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Groups of countries in special situations: follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

Note verbale dated 13 December 2017 from the Permanent Mission of Zambia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Zambia to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to transmit herewith a letter from the Chair of the Bureau of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, dated 28 September 2017 (see annex).



**Annex to the note verbale dated 13 December 2017 from the
Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General**

28 September 2017

In my capacity as Chair of the Bureau of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, I have the honour to transmit herewith the revised and updated text of the rules of procedure, adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries at their sixteenth Ministerial Meeting, held in New York on 20 September 2017 on the sidelines of the general debate of the seventy-second session of the General Assembly (see enclosure), and of the Ministerial Declaration (see [A/72/635](#)). I should be grateful if the present letter and its enclosure could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 22 (b), and as a revision to the earlier document ([A/C.2/64/5](#)).

(Signed) Lazarous **Kapambwe**

Ambassador

Permanent Representative

Chair of the Landlocked Developing Countries

Enclosure

Rules of procedure of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries

1. The Group and its membership

1.1. The Group of Landlocked Developing Countries is composed of 32 developing Member States of the United Nations that have no sea-coast, as defined in article 124 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (see appendix for list of Member States).¹

1.2. Any landlocked developing country that is a Member State of the United Nations and that wishes to become a member of the Group shall do so by writing to the Group's Chairperson, and the Chairperson shall notify the Group accordingly.

1.3. The Group may grant observer status to other United Nations Member States that express interest in the work of the Group. Observer States may be invited to participate in formal meetings. Decisions on issues of importance to the Group, including the right to negotiate, shall be reserved for its member States.

2. Objective

2.1. The Group shall provide the forum for its member States to articulate and promote their collective economic interests, including, in particular, the effective implementation of the globally agreed goals, targets and programmes of action relating to the development of the landlocked developing countries, in order to enhance their joint negotiating capacity on major international economic issues within the United Nations system, the World Trade Organization and all international and multilateral forums.

2.2. The attention of the Group shall be directed primarily at achieving the best terms for the Group in resolutions, declarations, plans of action and other decisions of the United Nations General Assembly, international summits, conventions and conferences. The Group shall try to obtain concessions, facilities and additional financial resources and technical assistance from transit developing countries, donor countries, the United Nations system and other international and regional development, economic, social and financial institutions.

3. Decision-making

3.1. The Group shall take decisions based on consensus.²

3.2. A presence of two thirds of the membership of the Group shall be required for the purposes of electing a new Bureau.

¹ The Plurinational State of Bolivia underscores its maritime condition as stated in the declaration manifested in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

² "Consensus" means adoption of a decision without formal objections and vote; this being possible only when no delegation formally objects to a consensus being recorded, though some delegations may have reservations to the substantive matter at issue or to a part of it (*United Nations Juridical Yearbook 1987* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.V.6), chap. VI).

4. Bureau, Chair and responsibilities

4.1. The Group shall elect seven members of the Bureau from among the representatives of its members according to the following geographical distribution:

Three representatives of member States from Africa

Two representatives of member States from Asia

One representative of member States from Eastern Europe

One representative of member States from Latin America

4.2. The Group shall elect a Chair from among the Bureau members based on the principle of geographical rotation, giving due regard to previous terms on the basis of information provided by the Secretariat. Should a Regional Group be unable to propose a candidate to serve as Chair, the next group in line shall propose a candidate, based on the principle of geographical rotation.

4.3. The Group shall elect a Vice-Chairperson from among the Bureau Members. The Vice-Chairperson shall act as the Chairperson during the absence of the Chairperson.

4.4. The election of the Bureau and the Chairperson shall be formalized during the annual Ministerial Meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of landlocked developing countries.

4.5. The term of office of the Chairperson and of the members of the Bureau shall begin on 1 January for a period of two years, and shall end on 31 December.

4.6. The primary task of the Chairperson shall be to chair all meetings of the Group and coordinate the Group's actions. The Chairperson shall act as spokesperson for the Group and represent the common views of the Group in the intergovernmental meetings of the United Nations system and all international and multilateral forums.

4.7. The Bureau may appoint any of its members as coordinators for specific substantive issues, such as, inter alia, international trade, financing for development and climate change.

4.8. The members of the Bureau shall uphold and promote the transparency and accountability of their actions during their tenure.

Visibility

4.9. The Chairperson shall develop the visibility and communication guidelines of the Group with the support of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, in order to effectively communicate the interests of the Group to the international community, to gain support for the trust fund, aimed at carrying out the activities undertaken by the Office to effectively implement the globally agreed goals, targets and programmes of action relating to the development of the landlocked developing countries.

4.10. The visibility and communication guidelines shall be introduced at the beginning of the year for the consideration of the Group, and updated on an annual basis.

Annual report

4.11. The Chairperson shall present an annual report to the Group with the support of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States at the end of the year.

Calendar of activities

4.12. The Chairperson shall present the calendar of activities to the Group for consideration at the beginning of each year.

Summary records

4.13. The Chairperson shall communicate to the Group a summary of the minutes of the formal meetings.

Archives

4.14. The Chairperson shall designate a member of the Bureau to coordinate with the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States to preserve and provide access to the records that document the activities of the Group of landlocked developing countries.

5. Annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs

5.1. The annual meeting of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries shall be convened, as appropriate, at the beginning of the regular session of the General Assembly in New York.

6. Meetings of ministers responsible for trade and transport infrastructure

6.1. Periodically, meetings of the ministers responsible for trade of the landlocked developing countries shall be convened, as appropriate, to consult on and coordinate the Group's position on trade-related issues of interest to the Group, including the negotiations at the World Trade Organization.

6.2. Periodically, meetings of the ministers responsible for the transport infrastructure of the landlocked developing countries shall be convened, as appropriate.

6.3. Ad hoc ministerial meetings of landlocked developing countries may be convened, as appropriate, to consult on the Group's position on other development-related issues of major interest to the Group.

Appendix

Group of Landlocked Developing Countries: composition by region (as at September 2016)

Africa

1. Botswana
2. Burkina Faso
3. Burundi
4. Central African Republic
5. Chad
6. Ethiopia
7. Lesotho
8. Malawi
9. Mali
10. Niger
11. Rwanda
12. South Sudan
13. Swaziland
14. Uganda
15. Zambia
16. Zimbabwe

Asia

17. Afghanistan
18. Bhutan
19. Kazakhstan
20. Kyrgyzstan
21. Lao People's Democratic Republic
22. Mongolia
23. Nepal
24. Tajikistan
25. Turkmenistan
26. Uzbekistan

Eastern Europe

27. Armenia
28. Azerbaijan
29. Republic of Moldova
30. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Latin America

31. Bolivia (Plurinational State of)
32. Paraguay

Observers to the Group

Switzerland (Geneva-based Group)
