

**Statement Delivered by Nepal on behalf of the LDC Group at the Trade
Facilitation Committee Meeting**

(25 June 2019)

Good Afternoon Everyone!

Thank you, Chair for convening this meeting and giving me the Floor

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the LDC Group.

As the LDC Group is taking the floor first time, we wish to congratulate Excellency Ambassador Ms. Dalia KADIŠIENE (Lithuania) for completing the chairmanship of the TF Committee successfully. Also, we would like to welcome H.E. Mr. Mohammad Qurban Haqjo (Afghanistan) as a new Chair of this Committee and wish you a successful tenure. You may count the support of LDC Group.

The LDC Group would like to thank Secretariat (Ms. Nora Newfeld) for the updates on notification and ratification of the TFA.

Similarly, we thank Srilanka and USA for experience sharing related to Article 1.4. Also, we thank the representative of Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation for the information and update of the work. The information shared is very useful.

The LDC Group also wishes to extend thank to the TFAF / WTO, specifically Sheri Rosenow and her team for updating the TFAF activities including for co-sponsoring and coordinating the LDC 2nd Retreat on Trade Facilitation which was held on 14 and 15 June.

Similarly, our thank goes to Summit Alliances International (SAI), DFID TAF 2 plus and Australian Aid, DFAT for co-funding and providing support to make the retreat successful.

During the retreat, presentations, discussions and experience sharing on the state of play of TFA implementation remained quite useful as the LDC members have different issues in implementation of the TFA. The draft 'Work Book' prepared by the WTO Secretariat and discussed at the retreat mirrors the status of implementation of the agreement of each LDC members. We are of the view that the Work Book will be a good resource for the LDC members themselves as well as for the development partners to boost the effective implementation of the agreement. The presentations from World Customs Organization/WCO and UNCTAD were quite useful. In this context, we would like to thank the representative of WCO and UNCTAD as well.

The implementation of the TFA could reduce time, cost, bureaucratic delays and red tape in cross border trade and enhance the efficiency of trade transaction. Since the TFA focuses on simplification, standardization, modernization and harmonization of import- export procedure and expedites the movement, release and clearance of goods including goods in transit, its effective implementation benefits to consumers, traders, entrepreneurs and governments. Moreover, TFA is significant to LLDCs as the Article 11 provides facilitating procedures including rationalization of fees and formalities during transit. Likewise, the TFA implementation is critical for regional integration.

Regarding the implementation, the LDC members are in diverse stages. Although TFA implementation is important for LDC members, they have to focus on other priority areas such as, poverty reduction, physical infrastructure development, invest in health and education, among others. It is highly significant to provide support by the developed members as aimed in the TF agreement. Without external support, it is very difficult for LDC members to implement the category C commitments.

We would like to thank developed members who notified under the Article 22 of the agreement and encourage them to provide dedicated support at an enhanced level to implement the category C notifications of the LDC members.

Accordingly, ensuring ownership, harmonization, mutual accountability, predictability and transparency in mobilizing the external assistance is highly important to have the impact in the ground. It is very imperative that the support

should not be confined to address the border level issue, it should equally focus on behind the border issues. Likewise, the balance between hardware and software part is equally important.

Finally, Chair, I take this opportunity to thank developed members and development partners for the support provided so far and would like to encourage to provide additional support in line with TFA to address the need and priority of the LDC members.

I thank you