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BM ZİRVESİ KONUŞMA METNİ

**ADDRESS by DEİK PRESIDENT ÖMER CİHAD VARDAN at the
UNITED NATIONS MEETING ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

***High-level Comprehensive Midterm Review (MTR) of the Implementation of the
Istanbul Program of Action (IPoA) for Least Developed Countries (LDCs)***

Excellencies;

Distinguished Delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

On behalf of the Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey, DEİK, I would like to welcome all of you to this Summit.

It is an honor for me to address our views on today's needs of Least Developed Countries based on the talks made yesterday.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Before going into details, it may be worthwhile to mention about DEİK for those who have never heard of us, just with a few words.

We are the official body, responsible of the foreign economic relations of Turkey's private sector. This institution has been established in 1986.

Within DEİK, we do operate through our business councils. Right now, we have 133 business councils throughout the World, 126 of which are country based. This means that we have operations in 126 countries.

So it is quite valuable for us to be a part of this event where we have been trying to understand the sources of the problems in the LDC's and to find out the solutions to those.

At this point; I just would like to share the experience we have lived at the beginning of this week at the World Humanitarian Summit.

We, as business world, signed a statement titled "**Humanity is our first business**". There, we committed ourselves to achieve whatever we write on the statement to help the people facing crises.

During the welcome reception which we, as DEİK organized, we have handed this Statement to HE Jan Eliasson, the Deputy Secretary General of UN.

We were very lucky to have his and other esteemed participants' signatures on the Statement as well.

Distinguished Delegates;

The Least Developed Countries are important members of the international community and their economic development and social progress are closely related with the World peace and stability.

Therefore, it is all of our responsibility to lend a strong hand to the Least Developed Countries to achieve their development goals. And we as DEİK, have been trying to do so; not only in Turkey but also in the countries we do operate.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I would like to highlight a few points from yesterday's Private Sector Forum on Investment Opportunities in the LDCs.

The Forum organized by the UN and WAIPA has been a great success in terms of going beyond the established rhetoric on financing for development in the LDCs. Speakers from Haiti, Lesotho, Senegal, Cambodia, Zambia, Malawi... and representatives from the European Commission, ICC, ITC, World Bank, UNIDO... and others greatly contributed to the debate.

We have tried to classify what have been said in 7 points.

But let me begin by sharing my personal observations; from a business perspective, with numbers:

In 1971, there were 25 countries listed as LDCs; now there are 48; home to nearly 950 million people.

In the last 40 years, only 3 countries have graduated from the LDC status.

The total share of LDCs trade still remains marginal.

FDI flows to LDCs, rose by 4% in 2014; representing only 2% of global inflows.

While the value of FDI in LDCs remains concentrated in a small number of mineral-rich economies; sectors are also limited.

In any case; we as businessmen, need to be optimistic for the future.

Instead of seeing LDCs as poor, as weak, as needy;

We need to see them as a landscape of opportunity.

That was **Number One point** from yesterday's Forum.

In addition; investing in the LDCs, is not a charity; but a smart business.

That was **the second point**.

If we look at the issue from a "smart investment" point of view, a clear, determined, coordinated and sustainable framework for investment is needed; with less bureaucracy. That's **number 3**.

To **number 4**, I will put **LDCs' efforts** to attract increased FDI flows that needs to be encouraged.

Boosting aid for productive capacity; was **number point 5** from yesterday's Panel.

Last two points; one; the **constructive role of PPP** and the other; the **corrosive role of media**.

In addition; there were 3 words which have been attracted me as underlined by almost all of the speakers:

Leadership; Trust; and time.

It seems that we have all the ingredients for a successful and a genuine partnership for development here, in Antalya; except the time.

We don't have a minute to waste.

In concluding; on behalf of Turkish private sector, Foreign Economic Relations Board of Turkey, DEİK, I would like to welcome you once again and wish this gathering be a complete success.

Thank you very much for listening.