

Statement by Hon. Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali, Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Leader of Nepali Delegation to the 74<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly, at the 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Ministerial Meeting of LLDCs (CR5, New York, 15:00, 25 September 2019)

Mr. Chairman,

Honorable Ministers,

Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS,

Distinguished Delegates.

I first extend my sincere appreciation to Paraguay for providing leadership to the group and representing us in different processes as the global Chair for the last two years<sup>1</sup> and congratulate Kazakhstan<sup>2</sup> for assuming this role.

I thank and appreciate United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres for his solidarity and support for the Group.

UN system has always been an important institutional support mechanism to LLDCs. I commend the role played by Under Secretary-General and High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, Madam Katoa Utoikamanu and her team in promoting the cause of LLDCs.

I also thank the Ambassadors of Austria and Bhutan for successfully concluding the inter-governmental negotiations on the draft political declaration<sup>3</sup> to be adopted by the High-Level Mid-Term Review of the VPOA.

Mr. Chairman,

LLDCs face several challenges arising from their remoteness, land-lockedness and geographical isolation. They face difficulties to be connected to global trade networks and value chains. The geographical constraint has compounded the cost of development; while perpetuating poverty and economic distress. Add impact of climate change on them, their vulnerability increases manifolds.

Infrastructure gap in LLDCs compared to other countries is the highest. Building connectivity is extremely difficult. Geographical remoteness has eroded the competitiveness of their products.

The draft political declaration of VPOA nails down the kernel of LLDCs: a commitmen.05 232.ds

