



High-Level Latin America Regional Review Meeting of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024

27-28 July 2023 – Asuncion, Paraguay

Concept Note

Introduction

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), in its resolutions 76/217 and 77/246, decided to convene the Third United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) in 2024. The Conference aims to undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the Decade 2014-2024 (VPoA) and to formulate and adopt a renewed framework for international support to address the special needs of LLDCs and to strengthen partnerships between the LLDCs and transit countries and their development partners.

The General Assembly also decided that the Conference shall be preceded by national and regional-level reviews, as well as thematic preparations. In line with the decision of the General Assembly, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLS), jointly with the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC) and the Government of the Republic of Paraguay are organizing the



This complexity is exacerbated by logistical hurdles, such as border delays, bureaucratic bottlenecks related to customs procedures and border-crossing regulations, all resulting from their landlockedness. Further, country-specific structural challenges act as roadblocks



Whilst international trade remains important for LLDCs' economies, their participation in global trade remained low for the duration of the implementation of the VPoA. LLDCs' share of global merchandise exports decreased from 1.2% in 2014 to 0.98% in 2021. In 2022, the developing economies (excluding China) share of global exports was 30.88%. All LLDCs accounted for a 1.12% of the global merchandise trade, while the Plurinational State of Bolivia accounted for 0.06% and Paraguay accounted for 0.04%².

Commendable progress has been made in some countries, particularly on both LLDCs in the Latin American region. Improvements in inland water transport infrastructure along the Paraguay-Paraná Waterway have also taken place, leading to a rise in the number of ports and the size of the available merchant fleet. Despite this progress, certain challenges persist along shared international watercourses, most notably because of domestic regulations and the need of coordination between landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and transit countries, in addition to the natural restrictions on navigation.

In general, transport infrastructure in most LLDCs remains of poor quality, fraught with missing links on key points within and among different modes both within and in transit countries. Adequate and efficient economic infrastructure (transport, ICT and energy) is central in enhancing the productivity and competitiveness of LLDCs through the effective reduction of production and transaction costs. Events such as COVID-19, and the geopolitical tensions impacted transport logistics and trade facilitation causing supply chain disruptions and inflation which in turn deepened the structural weakness that LLDCs experience.

Whilst most LLDCs have ratified the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, their implementation of the Agreement lags behind in general. However, in Latin America, according to the Trade trade@0.00000





Objectives

The objectives of the Latin America regional review meeting of the VPoA are to:

- Undertake a comprehensive review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in Latin America, including identification of the achievements, constraints, emerging challenges and opportunities for achieving sustainable development and the SDGs in LLDCs;
- Identify alternative and innovative sources of finance (including trade finance) that could be leveraged and used for implementation of VPoA and provide guidance on how the LLDCs can mobilise adequate resources, as well as have access to enhanced technical assistance and capacity building on a sustainable basis;
- Share best practices, experiences and innovative approaches for tackling external shocks, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the effects of climate change and debt crisis and achieving sustainable development on LLDCs, and
- Identify appropriate policy measures and concrete action-oriented recommendations at the national, regional and global levels necessary for making the next programme of action for LLDCs a truly transformative one, especially for contributing to the acceleration of the achievement of the SDGs in Latin American LLDCs.

The meeting will adopt an outcome document with recommendations that will form substantive inputs into the preparations of the Third United Nations Conference for LLDCs and will serve as an important background for the Preparatory Committee Meetings to be held in New York in early 2024.

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Background Documentation

[Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024](#)

[Report of the Secretary-General on the Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action](#)

[Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: Progress and recommendations for acceleration](#)

[Status of implementation in South America of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024](#)

[The impact of COVID-19 on transport and logistics connectivity in the landlocked countries of South America](#)

[GA resolution A/RES/76/217 on the Follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on LLDCs](#)

[GA resolution A/res/77/246 on the Follow-up to the Second UN Conference on LLDCs](#)

[Scaling Up Renewables in Landlocked Developing Countries \(LLDCs\)](#)

[Global Report on Improving Transport Connectivity for LLDCs](#)

[Impact of COVID-19 and responses in LLDCs](#)

[Effective Transit Transport Corridor Development and Management: Report on Best Practices](#)