

## Foreword by Under-Secretary-General Gyan C Acharya, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, UNOHRLLS

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The 2016 report of the *LDC IV Monitor*, the second in a series, comes at a critical time for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs): the staging of a High-level Midterm Review of their Programme of Action, which was adopted in 2011 in Istanbul, Turkey.

Five years into the implementation of this global compact, the global community is holding a midterm review to assess the rate of progress in fulfilling commitments made by the LDCs and their development partners, to identify challenges, lessons learnt and best practices and to propose recommendations for the remaining five years.

This report constitutes a major contribution to this exercise and as such we welcome its efforts. It focuses on four themes at the core of the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA): structural transformation and export diversification in the LDCs; prospects for the countries' graduation from the LDC classification; implications of the 2030 Agenda for the LDCs' concerns; and new challenges facing the LDCs in their pursuit of achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The report is also noteworthy as it encapsulates joint efforts by a partnership of seven globally reputed think tanks, international organisations and development partners to come together and generate a knowledge product that all agree on. Such joint responsibility, partnership and ownership will go a long way in ensuring buy-in with regard to the messages of the report.

We would like to offer our gratitude to the partners of the *LDC IV Monitor* for this evidence-based assessment of the IPoA and the way forward—taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It is our hope that policy-makers, academia and civil society, as well as the general public within and outside LDCs and their development partners, will consider the messages of this report as they move towards the next phase of implementation of the IPoA.