



UNECE



Expert Group Meeting
on
the Midterm Review of
Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries
for the Decade 2014-2024

Almaty, Kazakhstan
18-19 September 2018

Venue: The Dom Priyomov Convention Centre

Concept Note and Programme

Vienna Programme of Action

The Vienna Programme of Action was adopted in November 2014 during the Second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries. It is the principal programme of the United Nations that addresses issues related to development of states that lack direct access to the sea. This geographical constraint impedes their ability for international economic interaction and consequently makes development a more strenuous process. The overarching goal of the Vienna Programme of Action “is to address the special development needs and challenges of landlocked developing countries arising from landlockedness, remoteness and geographical constraints in a more coherent manner and thus contribute to an enhanced rate of sustainable and inclusive growth, which can contribute to the eradication of poverty by moving towards the goal of ending extreme poverty”.

Taking into the consideration the particular predicaments of landlocked developing countries, of which there are 12 in Asia and the Pacific, the Vienna Programme of Action identifies several priorities of action. These include: fundamental transit policy issues (priority 1); infrastructure development and maintenance (priority 2), which includes transport infrastructure (priority 2a) and energy and communications technology infrastructure (priority 2b); international trade (priority 3a) and trade facilitation (priority 3b); regional integration and cooperation (priority 4); and structural economic transformation (priority 5). The final priority (number 6) refers to means of implementation.

Midterm Review

Through the adoption of Resolution A/RES/72/232, “Follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries”, the General Assembly has decided to convene a comprehensive high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 in 2019, to assess progress made in its implementation. As highlighted in Resolution A/C.2//72/L.62, this high-level midterm review is to be preceded by regional preparatory meetings. This expert group meeting aims at discussing the progress made, contributing to the preparation of the Asia-Pacific regional midterm review and addressing the challenges related to VPoA implementation.

The expert group meeting, which is being organized by UNESCAP, UNCTAD and UNECE, will examine the status of implementation of the priorities of the Vienna Programme of Action in Asia’s landlocked developing countries. The outcome of the meeting will feed into the Mid-term Review of the Vienna Programme of Action.

Tentative Programme:

DAY 1	
8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-9:40	Opening Session Introductory remarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mr. Oliver Paddison, UNESCAP• Mr. Mussie Delelegn Arega, UNCTAD• Mr. Roel Janssens, UNECE• Ms. Dagmar Hertova, OHRLLS
<u>Session 1:</u> 9:40-11:10	Fundamental Transit Policy Issues and Transport Infrastructure <p>The session assesses the progress in the implementation of the Priority 1 and Priority 2 (transport infrastructure component) of the Vienna Programme of Action.</p> <p>Effective transit policies play an important role in development of landlocked countries, as they facilitate access to the world’s markets. For this, harmonization, simplification and standardization of transit rules and documents by becoming party to international conventions on transport and transit is an important process for States.</p> <p>Infrastructure development, including transport infrastructure, reduces the costs of development for LLDCs. In most LLDCs’, transport infrastructure continues to be inadequate as compared to the</p>

	<p>existing needs, such that additional efforts are required to address these shortcomings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Ms. Azhar Jaimurzina Ducrest, ESCAP • Presentations by LLDCs’ representatives • Discussion and Conclusions
11:10-11:25	Coffee break
<u>Session 2:</u> 11:25-12:55	<p>Information and Communication Technology Infrastructure</p> <p>Information and communication technology infrastructure contributes to sustainable and inclusive growth, increasing productivity across sectors, facilitating market expansion, lowering costs, facilitating access to services, and increasing participation in governance, among others. The session examines the progress made in addressing challenges in keeping up with the necessary infrastructure deployment and concomitant evolution of policy frameworks related to Priority 2 (Information and communications technology infrastructure component).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Mr. Roel Janssens, UNECE • Presentations by LLDCs’ representatives • Discussion and Conclusions
13:00-14:00	Lunch
<u>Session 3:</u> 14:00-15:30	<p>International Trade and Trade Facilitation</p> <p>International trade is of paramount importance for development. Greater integration into global trade and value chains is vital for increasing countries’ competitiveness. Landlocked developing countries’ main predicament relates to high costs of international trade due to their geographic impediments; non-physical barriers and inefficiencies make transport costs even higher. The session assesses the progress in Priority 3 of VPoA among landlocked developing countries, in relation to international trade developments and progress in implementing trade facilitation measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Mr. Mussie Delelegn Arega, UNCTAD • Presentations by LLDCs’ representatives • Discussion and Conclusions
15:30-15:45	Coffee Break

<p><u>Session 4:</u> 15:45-17:15</p>	<p>Regional Integration and Cooperation</p> <p>Close cooperation with transit countries is essential to facilitate landlocked developing countries' access to world markets. This necessitates closer cooperation among and between landlocked and transit countries and meaningful regional integration. Asia is home to various sub-regional cooperation mechanisms, featuring various degrees of integration. The session focuses on assessing progress in regional integration and cooperation and its facilitation of LLDCs' development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Mr. Christopher Athey, UNECE • Presentation by Mr. Andrzej Bolesta, UNESCAP • Presentations by LLDCs' representatives • Discussion and Conclusions
<p>DAY 2</p>	
<p>9:00-9:10</p>	<p>Opening remarks, Mr Hongjoo Hahm, Officer in Charge, ESCAP</p>
<p><u>Session 5:</u> 9:10-10:40</p>	<p>Structural Economic Transformation</p> <p>Many landlocked developing countries rely on a limited number of export commodities with low value addition. To better utilise their economic potential, measures need to be taken to structurally transform their economies. However, efforts do to so far are, in many cases, inadequate. Improving manufacturing capacities and diversifying production bases, and thus enhancing their contribution to regional and global value chains, can effectively contribute to LLDCs' development. This requires development in science and technology and a stronger private sector. The session assesses the progress in structural transformation and identifies related challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Mr. Mussie Delelegn Arega, UNCTAD • Presentations by LLDCs' representatives • Discussion and Conclusions
<p>10:40-11:00</p>	<p>Coffee Break</p>
<p><u>Session 6:</u> 11:00-12:30</p>	<p>Means of Implementation</p> <p>The session focuses on means of implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action's priorities. It examines the availability of domestic resources, the support of development partners, ODA flows, aid for trade, South-South cooperation, international organisations' contribution and private sector's role through FDI.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Ms. Dagmar Hertova, OHRLLS • Presentations by LLDCs’ representatives • Discussion and Conclusions
12:30-13:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch
13:30-15:00	<p>Closing Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Odbayar Erdenetsogt, Executive Director, International Think Tank for LLDCs • Ms. Renata Cristaldo, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Paraguay. Representative of Chair, Group of Landlocked Developing Countries • Conclusions