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Agenda item 7

**Adoption of the report of the Committee on its
fifty-ninth session**

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Jun Yamada (Japan)

Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the year 2020

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 8

Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States

1. At its 5th meeting, on 4 June 2019, the Committee considered programme 8, Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, of the proposed programme plan for 2020 and programme performance information for 2018 ([A/74/6 \(Sect. 10\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2019/CRP.1/Rev.2](#)).
2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during its consideration by the Committee.

Discussion

3. Several delegations expressed their appreciation for the work of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in implementing its programme, working towards eradicating poverty and bringing about structural change and market integration, with one noting that the Office did so with fairly moderate resources. It was underscored that the three categories of countries covered by the Office – least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing



States – needed the support of the international community as they continued to face serious challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and tackling climate change.

4. The view was expressed that, in recent years, unilateral restrictive trade measures had caused a drop in business activity and negatively affected supply chains. Similarly, one delegation said that unilateral coercive measures applied against some countries, for example the economic blockade facing that delegation, were the main obstacle to implementing the 2030 Agenda. Another delegation emphasized that relations between individual States members of the Committee were not within the ambit of the Office.

5. Appreciation was expressed with regard to subprogramme 1, Least developed countries. A delegation said that it was encouraging to see that more least developed countries were prepared to graduate from that status and welcomed the role of the Office in helping to sustain a smooth transition. At the same time, it was noted that some countries requested an extension of the preparatory period before effective graduation, given that more time to prepare for graduation was deemed necessary, and clarification was sought as to what specific activities the Office would carry out in relation to such deferrals.

6. A delegation suggested that, in some countries, the meetings and activities of the Office had somewhat “flown under the radar” and called upon the Office to increase the visibility of its activities, including by holding meetings in the actual countries within its mandate.

7. Appreciation was expressed for the highlighted result of the subprogramme in 2018, relating to the full operationalization of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, and a science, technology and innovation capacity-building mechanism for least developed countries. A delegation welcomed the fact that the Bank had begun to implement its work programme and that initial studies had already been launched. The delegation also emphasized the importance of market access and of specific support provided in that regard, but stressed that it was equally important to be able to produce goods and services in the first place and sought information on what other mechanisms the Office intended to establish in support of least developed countries. Concern was expressed that the creation of the Bank could contribute to widening the digital divide between least developed countries.

8. Regarding subprogramme 2, Landlocked developing countries, clarification was sought regarding paragraph 10.8 (a), in particular the mandate for the project on strengthening the capacity of landlocked developing countries under the Belt and Road Initiative to design and implement policies that promoted transport connectivity for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Information was also sought on what activities would be undertaken in support of the midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action.

9. A delegation representing a landlocked country indicated that it considered itself to be “landlinked” rather than “landlocked”, given its strong connectedness in the region, the facilitation of trade through the Southern African Development Community, the Southern African Customs Union and the African Continental Free Trade Area and the development of infrastructure, including a dry port and a railway to gain access to the Indian Ocean. The delegation highlighted the importance of regional integration to foster connectedness and minimize the negative implications of being landlocked, saying that that aspect was not sufficiently covered in the programme. Similarly, a delegation stressed that, while development began with a national vision and engagement, it was essential to strengthen global partnerships. In that regard, information was sought on whether the Office was partnering in projects,

whether already under implementation or yet to be launched, with actors such as the World Bank or the World Trade Organization.

10. As regards the highlighted planned result for 2020, under subprogramme 3, Small island developing States, information was sought on the Small Island Developing States Global Business Network, in particular its mandate and whether it was a voluntary effort of the Office. Information was also sought on the next steps planned by the subprogramme and how the programme would support the delivery of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

11. In relation to the format of the programme, regret was expressed that not all paragraphs were numbered, making it difficult to provide references for discussion.
