



**STATEMENT BY**

**Honourable Matsepo Molise Ramakoae – Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Relations of the Kingdom of Lesotho During the Annual Ministerial Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs for Land Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs)**

**23 September, 2021**

**President of the General Assembly**

**Under Secretary-General and High Representative of the UN-  
OHRLLS**

**Mr. Chairman  
Excellencies**

**Mr. Chairman,**

At the outset I wish to pay tribute to you as the outgoing Chair of our group for outstanding leadership as evidenced by the many initiatives of your office in the furtherance of the work of our group, which included establishment of the roadmap to accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. I further wish to congratulate the Republic of Botswana for their election to direct the work of our group and assure them of my delegation's full support and cooperation during their tenure of office starting January 2022.

**Mr. Chairman**

This year's theme is both very timely and appropriate since the world is reeling from the unprecedented impacts of Covid-19 which have been grossly adverse to LLDCs owing to their geographical location. It is evidential that LLDCs are economically the hardest hit by the pandemic mainly due to inability to be integrated into global trade and development, owing to their dependence on trade and other facilitation arrangements with transit countries. In dealing with the pandemic themselves, transit countries have applied stringent measures to curb the spread of the virus throughout the last one and half years. The unintended consequence has

been border closures and cumbersome transit procedures that have translated into high trade costs, loss of jobs and economic decline in neighboring LLDCs. The case of Lesotho, sharing borders with only one neighbour, is an elaboration of significant declines in tax revenues, jobs, food supply, health services and socio-economic wellness resulting from the transit countries albeit necessary internal actions on recurrent spikes of the pandemic.

**Mr. Chairman**

With less than four years remaining to implement the VPoA, Lesotho wishes to underscore the importance of strengthening our global partnerships to accelerate the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and the VPoA.

In closing, my delegation wishes to welcome and affirm support for the Outcome Document of the 2021 Forum on Financing for Development and the 2021 Ministerial Declaration of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Among other elements, both decision documents call for the scaling up of financing efforts for sustainable development, supporting the Covid-19 Covax facility, and commit to an inclusive and coordinated recovery from the pandemic in LLDCs through funding stimulus measures that address specific vulnerabilities, hence our unwavering support for the Ministerial decisions.

**I thank You!**