

■ ■ ■ ■ **BM En Az Gelişmiş Ülkeler**  
■ ■ ■ ■ **Bakanlar Konferansı'nda**  
■ ■ ■ ■ **Yapılan Konuşma**

∴ İstanbul, 4 Temmuz 2007

**M**adam President of the General Assembly,  
Honorable Ministers,  
the Administrator of the UNDP,  
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

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I would like to welcome you all to Istanbul. It is a great pleasure and privilege for us to host such a high-level and important conference in Turkey. The objective of the conference, “Making Globalization Work for the Least Developed Countries”, is a compelling priority for us all.

Turkey's decision to host this Conference is also a testimony of our desire and determination to support the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The challenges you face and the goals you pursue hold a particular place in our foreign policy agenda. We see this conference as an opportunity to better understand each other's needs. We also hope to use this understanding to expand our policies and programs towards the LDCs.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,

Globalization comes with opportunities and challenges. The LDCs, in this regard, find themselves in a particularly difficult position. Strengthening the ability of the LDCs to cope with the challenges of globalization and benefit from its opportunities presents a tall order. Promotion of economic growth, sustainable development, capacity-building and good governance are among the essential elements of success. The improvement of the living conditions of over 600 million people in 50 LDCs depends on effective policies geared to this end.

Yet, this is first and foremost the responsibility of the LDCs themselves. The optimal means for growth and development should be found by those who live through these conditions and who know best the realities of their specific countries. However, in the global environment nobody should be left alone. In fact, the UN Millennium Summit decisions, which urge member states to address the special needs of the LDCs, confirm that this is a collective responsibility for the entire international community.

The LDCs have achieved considerable progress in structural reforms, trade promotion and the development of private enterprise. We commend these efforts. However, despite their efforts and the assistance by their development partners, much remains to be done. Development partners must do more to complement the national efforts and policies of the LDCs.

Contribution of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations and the private sector is equally indispensable. The international community must fulfill the commitments and objectives with respect to Official Development Assistance for the LDCs. Cancellation of bilateral and multilateral debts and the acceleration of the World Trade Organization's Doha Work Program are also crucial. We have to focus our attention on strengthening and accelerating the effective implementation of the UN development agenda and the Millenium Development Goals in particular.

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Excellencies,  
ladies and gentlemen,

Let me to say a few words on where Turkey stands regarding these challenges and what we actually do to alleviate their impact. Firstly, Turkey believes that ensuring fair, comprehensive and sustainable development is a common responsibility for the entire international community. Secondly, this responsibility should not be reduced simply to a matter of providing financial resources. We must redress the imbalances of the international economic system. In some cases, that requires financial resources. In many others, what is needed is a political will that responds to the concerns of the LDCs.

As a developing country itself, Turkey tries to alert and raise the awareness of the international community. However, transformation of the global approach to the development problems requires a much more comprehensive and cooperative effort. We know this is a long-term effort. We remain committed to pursue it for as long as it takes. The Official Development Assistance provided by Turkey in this regard has been steadily increasing over the recent years. It reached 750 million US Dollars in 2006.

At this point, I would like to point to the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency. It plays a central role in extending Turkey's

assistance to countries in need since its establishment in 1992. Presently, TICA is carrying out hundreds of projects in partner countries spanning from Central Asia to the Balkans, from Middle East to Africa, and from Asia-Pacific to Latin America and the Caribbean. With 22 field offices, it contributes to the development of many countries in various regions. These projects have already started to make a positive impact. For this reason, a fund of 15 million US Dollars has recently been allocated for the implementation of projects through TICA in the LDCs, Land-Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Today, I am happy to announce that Turkey allocated an additional 5 million US Dollars to finance small and medium scale regional development projects in the LDCs. Our pledges might seem to be a modest amount. We believe every drop counts. However, I am sure they will set the stage for a much more ambitious plan of development cooperation. We now look forward to hearing your views and suggestions to steer the process. Indeed, we expect you to be in the driving seat and let us fill the gaps as required.

We wish you to come up with concrete project proposals. These projects could be in a number of areas that you would deem necessary. We believe that we can bring an added value particularly in areas such as; agriculture, irrigation, sanitary water supply, agro-processing, effective use and development of bio-mass and bio-fuel, trade related capacity building, communications technologies, health and education.

Our contributions are of course not confined to development assistance alone. We also provide humanitarian assistance to the countries in need. And we do that with great conviction, because the Turkish people have a strong tradition of responding to humanitarian crises. We attach particular importance to “forgotten crises”.

I am pleased to point out that Turkey’s bilateral humanitarian assistance has increased considerably in recent years. It reached 300 million US Dollars within the last three years. This amount does not include assistance by our NGOs. I am also proud to say that assistance by the Turkish Red Crescent Society and other Turkish NGOs has exceeded those made by the Government. Furthermore, since 2004, Turkey has contributed almost 6.5 million US Dollars through the World Food Program to those countries suffering from food shortages. We have already become one of the major donors of the World Food Program in its efforts to resolve the food crises in Africa.

In addition to development and humanitarian assistance, Turkey also attaches great importance to the building of a trade and commerce capacity for the LDCs. Turkey has been providing duty-free and quota-free market access for

the industrial goods originating from all LDCs since 1 January 2006. This shows our commitment to provide special and favorable treatment to the LDCs. We wish to assist their better integration to the multilateral trading system.

Moreover, Turkey decided to contribute one million US Dollars to the Trust Fund of the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-related Technical Assistance for the LDCs. We hope this will contribute to the trade-capacity enhancement of the LDCs. Turkey is supporting debt relief initiatives for the LDCs. As a donor country, we will keep on supporting the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility of the IMF.

We are also committed to the advancement of bilateral commercial relations with the LDCs. We encourage the Turkish private sector to invest in the LDCs. Foreign direct investment has a critical role in achieving sustainable development by increasing job opportunities.

We believe that we have a lot to learn from each other. Our common experiences provide a strong foundation for establishing stronger relations within the family of developing countries. Turkey will continue to do its best to be the voice of LDCs where they are not represented to better reflect their concerns. We are committed to make this cooperation a success story. We have the necessary will and potential to do so.

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Distinguished Ministers,  
Excellencies,

Before I conclude, let me express my gratitude to the UN Office of the High Representative for the LDCs, Land-Locked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States as well as the UNDP for their guidance, professionalism and unrelenting efforts to make this conference a success. I also wish to express my warmest thanks to all the other UN agencies for their close collaboration in organizing this Conference.

I would like to thank you all for coming to Istanbul to share your experiences and concerns. I know that it has been a long journey for many of you, but I hope we will all benefit from this meeting and that you will enjoy your stay in Turkey.