The benefits of those natural resources continue to primarily profit multinational corporations and supply chains of the global North. This pattern of commodity exchange adds little value to LDC countries and actively prevents them from diversifying their economies and investing in the sustainable economies of the future. Economic sovereignty is critical to ensure that both the policy space and tools are available for LDC countries to be able to deliver on the priorities for their citizens.

Participants supported attempts by governments in the global South for closer regional economic and political co-operation and integration as a practical step to enhance regional economic inclusive sustainability. The starting point is the unequal relationships between the north and south, the damage done by the structural adjustment programmes imposed on them.

Critical to delivering the DPoA is redirecting their economies away from commodity exports to the north towards meeting the needs of their citizens. Such approaches are only viable through economic control, transparency and both the accountability and the importance of regulatory interventions in their economies to build their own manufacturing capacity, exactly as the richest countries have done. The priority must be to bring their resources such as minerals and metals into public control, to ensure that the use of such resources is both sustainable and can build the productive capacities of their economies.

The Covid pandemic and the response of the richest countries has yet again illustrated the failure of the international community to act in a spirit of solidarity and co-operation. It has once again demonstrated the critical importance of universal healthcare systems, noting that for many LDC countries the debt trap forces many to spend more on serving illegitimate debt than on their health systems. The CS Forum reminded the international community that the response to previous health pandemics such as AIDS/HIV demonstrated the need for well-funded, resourced community health workers to deliver public health interventions. These workers, mainly women, have been at the forefront of protecting people's health but are often the lowest paid, exploited, face informality and precarity.

The Forum noted that as new viruses and health pandemics become a new reality as the climate and biodiversity crisis worsen. LDC countries like others in the global South must not only have the right to automatic TRIPs waivers, but they must have the resources to develop their own capacity to produce medicines and vaccines. Investing in regional manufacturing bases whose mandates are determined through democratic control and governance are key to ensuring future resilience.

Great concern was expressed that failed models of privatized health care, insurance schemes, and approaches of unaccountable global actors are being promoted that will benefit those seeking to make profit from health by prioritizing the creation of markets. The right to health is not simply having access to health, but the ability to realize that right - so the starting point must be public health systems.

Without the necessary regulatory interventions needed by the State - citizens and governments will not have the policy tools or the economic space needed to deliver the

solutions needed. Participants urged that the paradigm shift need also recognizes that addressing these issues in isolation is a luxury at best and a failed approach. The CS Forum called for a profound shift and a centring of the public sphere and public interest and a rebuilding of internationalism, solidarity and co-operation.

Whilst economies of the global North are discussing plans to transition their economies, those plans are focused only on the material inputs and fail to ensure that the transition is both just and leaves no one behind. The Forum commends the various approaches being developed across the global South that recognize the knowledge of peoples in the Post Extractive Futures and Eco Social Pact in Latin America, the feminist Green New Deal in Africa, Just Transition frameworks in Asia as part of a people led 'Global Green New Deal' by centring demands on climate justice through a fair share lens, tackling inequality, respecting planetary limits and recognizing that addressing current unjust economic systems requires transfers of grant based finance and technology. Doing so is neither charity but must be part of a wider reparations' framework that seeks to repay the harm done by failed policies imposed by the global North as well as a commitment to do no further harm.

CSO commitment

1. The foundation of all policies, including realizing the DPoA is CBDR and principles of equity and justice.
2. A coherent and interconnected framework to deliver the DPoA that aligns all other multilateral institutions and policies behind the goal that everyone has the right to live with dignity and in harmony with the planet.
3. The centrality of tackling inequality, poverty is key to addressing the climate and ecosystems crisis, central to which is universal public services.
4. A paradigm shift to deliver an inclusive, just transition for all, including financial and technology transfers from the global North to the poorest countries.
5. The principle of sovereignty is key to ensuring the right to development and the realization of rights including sovereignty over resources along with political and economic space and tools for diversification of economies.

Digital transformation

The digital revolution is at a point of inflection, where techno-libertarian, corporate-led processes can lead to undesirable results. There is a democratic deficit in the global governance of data, artificial intelligence (AI) and platform technologies may perpetuate a neocolonial economic paradigm based on control over the data resources of people of developing countries.

The digital divide represents and reinforces the development divide – between developed and developing, between rural and urban, between men and women, preventing the world's majority from being active participants and beneficiaries of technological development.

The call for a digital transition must acknowledge the failure of the current digital order that is deepening inequalities.

Algorithmic management is at the root of labour rights violations in digital value chains

Automated welfare systems, often managed through PPPs, have technicized state-citizen relationships, delegitimizing citizen's voices and claims.

The weaponization of social media for political polarization and propaganda warfare in the poorest countries by powerful nations and digital analytics firms has destroyed the fabric of local democracy.

Incessant data collection and unethical profiling by cross-border data businesses reflect new incursions on human rights in the digital order.

The regulatory power of LDCs is often curtailed in the digital economy. Trade agreements that force LDCs to agree to free data flows, tax evasion by digital companies and the moratorium on customs duties for e-transmissions are trade perpetuate structural injustices of/in the digital order.

The call for a digital transition should recognize that the current techno-social paradigm has failed the foundational tenets of equity and LDCs are being left behind.[1]

Over half of the LDC population still have no access to electricity. Affordability and accessibility of devices is meaningless without contextual innovation that catalyses virtuous cycles of local productivity and wellbeing on the one hand and technological diffusion and use on the other; to put it differently, a generative, decentralized and locally controlled platform economy that supplants the dominant model based on the enclosure of data and data-based intelligence.

Structural transformation hinges on both human and techno-institutional capabilities. Digital infrastructure acquires strategic significance only when tied to an economic policy framework that centres the role of infrastructure in enabling and supporting human capabilities that build adaptive capacity and improve human well-being. Techno-institutional and human capabilities are two sides of the development coin.

Today, a handful of corporate platforms with the essential infrastructure of interconnection are transforming social, economic, political activities. Countering the systemic deskilling, erasure of contextual knowledge and marginalization of local capital formation in the modus operandi of tech platforms require increased investment.

Closing the technology divide without leaving anyone behind requires recognition, promotion, enabling the home-grown technologies, capacities, innovations and knowledge systems of local and indigenous communities in LDCs

Public financing for building public digital infrastructural ecosystem - increased investment in human and knowledge capital, public digital infrastructure underpinning critical economic and social sectors, and research and development cultures that propel public digital innovation

ecosystems so that value generated from frontier data and AI technologies is ploughed back into the local economy.

As a counter to the existing exploitative, monopolistic, and data-extractivist platforms – leading to a “*race to the bottom*” for workers – public platform infrastructures that promote collectivist and cooperativist enterprises are critical. Such infrastructures can galvanize sustainable production and equitable redistribution in the local economy.

At the international level, there needs to be an effective governance framework for holding transnational digital corporations accountable. This requires the reform of global taxation, trade, and IP regimes, as well as effective enforcement of the human rights obligations of business enterprises. An international data order based on sovereign equality of all countries and peoples for the realization of human rights in the digital age, is needed, including a new regime of labour rights that specifically accords protection to workers in the digital economy.

Commitment to Follow-up

Civil society has demonstrated its commitment to working with the multilateral system in addressing the fundamental challenges facing us all, not least citizens and residents of LDCs. It is now more vibrant than it has ever been with the presence at this conference of civil society representation from most LDCs, as well as other developing countries and partner countries.

Many civil society organizations participating in the Forum are rooted in local communities and derive strength and credibility from the diverse interests represented. Since many of the overwhelming constraints to an LDC’s ability to achieve sustainable development are defined by external factors, its civil society actors working nationally recognize the need for collaboration with actors from other countries, both LDC and non-LDC. Civil society representatives present at LDC5 expressed commitment to working together to this end.

The DPoA provides an ongoing framework around which to work together towards achieving socially just, equitable and sustainable development in each and every LDC. This will require collective action and constructive engagement with all relevant actors. To this end, many participants proposed an approach at country level that identifies interim goals relating to the six substantive commitments defined in the DPoA and use these as a basis for regular assessments of progress.

Thank you.

[1] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. (2022, February 16). Recovering from COVID-19 in an increasingly digital economy: Implications for sustainable development - Note by the UNCTAD Secretariat. United Nations. Retrieved February 10, 2023, from https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdb_e5d2_en.pdf