



PRESS RELEASE



UN OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES,
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

**SENIOR UNITED NATIONS OFFICIAL CALLS ON DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO OPEN
UP THEIR MARKETS TO TRADE WITH LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

**“MDGs WILL NOT BE ACHIEVED GLOBALLY UNLESS THE MOST VULNERABLE
COUNTRIES ARE SUPPORTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY”**

Bangkok, 17 May 2005: At the Ministerial Segment of the 61st Session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Anwarul K. Chowdhury called on developing countries to open up their markets and avail of the tremendous potential for trade with Least Developed Countries.

He underscored the urgent need for the international community to tangibly support the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States in their efforts to implement the respective Programmes of Action, namely the Brussels, the Almaty and the Barbados Programmes. “Slow economic growth, poor trade performance, continuing environmental degradation, debilitating HIV/AIDS pandemic, discouraging foreign direct investment and unmet Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments compounded by a host of new challenges in a globalizing world, make the development tasks of these countries much more difficult,” he said in Bangkok today.

“MDGs will not be achieved globally,” Mr. Chowdhury cautioned, “unless we are able to support effectively these most vulnerable countries in achieving their goals.”

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Welcoming the increase of the total Official Development Assistance flow to the Least Developed Countries amounting to \$23.5 billion in 2003, a 25 per cent increase in real terms over the previous year, Mr. Chowdhury reiterated that “the Least Developed Countries have been provided almost full access by major trading partners, but the benefits of this access has contributed little to the development prospects of these countries due to intractable supply-side constraints.”

Mr. Chowdhury briefed the delegates on the preparations conducted by the Office of the High Representative for the mid-term review of the Brussels Programme of Action for LDCs. The review is scheduled to take place at the 61st Session of the General Assembly in 2006. “Substantive regional reviews will be undertaken by the United Nations regional commissions early next year. More than one-third of the world’s 31 Landlocked Developing Countries are located in Asia and as such, their concerns are high on the regional agenda.”

The High Representative concluded his presentation by emphasizing the role that regional organizations could play in the implementation of the sustainable development agenda of small islands. The Pacific Islands Summit will take place next year during the UN ESCAP’s 62nd Session in Indonesia.

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