

Enhancing LDCs productive capacity and resilience for the impact of Global Crises

Statement by **Dr. Sarba Raj Khadka, Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN)**

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Respected Chairperson,

Your excellences, ladies, gentlemen and comrades from civil societies,

I extend my gratitude to the organisers for availing this opportunity to speak on **ensuring food security and food sovereignty through enhancing productive capacity and resilience building for responding the impacts of global crisis in the LDCs.**

I come from Nepal, a country endowed with the enormity of innate natural beauty, natural resources and inhabited by laborious people. Mainly an agrarian country, she engages above 66% of her economically active population in agriculture. However, the agricultural productions as well as the incomes to afford food materials do not meet the nutrition requirements of majority of the population. Hence, structural poverty and chronic food insecurity are still the burning problems being faced by us. Let me share some of the gruesome incidents associated with food insecurity and food sovereignty in my country.

In 2009, a lactating mother in the remote district of Taplejung committed suicide by jumping into the river along with her six months old baby tied on her back, because she had nothing to feed herself and the baby for several days. It affected her so badly that the body system ceased producing enough breast milk to feed the child, and she decided to end their misery through suicide.

In 2010, a large chunk of agricultural land in several districts of Tarai (plain area) that was planted with imported hybrid corn seeds failed to bear grains. Thousands of farmers got agitated, demanding justice and asking for compensation. Different missions studied the case. Some blamed unexpectedly changing climate patterns as the cause of failing grain setting, some argued that it was due to the use of genetically modified seeds, others opine lack of knowledge

among the farmers about the hybrid seeds. All these situations may be true but the farmers who planted the imported seeds had no role to play except falling prey to the above situations – climate change, corporation driven GMOs and exotic knowledge base.

The recent food price hike has had tremendous impacts on the poor people in the LDCs including other poverty trodden parts of the world. Lack of employment opportunities, reduction in food production and unjust distribution systems compounded with increased food price have negatively impacted the basic tenets of livelihood - food and nutritional security and food sovereignty. High price of food means lower amounts and inferior qualities thus compromising the nutrition requirements.

The above are just some representative cases that are prevalent in almost all parts of the LDCs. I believe the success of the UN LDC IV Conference lies totally on the meaningful political maneuverings that unequivocally eradicate poverty and hunger within a definitive timeframe, galvanise the foundation for universal enjoyment of human rights and social justice, and contribute towards developing a world free from violations of human rights. The new Programme of Action should espouse robust, pro-poor, and clearly deliverable sustainable development agenda overcoming the shortcomings of the previous programmes of actions for LDCs.

Productive capacity and resilience for ensuring food security can only be built when necessary resources are managed to address the underlying causes of poverty, vulnerability and environmental degradation, among others. Translatable commitments sincerely implemented in a timely manner - especially addressing the underlying causes of global climate crisis, economic crisis, debt crisis, energy crisis and food price crisis would strengthen the food security situation and reduce poverty and vulnerability in the LDCs. We all are aware of the facts that the multiple crises that I just mentioned are not the creation of the LDCs, but they remain in the forefront of bearing the brunt.

Resource mobilisation and committed political leadership are very important to manage the above mentioned crises. At a time when ODA is being slashed back on accounts of the financial crisis, the immediate and unconditional cancellation of LDC debts, along with the

implementation of a global financial transaction tax, would generate an impetus to accelerate the socio-economic development of the LDCs.

Finally, I urge this august gathering to plan the convening of an UN Convention on Food Sovereignty, to pave the way for food security and food sovereignty of the resource poor, hungry and vulnerable people mainly living in the LDCs.

Thank you very much