Committee for Development Policy

Report on the fifteenth session
(18-22 March 2013)
Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.
Summary

The present report contains the main findings and recommendations of the fifteenth session of the Committee for Development Policy. At the session, the Committee addressed the following themes: the role of science, technology and innovation (STI) for achieving sustainable development as its contribution to the discussions on the 2013 Annual Ministerial Review on the theme of “Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture for promoting sustainable development and achieving the millennium development goals (MDGs)”; the vulnerabilities and development needs of the small island developing States (SIDS); emerging issues in international development in post-2015 era; issues related to the least developed countries, including the guidelines regarding the smooth transition from the LDC category, and monitoring of the development progress of Samoa.

In its analysis of STI, the Committee noted that advancing a nation’s capacity in STI and its effective application in economic activities are indispensable to sustainable and inclusive development. To address the threats that climate change poses to sustainability, equal attention should be paid to technologies needed for mitigation and adaptation. At the same time STI and related policies need to be placed in a broader context that takes into account the institutional, cultural and historical dimensions within which STI operates. Governments have a fundamental role to play in building STI capabilities through education, funding of research and the promotion of innovation, including through effective sectoral policies. This requires changes in current international trade and investment regimes so as to provide national governments with adequate policy space to undertake appropriate policies and measures. It is also imperative to understand that technological choices can have negative impacts and externalities on the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Technological choices also have important distributional effects. Thus, a comprehensive approach is required. Scientific knowledge and technologies required to meet basic human needs and environmental challenges should be regarded as global public goods. Accordingly, a more adequate system of incentives for the promotion and dissemination of these technologies is needed to make them widely available.

The Committee also considered the vulnerabilities and development needs of SIDS and possible policy responses, focusing on how to further the full and effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) and the Mauritius Strategy. International support for the sustainable development of SIDS has been on the international policy agenda for a long time, but the challenges faced by SIDS are intensifying, as evidenced by the mounting threats associated with climate change, the negative impacts of the recent global economic and financial crisis, and more structurally, for some of them, the intensification of existing vulnerabilities due to increased globalisation. Stabilizing global economic and financial markets and international measures to minimise the extent and impact of climate change are indispensable to the sustainable development of SIDS. Existing measures to support climate change adaptation in SIDS also need to be scaled-up.

As follow-up to its work programme, the Committee continued to consider how the United Nations development agenda could proceed in the post-2015 era. Noticeable emerging trends in the global economy include increasing heterogeneity of developing countries; a transition to a multi-polar world; and persistent global and rising domestic inequalities. Urgent action is needed to move from the articulation of global goals to the implementation of policies and strategies for the realization of those goals. The new development approach should be universal. International cooperation post-2015 will need to deliver more effectively on three basic objectives: (i) managing the growing interdependence of countries; (ii) promoting universally agreed social and environmental standards; and (iii) reducing the large inequalities in the levels of economic development of countries. New thinking coupled with institutional reforms is needed to improve global governance so as to achieve more equitable distribution of opportunities among countries and people within countries; a more efficient provision of global public goods; and a reduction of human, environmental and financial risks.

Regarding LDCs, the Committee proposed refinements to the reporting procedures of graduating and graduated countries and of the Committee itself; in the light of the new General Assembly resolution (67/221) on the smooth transition for countries graduating from the LDC list. These refinements are intended to enhance and facilitate
reporting on the preparation and implementation of smooth transition strategies. The Committee noted the sustained positive development progress of Samoa which is scheduled to graduate in January 2014.
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Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Matters calling for action by the Council

Emerging issues in international development in post-2015 era

1. The Committee for Development Policy considered how the United Nations development agenda should proceed in the post-2015 era. In this regard, it recommends that the Council in its deliberations on the post-2015 framework considers taking a broader approach, focusing not just on goals but also on the policies and strategies for sustainable development worldwide, in all its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental). In this task, particular attention should be paid to rising domestic inequalities and the persistence of high levels of abject poverty, two of the most adverse trends that the world has experienced in recent decades. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the Council incorporates the reduction of inequality as a specific goal, with measurable targets, in its deliberation on the post-2015 agenda. In addition, in considering that agenda, the international community should be fully respectful of national priorities and strategies, and guarantee adequate policy space at the national level through appropriate changes in global governance.

2. It is further recommended that, in defining universal policies for the post-2015 era, the Council should take into account three basic objectives of international cooperation: (i) managing the growing interdependence of countries; (ii) promoting social and environmental standards already adopted by the international community (economic, social and cultural rights, associated conventions, and access to basic social services for all); and (iii) reducing the large inequalities that remain in the levels of economic development among countries, particularly between advanced and least developed countries. These tasks should be undertaken cognizant of two emerging features of the global economy: (a) the transition to a multi-polar world, and (b) the increasing heterogeneity of developing countries; both require rethinking how to effectively operationalize the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.
Effectively addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States

3. As requested by the Council in its resolution 2011/44 on the review of the United Nations support for small island developing states, the Committee considered how to further the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation. The Committee noted that the urgency of such implementation has been heightened as a result of the growing threats posed by climate change and the observed negative impact on SIDS of the 2008/2009 global financial and economic crisis. The Committee recommends that the Council gives consideration to the merits of a creating a SIDS category, defined by appropriate criteria, based on the specific vulnerabilities experienced by this group of countries. The Committee recommends that support measures for any group of countries should be differentiated according to the specific vulnerabilities they face.

Guidelines regarding the smooth transition from the LDC category

4. The Committee welcomes the adoption of General Assembly resolution A/67/221 on smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries, in particular the decision by the General Assembly to act upon decisions of the Council on inclusion and graduation of countries from the LDC category at its first session following the adoption of the such decisions by the Council. In this context, the Committee proposes a number of refinements to the process by which graduating and graduated countries report on the preparation and implementation of their smooth transition strategy. The Committee requests the Economic and Social Council to endorse these guidelines as a further clarification of the framework laid out by the General Assembly resolution 67/221 and earlier resolutions related to the smooth transition from the category, in particular General Assembly resolution 59/209.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development

5. Science, technology and innovation (STI) are essential drivers of sustainable and inclusive development. Thus, it is crucial that STI initiatives address all aspects of sustainable development – economic, social and environmental, and their interrelationships—, as technological choices can have negative impacts on the social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. It is equally important that knowledge systems should be constructed broadly to include cultural, social, institutional dimensions in which it operates.

6. The role of government in building science, technology and innovation capabilities is fundamental, including in stimulating the development of systems which will foster
acquisition, development and dissemination of knowledge in the national economy. This includes promotion of education, research, development and technological dissemination, as well as the design and implementation of nationally appropriate industrial policies. Moreover, the international community should review the extent to which the international trade and investment regimes can guarantee adequate policy space for national governments in this area. In particular, the limitations imposed by the TRIPS and the TRIMS agreements should be recognized, in particular the restrictions on the use of policy instruments such as domestic content, export performance and standards on government procurement that have been widely used by developed countries and successful industrializers in the developing world.

7. The current system of promoting research and development (R&D) –including, as noted, associated intellectual property rights— leads to underinvestment in social priorities and restricts access to the benefits of innovation. Alternative modalities for supporting and financing global research and innovation merits serious consideration. Knowledge, research and technologies that have a direct bearing on the fulfillment of basic human needs, small rural producers, and tackle environmental challenges –in particularly those related to climate change—, should be freely accessible to all as global public goods. A major challenge for science, technology and innovation for sustainable development will be climate change adaptation, particularly in the most vulnerable communities and countries. To this end, emphasis should be placed on the creation of an improved knowledge base for the understanding of climate change dynamics and of the technologies and innovations needed to respond to them.

**Effectively addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States**

8. The Committee noted that action on climate change including, a meaningful outcome to global negotiations on a new climate change treaty and on enhancing global macroeconomic stability, is of particular interest to SIDS. International support to SIDS to undertake adaptation to environmental shocks arising from negative global impacts is essential, including support for the resettlement costs of involuntary migrants from climate-change affected SIDS. An effective monitoring mechanism for the implementation of the BPoA and the MSI needs to be established, building as appropriate on existing national and regional mechanisms, to ensure adequate and timely analysis of the adequacy and effectiveness of such implementation.

**Monitoring the development progress of graduating countries**

9. The Committee reviewed the development progress of Samoa and noted the country’s continued economic and social progress, based on the findings from the recent trends in the indicators which are used for identification of LDCs. It encourages Samoa, with the assistance of its development partners, to prepare a transition strategy for its graduation from the category in accordance with General Assembly resolution 67/221.
Chapter II
Science, technology and innovation for sustainable development

A. Introduction

10. Science, technology and innovation (STI) play a critical role in achieving sustainable development goals, including, enhancing productivity and inducing dynamic transformation of the economy, increasing growth rates and the number of decent jobs while reducing fossil-based energy consumption, developing essential drugs and improving health/medical care, achieving food security through sustainable agricultural methods and raising agricultural productivity, and reducing the drudgery and improving the safety of housework and reproductive activities. Advancing a nation’s capacity in STI and its effective application in economic activities are essential factors for expanding peoples’ capabilities and achieving sustainable development. At the same time, STI forms part of global and national capabilities to address the economic, social and environmental dimensions of development and their interactions.

11. While STI is essential to find answers to the sustainability crisis that the world is currently facing, there is need to place it in a broader context and take into account both the cultural and historical dimensions in which STI operates. Under this framework, it is crucial to recognize that although the world is confronting common crises, there are differences in and between countries; hence knowledge systems should be constructed broadly to include diverse historical, cultural, social, and institutional features of countries.

12. In this regard, STI contributions towards a new sustainable development paradigm require a deep understanding of the relation among the three pillars of sustainable development, acknowledging that environmental degradation harms economic development and human wellbeing, especially for the poor and vulnerable groups in society. Social and economic sciences must contribute as much as natural and technical sciences towards an approach where improved quality of life and sustainable patterns of consumption and production can be reconciled with reduced environmental degradation, poverty and inequalities and the promotion of peace and security.

13. Similarly, it is imperative to understand that there are technological choices that can have negative impacts (externalities) on the social and environmental dimensions on sustainable development. They also have important distributional consequences besides generating “winners” and “losers” due to the introduction of new production processes and labour saving technologies. Important distributional implications emerge particularly due to decisions about what types of knowledge and innovations are promoted and developed.
and which types are neglected and forgotten. Thus, it remains important to be clear about the fact that the choices we face are societal choices, not scientific or technical ones. Understanding this approach, STI for sustainable development offers immense opportunities to reciprocally connect science with society, culture and traditional knowledge.

B. Science, technology and innovation to meet basic human needs and environmental challenges

14. STI capabilities of a nation are basic, yet crucial, factors not only for sustained economic growth, but also for a nation’s ability to provide its citizens with quality education, good health care, safe food and to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

15. Since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2000, there have been renewed STI efforts, nationally and globally, for the development of vaccines and improved medical treatments for tropical diseases and other diseases that plague the developing world, as well as for global pandemics such as HIV/AIDS. Technological innovation has played an equally critical role in the management of safe freshwater resources and in addressing concern over water scarcity in agricultural production by small farmers. International research institutions, supported by public funds, were active in agricultural innovation in developing countries in the past, leading to the Green Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s. National Governments expanded roads, irrigation systems and electrical power supply to support farmers to adopt the new technology. International lending was also prioritized for agricultural development. More recently, an innovative system, known as the System of Rice Intensification (SRI) has been successfully tested in 40 countries. Nonetheless these efforts remain limited. Moreover, access to technology and innovation remain restricted in view of the proprietary nature of intellectual rights in many instances.

16. Geography matters for climate change and some regions will be more affected than others. The economic, social and environmental consequences will also vary, depending on levels of development in general and on individual, local and national preparedness to mitigate and adapt to the impact of climate change.

17. A major challenge for STI in climate change is to support mitigation and adaptation. While much attention has been paid to mitigation, particularly because greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are largely generated in the more technologically advanced countries, little or no attention has been paid to the promotion and development

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2 The Green Revolution has been criticized on the basis of the technology it promoted due to its intensive use of fertilizers, chemical pesticides and water, which have negative environmental impacts.
3 Rice has been the single most important staple of the poor, particularly in Asia and parts of Africa.
of STI for adaptation. Most of the adaptation technologies currently available reflect informal or spontaneous processes, such as indigenous or traditional knowledge-based technologies used to cope with flooding; irrigation systems developed and updated to make more efficient use of scarce water, etc. Adaptation measures are likely to be more amenable to small-scale interventions and thus more flexible to local conditions and institutions. Nevertheless, adaptation measures are likely to be more accessible to richer countries, communities and individuals, which are not necessarily the most vulnerable.

**STI as global public goods**

18. The above reinforces the need to consider some technologies—particularly those technologies that contribute to meeting basic human needs and environmental challenges—as global public goods deserving to be supported by a system of incentives to make them accessible to all. Development and dissemination of these technologies should be a global priority. However, both confront major obstacles.

19. First, with respect to development, markets have not been efficient in providing these goods and services at the right quantity and quality in a timely manner. The current system of financing research and development depends largely on granting exclusive intellectual property rights as an incentive for private investment in the generation of technology and innovation. This leads to underinvestment in innovations for social priorities, notably to meet basic human needs and environmental sustainability. Therefore, alternative mechanisms for financing innovation are needed, such as prizes and public funds (including public funds to buy technologies that would then be made freely accessible), deserve further consideration.

20. Second, with respect to dissemination, technologies receiving patent protection are often less accessible due to monopoly pricing which makes them more costly. However, a defining aspect of global public goods is that they should be non-excludable: *once the knowledge or technologies are created in these crucial areas, no one should be excluded from the access to them.* The question is how to secure sustainable funding to provide them. Because of their non-exclusiveness nature, R&D in such technologies has long been underfunded, in particularly for those needed by poor people living in low-income countries.

**C. Building science, technology and innovation capabilities for sustained growth: the role of the government**

21. Development is, in essence, a process of capacity building. Developing countries confront many obstacles in building a robust and entrepreneurially dynamic private sector. But developing countries also have some advantages. They can draw on the knowledge accumulated elsewhere, obviating the need to devote significant resources to R&D. As
known as the “latecomer effect”, developing countries use a given technology only after it becomes industrial standard, which also implies that developing countries can use and adapt these existing mature technologies. However, latecomers also need to acquire new or emerging technologies which are often associated with dynamic markets. Emerging technological paradigms can serve as a window of opportunity for the latecomer because they are not necessarily locked into the “old” or “mature” technological and thus able to make best use of new opportunities in the emerging or new industries.

22. However, developing countries often go through technological learning and capability development before reaching the stage where they can fully benefit from the latecomer effects. Public and/or private entities need to build a stock of knowledge in the form of human and physical capital, identify the technologies and industries in which the country or firm has the larger growth potential and channel the resources into them, while acknowledging the risks of failing to plan.

23. Governments thus have a fundamental role to play in building STI capabilities, including in stimulating the development of systems that foster acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, as well as in designing and implementing industrial policies. Evidence suggests that the level of expenditure on research and development is key to building up innovation capacities. Meanwhile, institutions, the educational system and the quality of education are among the significant factors in explaining the transition from low-income to middle-income level. In this regard, it should be noted that tertiary education and re-training and facilitating mobility of researchers are necessary to enhance the transfer of technology among different sectors of the economy and the application of such technologies in business activities.

24. Moreover, building technological capacities requires government support. When the private capacity is non-existent or weak, the public sector as a whole needs to lead the design and implementation of the development of a new industry or a new technology, with a combination of horizontal interventions at the macroeconomic level. As the capacity of the private sector advances, the direct involvement of the national Government may become less prominent and its policies are likely to be more targeted to specific industries or technologies, and the nature of the public and private cooperation takes the form of partnership. Ultimately, the private sector may become fairly independent from the public sector in technological development, with the later providing the former with economic incentives, including exclusive property rights for a certain period, to encourage its efforts. Nonetheless, it should be recognized that even in developed countries, governments continue to carry out and sponsor a significant amount of research and technological development, and not only in defence-related matters.

D. The importance of policy space for science, technology and innovation

25. From the above, a pertinent question is whether the current international trade and investment regimes guarantee enough policy space for the Governments of developing countries to promote national STI capabilities.

26. Among the relevant multilateral, regional and bilateral agreements, the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the agreement on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) should be mentioned. TRIPS establishes minimum standards for domestic intellectual property protection with which signatory countries (excluding LDCs) are required to comply. This has significant implications for permissible STI policies at the national level. In this regard, certain measures that developed countries used in the course of their industrialization – discrimination against foreign patent application, or exclusion of industries, such as chemicals and pharmaceuticals – are no longer available. However, the agreement contains several “flexibilities” that can be used by developing countries in designing their own IPR system. Meanwhile, TRIMS prohibits practices such as local content requirements, manufacturing requirements, export performance, trade balancing requirements, and technology transfer requirements. Simply put, these measures significantly limit policy space for Governments in developing countries. Beyond this issue, there is the question whether the TRIPS rules are the right model of intellectual property rights (IPRs) for developing countries, and which implications it brings in terms of access to knowledge and technology.

27. There is a need for a global dialogue on the reform in international trade and investment regimes. In particular, systems of IPRs need to evolve from a focus on protection to one that fosters dissemination. Stringent protection of IPRs (particularly patents) can be a serious deterrent in countries’ efforts to achieve sustainable development in general and to pursue appropriate industrial policies to that effect. In this regard, the international community should also consider several policy issues, including a broad research exemption for experimental users and judicial power to require nonexclusive licensing in the spirit of public interests. Moreover, there is a need to install a minimum safeguard of public interests by ensuring transparency in licensing and allowing wider use of non-exclusive licensing, particularly in the patenting of results of publicly funded research.
Chapter III

Effectively addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States

A. Introduction

28. In resolution 2011/44, adopted on 5 December 2011, the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations requested the Committee for Development Policy to submit its independent views and perspectives on “how to further the full and effective implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy, including by refocusing efforts towards a results-oriented approach and considering what improved and additional measures might be needed to more effectively address the unique and particular vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States”.

29. The Committee considered the vulnerabilities and development needs of small island developing States (SIDS), building upon its previous review on the United Nations support to SIDS which was prepared in 2010 at the Council’s request. The analysis reconfirms that the intrinsic vulnerabilities and development needs of SIDS are related to their smallness; isolation and fragmentation; narrow resource and export base; exposure to environmental and natural shocks (including climate change and natural disasters); and exposure to external economic shocks.

30. Whereas most of these structural constraints also pose challenges for many non-island developing countries, SIDS are typically particularly vulnerable as a higher share of population is negatively affected by shocks when compared to other developing economies. In addition, a number of SIDS composed of low-lying atolls could face an existential risk of becoming uninhabitable due to climate change impacts, in particular sea level rise. In this regard, the Committee highlights that challenges faced by SIDS continue to intensify, as evidenced by the mounting threats associated with climate change, the negative impacts of the recent global economic and financial crisis on many SIDS and the heightened competitive challenges due to increased globalization. These persistent and increasing challenges highlight the structural nature of SIDS vulnerabilities as well as the lack of effective response measures.

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B. Scaling up support measures

31. Both the Barbados and the Mauritius initiatives include a wide range of international support measures to support national level action to address the vulnerability and development needs of SIDS. Beyond these, there are several instruments, conventions, agreements and strategies that also tackle challenges directly related to SIDS vulnerabilities SIDS, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Hyogo Framework for Action on disaster risk reduction and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. But there is an urgent need for scaled-up international measures, in some instances, substantially. This holds particularly for climate change adaptation in SIDS, as these countries contribute the least to the problem while some will be among those that suffer most from the consequences. Implementation of adaptation programmes and projects is still at an early or pilot stage; and it is not clear that adequate resources are being provided. The Committee also highlights the responsibility of the international community to finance climate change adaptation in SIDS, as the contribution of these countries to the global problem is negligible.

32. Disaster risk reduction and sustainable resource management, also require scaled-up support. While regional and international disaster risk insurance schemes can play an important role, they need to be embedded in comprehensive disaster risk reduction strategies. Existing mechanisms such as the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facility could be enhanced by covering broader economic damage, in particular damage endured by the poor, and not only damage to government property. Additionally, the piloted new mechanisms in the Pacific need to be urgently implemented. International support is needed to set up disaster insurance mechanisms and to subsidise the cost of insurance policies for poorer SIDS.

33. Increased support is also needed to address the high costs of providing goods and administrative services in SIDS. These high costs are associated with very small populations and the resulting absence of economies of scale as well as geographic dispersion in the case of archipelagic SIDS. Where feasible, the joint provision of public goods on a regional basis could be expanded and supported internationally. Positive results have been achieved in areas such as tertiary education, monetary policy or fisheries management, while additional measures need to be explored in certain instances such as in the provision of transport services to remote islands.

34. Whereas economic diversification is important to address risks that arise from small export base, the structurally limited production base of SIDS constrains the effectiveness of such measures. Since lack of export diversification heightens exposure to economic shocks, there is a need to strengthen (official and market-based) contingent financing mechanisms that SIDS can utilize in response. However, the high levels of indebtedness of many SIDS limits their access to international capital markets. Hence, there is also a need to address the debt problematic in affected countries.
35. Migration is a common response in many SIDS to external shocks, particularly in smaller ones where the whole country can be affected. Major destination countries could further facilitate the temporary mobility of labour from affected countries in the aftermath of severe shocks. Linking unilateral, bilateral and regional measures in this regard to a global migration framework could further enhance the realization of benefits, and limit the costs, associated with migration.

C. Reducing global shocks

36. Environmental, economic and financial shocks are external events from the perspective of SIDS and pose development constraints for all countries. The special vulnerabilities of SIDS, however, make them particularly dependent on effective international responses to tackle the causes of such shocks.

37. The world is not on track to achieve the internationally agreed goal to limit the global temperature increase to 2 degree Celsius compared to pre-industrial times, but even this agreed limit is expected to lead to detrimental development consequences in SIDS. Adaptation measures in SIDS are critical to limit negative impacts, but will not suffice to completely mitigate the negative consequences of climate change. In addition, adaptation measures reduce the resources otherwise available for the sustainable development of SIDS. A global treaty that ensures that global carbon emissions peak in the near future and massively decline thereafter, and that guarantees a fair and equitable distribution of responsibilities and costs is needed. Its implementation will require a transformation of socio-economic development paradigms, as purely technological fixes will not be sufficient.

38. For most SIDS, ocean ecosystems are critical for food security, employment and tourism, but are increasingly threatened. Sustainable management practices at the national and regional level need to be supported, including the development and implementation of appropriate fishing licensing regimes and the establishment and enforcement of marine protected areas. However, additional international measures are needed for reducing threats from global overfishing, for example to stop unsustainable fishing practices, to prevent illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fisheries, to reduce global capacity in the fisheries sector, including through subsidy reforms, or to ensure a fair distribution of benefits of international fishing licenses.

39. The 2008/2009 economic and financial crisis demonstrated the vulnerability of SIDS to a sudden decline in global aggregate demand. Many SIDS, though not all, have been hit harder by the crisis than most other developing countries. Generally, the strong and lasting negative impact from the crisis is due to their high exposure to trade shocks, their export concentration in developed country markets and their limited scope for domestic counter-cyclical stabilization policies. Hence, international stabilization of

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economic and financial systems would play a major role in reducing the vulnerability of SIDS. Improved regulation of international and financial markets, an increased counter-cyclical orientation of macroeconomic policies in major markets and improved international coordination would be important.

40. The world food and energy price crisis also highlighted the vulnerability of many SIDS associated by high import dependency. Both stabilizing and ensuring affordability of global food prices would make important contributions to reducing the food insecurity of SIDS. Whereas controlling volatility in global energy markets (particularly oil markets) could also play a role in reducing SIDS vulnerability, moving towards renewable energy systems in SIDS is an even more effective approach to addressing SIDS vulnerabilities.

41. In sum, without robust global measures by the international community, the vulnerability of SIDS cannot be effectively addressed. Increasing resilience and reducing exposure will not be sufficient and may not be effective in reducing vulnerabilities if the sources of shocks are not tackled as well. These response measures must be seen in the overall context of sustainable development as well as the development needs of all developing countries in order to ensure coherence of the global support system.

D. Implications of SIDS heterogeneity

42. A wide range of appropriate indicators reveals that SIDS are indeed on average more vulnerable than other developing countries, whereas the higher per capita income and higher human capital make SIDS more resilient to shocks in general. However, looking at averages masks important heterogeneity among SIDS and non-SIDS. There exist highly vulnerable non-SIDS as well as only moderately vulnerable SIDS. Moreover, vulnerability rankings vary across indicators. Overall, heterogeneity of SIDS is smaller within regional groupings such as Caribbean or the Pacific Islands, whereas there is more regional diversity among SIDS within the Atlantic, Indian Ocean and South China Sea (AIMS) region. At the same time, even within-region heterogeneity is substantial and in some areas there is noticeable similarity across regions.

43. The heterogeneity of SIDS has implications for the optimal design and access to response measures, if these are to be effective and efficient. The creation of a SIDS category based on appropriate criteria measuring the specific vulnerabilities is an option that warrants further consideration by the Council, which should include differentiating the support to SIDS according to the kind of specific vulnerabilities they face. A differentiated approach to international support could also de-politicize some of the controversies surrounding the creation and composition of a formal SIDS category.
E. Global monitoring mechanism

44. The establishment of a robust global monitoring system can help to strengthen accountability and to ensure adequate and timely analysis of the implementation of the BPoA and the MSI. The upcoming 2014 international conference on SIDS to be held in Samoa provides an opportunity to agree on the principles and an implementation plan for such system. The monitoring framework should be based on existing regional and national monitoring frameworks. At the same time, the monitoring framework should also fully utilize readily available international data on vulnerabilities, development needs and policy responses relevant for SIDS, including the relevant indicators used in the economic vulnerability index developed by the Committee for Development Policy.

45. A comprehensive monitoring system could be instrumental for an evaluation of the whole set of response measures, taking into account the interlinkages between policies. The creation of feedbacks to national, regional and international policy-making could lead to the design of better integrated response measures. The system should also facilitate the exchange of experiences and include capacity-building activities for the generation and interpretation of statistical information.

46. Whereas the adoption of concrete policy recommendations, targets and milestones on the sustainable development of SIDS would facilitate the development of a monitoring framework, a monitoring framework could add value even on the basis of existing national, regional and international targets. In order to improve data availability, regional cooperation can complement national efforts. International agencies should allocate sufficient resources to include all SIDS in their data collection and estimation activities. Adequate resources need to be provided for the global monitoring system.
Chapter IV

Strengthening international cooperation for the post-2015 era

A. Introduction

47. As 2015 approaches and the international community considers new approaches to accelerate the implementation of the millennium development goals (MDGs) by the agreed date, attention is increasingly focused on the conceptualization of the global development agenda beyond 2015. In 2011, the Committee for Development Policy initiated a research programme to contribute to the discussions on the formulation of that agenda.8 In its deliberations the Committee has also underlined the need for the international community to firmly re-engage in the other (unfinished) agendas adopted at the various UN summits and global conferences of the past 15 years which laid out principles, commitments and goals beyond those expressed in the MDG framework.

48. But this will not be enough. The CDP also stressed the urgency to move from global goals to policies and strategies that allow for the realization of those goals and, particularly, enable the adoption of comprehensive strategies of sustainable development, that address all three of its dimensions (economic, social and environmental). Hence, there is a need for development models that can promote economic growth that is socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable and tackle the various crises affecting the global economy –economic and financial crises and their impacts, the food security crisis, the emerging climate change crisis and persistently high inequalities. In this regard, the method of measuring progress needs to move away from GDP to measures which capture additional factors such as the distribution of income, the environmental costs and associated depreciation of natural capital, as well as the adverse effects on human capital generated, among others, by malnutrition, avoidable ill-health and atrophy of skills generated by unemployment.

B. Alternative development strategies

49. The development model underlying the MDGs has not worked as intended and needs to be reconsidered both at the country and the international level. While there is no single recipe for promoting broad based growth with job creation and guaranteeing social and environmental sustainability, the analysis of CDP points to the following ingredients: greater reliance on domestic resource mobilization and savings; equitable growth including through investment in human capital; adoption of sectoral policies that are

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8 Committee for Development Policy. The United Nations Development Strategy Beyond 2015 (United Nations publication, sales No. E.12.II.A.3)
compatible with open economies; promotion of sustainable agriculture; low-carbon energy policies; and macroeconomic policies that promote stability and equity.

50. Historical experience and research suggest that the most significant reductions in poverty and attainment of a wide range of social objectives are best served by policies that ensure universal access to quality social services for all, which may be supplemented by targeted programmes of assistance to groups experiencing extreme poverty and vulnerability. In the absence of universal provision, however, targeted programme have limited effectiveness; and their effective implementation may pose present severe administrative challenges for many developing countries. It is also important to recall that the MDG framework was developed in a context in which social policy played a residual role and did not impinge on the prevailing macroeconomic policies. What has worked has been, on the one hand, broad-based, universal social policies and, on the other hand, economic growth and structural change that supports more productive activities and technological upgrading.

51. The implementation of development strategies does not take place in a vacuum. National strategies affect, but are also affected by, the wider global context in which they operate, particularly more so in a world characterized by increasing interdependence. The new development approach should be universal and applicable to all countries. Its focus should be on reforms needed to improve global governance for a more equitable distribution of opportunities among countries and people, a more efficient provision of global public goods and a reduction of human, environmental and financial risks currently afflicting the international system.

52. The current globalization process tends to accentuate interdependencies among countries, widening the scope of global public goods (GPGs). A strong relationship exists between GPGs and development agendas: failures in one domain can produce setbacks in the other. For example, the lack of technologies providing basic social services to the poor, clean energy, affordable transport and higher yielding and drought and pest resistant food crop varieties indicates gaps in global public goods that have an important bearing on the ability of national governments to provide essential services,

53. Among the GPGs with developmental impacts, the most challenging is the threat of climate change. This threat makes it imperative to review existing economic growth patterns and internalise the environmental costs. The characteristics of public goods imply that the market is incapable of ensuring their efficient provisioning and that some form of collective action is required. In the international sphere, the response must be carried out through coordination and voluntary cooperation formulas among the relevant players.

54. Moving forward, the Committee is of the view that international cooperation should deliver more effectively on its three basic objectives: (i) managing the growing interdependence of countries; (ii) promoting the reach of social and environmental standards already adopted by the international community (economic, social and cultural rights, associated conventions, and access to minimum social services for all); and (iii)
correcting the large differences that remain in the levels of economic development of countries. In this regard, problems associated with the frameworks regulating international relations (trade, investment, technology, etc.) need to be addressed to ensure they guarantee a better distribution of development opportunities, including penalising those practices hindering that objective (such as illicit financial flows, fiscal paradises, etc.).

C. The challenges ahead

55. This is not an easy task. On the one hand, there is a need for global rules and improved governance to manage global challenges as well as increase the positive while reducing the negative spill over effects (externalities) that some countries can generate on others in an interdependent world. On the other hand, global rules need to be developed in a way that maintains the necessary policy space at the national level, within the limits of interdependence.

56. International regulations or their absence may affect the capacity of national governments to implement appropriate policies. International trade rules that allow for agricultural export subsidies in rich countries affect the livelihoods of smallholders in developing countries. Similarly, the lack of adequate international financial regulations implies greater volatility in international capital markets contributing to the occurrence of crises which have negative consequences for the livelihoods of the poorest and most vulnerable. Some international rules also constrain government actions to promote productive transformative changes in the economy. At the same time, while social standards such as compulsory education, minimum wage, access to health care, unemployment insurance and other social standards are to be defined at the country level, universal standards are required to underpin international regulation and cooperative action if human rights are to be guaranteed at the global level.

57. The complexity of improving global governance, including through the adequate provisioning of global public goods, is further compounded by a few noticeable emerging trends. First, the persistence of global inequalities and rising domestic inequalities has led to a polarization of positions between current ‘winners’ and “losers” and blocks progress in developing a more just and fair system of governance. Despite some progress, inequalities remain pervasive at the global level. According to UNCTAD data, the average income per capita in developed countries was still more than 55 times higher than the average income per capita in the group of the LDCs in 2010.\(^9\) At the country level, wage shares in national income have been stagnant or declining in most parts of the world and income differentials among different types of workers (particularly between skilled and unskilled) have widened. This trend was reinforced by the adoption of inequitable macroeconomic policies, including the erosion of redistributive elements of national tax and transfer systems. Rising domestic inequalities should be recognized as one of the most adverse trends that the world has been experiencing in recent decades.

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58. Second, the level of heterogeneity among developing countries has significantly increased. While a group of countries, mainly located in Asia, has managed to drive successful growth processes that have allowed them to significantly reduce the gap with developed countries’ income levels, another group – the least developed countries (LDCs) – has maintained or increased their income gap with the developed world and some of these countries seem to be caught in a poverty trap. A third group, situated between these two extremes, includes countries that have followed very disparate growth paths over the last few decades. A dual divergence seems to have emerged during the period: (i) growing distance between the extremes (LDCs and the high income countries); and (ii) increased heterogeneity among developing countries. As a result of these trends, a single, shared diagnosis and development path is no longer valid. Moving forward, there is need to maintain an integral perspective and to work through a differentiated agenda in accordance with the diversity in conditions of developing countries.

59. Finally, the bipolar world that characterized the international reality during the Cold War is vanishing. Instead, a more complex and multi-polar world is emerging. New global powers from the developing world are becoming a significant factor in global politics alongside the traditional powers. These new powers are highly dynamic, with a notable capacity to project their influence. The main growth poles of the global economy are located in developing regions, and this trend is likely to continue in the near future. The increased diffusion of global power opens a window of opportunity for building a more inclusive and democratic governance at the international level. At the same time, while there is acceptance of the principle of common and differentiated responsibilities, it is far from clear how a global compact will actually evolve. Lack of progress in this area, however, delays the introduction of much needed reforms with serious implications for the further progress and the sustainability of development in general.

D. Moving the CDP research programme forward

60. The trends described above present new challenges for the international community. Addressing these issues demands an enabling international environment, based on cooperative commitments from both developing and developed countries. The Global Partnership for Development –MDG number 8- was the least concrete goal of the international development agenda. In fact, it was not well defined, rather vague, incomplete and without clear targets. Without an enabling international environment many national development efforts will be fruitless. In the Committee’s view, there is a pressing need to complement its existing analysis with a consideration of the impact of global rules and global governance on some crucial areas of development. In this connection, the CDP’s current research initiative will focus on how to strengthen international cooperation in order to fulfil the three main objectives described above more effectively. A related concern is to avoid neglecting agreed initiatives and compacts and guarantee effective monitoring, accountability and, in critical areas, enforcement of international commitments. The results of this initiative will be submitted to the Council in 2014.
Chapter V

Guidelines on reporting requirements for smooth transition from the least developed country category and the monitoring of Samoa

A. Introduction

61. In an effort to avoid reversals in the graduated countries’ development progress due to the abrupt disruption of external support, the General Assembly adopted resolution 59/209 (December 2004) on the smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the list of LDCs. The Istanbul Programme of Action adopted in May 2011 invited the General Assembly to establish an ad-hoc working group to further study and strengthen the smooth transition process. Subsequently, in December 2012, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 67/221 on smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of LDCs.

62. In accordance with resolution 67/221, the General Assembly will take note of the decisions of the Economic and Social Council regarding the graduation, at the first session of the General Assembly following the adoption of such decisions by the Council. This decision is a welcome development and deemed necessary to avoid delays in the graduation process.

63. The aim of this chapter is to clarify the procedures related to the reporting exigencies of graduating and graduated countries under the new resolution and how these interact with the monitoring outputs requested from the Committee for Development Policy. The Committee also reviewed the development progress of Samoa, which is scheduled to graduate in January 2014.

B. Reporting requirements for LDCs identified for graduation by the General Assembly

Reporting by graduating countries

64. General Assembly resolution 67/221 invites Governments of graduating countries, with the support of the consultative mechanism, to report annually to the Committee for Development Policy on the preparation of the transition strategy (paragraph 20)\(^\text{10}\).

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\(^{10}\) See paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 67/221 on the contents of the smooth transition strategy.
65. The reporting by graduating countries concern the period between the date the recommendation that the country be graduated is taken note of by the General Assembly and the effective graduation date (i.e. three years from the date in which the General Assembly takes note).

66. To ensure that the findings by graduating countries on the preparation of their smooth transition strategies can be reflected in the annual monitoring of the Committee, the Committee recommends that the following timeline be adhered to by the country submitting its report:

   i. The report by graduating countries is to be received prior to 31 December of each year preceding the publication of the Committee’s annual report to ECOSOC of the following year (see figure 1).

68. The Committee recommends that the annual report from graduating countries include the following elements:

   ii. A concise summary on the progress achieved in setting up a consultative mechanism, including identification of participants, indication of meetings convened, their respective objectives and outcomes, and specification of substantive and organizational support by the relevant UN institutions in convening the meetings, where applicable;

   iii. Identification of the LDC-specific international support measures most relevant to the country and corresponding details about the level of commitments made by development and trading partners in maintaining or phasing out those measures;

   iv. Information on the preparation of the transition strategy, including identification of the key issues to be addressed by the strategy, of measures (to be) taken by the country, decisions made and the identification of pending actions;

   v. If available, the latest version of the transition strategy should be attached to the report to the Committee.

**Reporting by the CDP on graduating countries**

69. Since 2008, in accordance with ECOSOC resolutions on the annual report of the Committee, the Committee monitors the development progress of graduating countries and includes its findings in its annual report to the Council. These recurring requests from the Council can be avoided by formalizing the monitoring of graduating countries as an integral part of the graduation procedures as follows:

   vi. The Committee for Development Policy will monitor the development progress of graduating countries on an annual basis and include its findings in its annual report to ECOSOC (see figure 1).

70. The monitoring report will contain the following elements:
vii. A review of a selected set of indicators and relevant information, established on a country-by-country basis, to assess any signs of deterioration in the development progress of the graduating country;
viii. A summary of the Committee’s review of the information provided by the graduating country on the preparation of the transition strategy, if submitted by the graduating country (see above under item i).

**Reporting by graduated countries**

71. Under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 67/221, graduated countries are invited to provide concise annual reports to the Committee on the implementation of the smooth transition strategy for a period of three years, and triennially thereafter, as a complement to the two triennial reviews of the list of LDCs carried out by the Committee for Development Policy (paragraph 20).

72. To ensure that the findings by graduated countries can be reflected in the monitoring report of the Committee, the Committee recommends that the following timeline be adhered to by the country submitting its report:

ix. The graduated country is invited to submit its annual report on the implementation of the smooth transition strategy before 31 December of each year preceding the publication of the Committee for Development Policy’s annual report in the following year, during a period of three years. Thereafter, the graduated country is invited to submit its annual report before 31 December in the year preceding the year in which the Committee undertakes its triennial review of the list of LDCs as a complement to two triennial reviews (see figure 1).

73. The Committee recommends that the report from the graduated country include the following elements:

x. An overview of progress made in implementing the smooth transition strategy and information on whether the measures by the Government of the graduated country and the commitments by its development and trading partner identified in the transition strategy are being fulfilled;

xi. In those cases where support is being reduced or withdrawn, the report should indicate how this is affecting the country in order to assist the Committee in its assessment and to bring any negative effects to the attention of the Council as early as possible.
Reporting by the Committee on graduated countries

74. In line with General Assembly resolution 67/221, the development progress of graduated countries will be monitored by the Committee in consultation with the Governments of those countries, on a yearly basis for a period of three years after graduation becomes effective and triennially thereafter, as a complement to two triennial reviews (paragraph 21).

75. The monitoring report prepared by the Committee will contain the following elements (see figure 1):

xii. The Committee for Development Policy will continue to monitor the development progress of graduated countries based on the existing guidelines established in 2008;11

xiii. The main purpose of the monitoring report is to identify any signs of reversal in the development progress of the country concerned during the post-graduation period and bring them to the attention of the Council as early as possible;

xiv. The monitoring will also include an assessment of the inputs from the report from the graduated country if submitted to the Committee (see above under item ix);

xv. Prior to finalizing its report to ECOSOC, the Committee—through its Secretariat—will consult with the New York-based representative of the graduated country about the conclusions of its draft report. The Secretariat will call for a meeting with the representative to discuss the views of the Government, not later than 10 working days from the date it sent the draft report. On the assumption that the meeting takes place on or before the specified date, the government’s views will be considered by the Committee in its final report to ECOSOC.

C. The proposed procedures and recommendation to ECOSOC

76. The procedures listed under items (i) to (xv) above are intended to clarify the steps needed to enhance the reporting procedures of the smooth transition process. The Committee for Development Policy considers that these procedures are consistent with the framework laid out by General Assembly resolution 67/221 and earlier resolutions related to smooth transition from the least development category, in particular General Assembly resolution 59/209.

77. The Committee requests ECOSOC to endorse these procedures as a further clarification to the framework established by General Assembly resolution 67/221.

11 See Official Records of the ECOSOC, Supplement No. 13 (E/2008/33), chap. IV.
D. Monitoring of graduating countries

78. ECOSOC resolution E/2012/32 requests the CDP to monitor recent socio-economic development progress of countries graduating from the LDC category. Currently, Samoa is the only LDC earmarked for graduation by the General Assembly.

79. While Samoa remains highly vulnerable to economic shocks, it continues to make economic and social progress, as findings from the recent trends in the national income and the human assets index (HAI) suggest. Its gross national income per capita has increased since 2009, recovering from the negative impact of the global economic crisis and the Pacific Ocean tsunami of 2009. With graduation scheduled to take place on 1 January 2014, the CDP reiterates the importance for the country to prepare its smooth transition strategy, in collaboration with its development partners.
Chapter VI

Future work of the Committee for Development Policy

80. The Committee for Development Policy will continue to align its work programme to the needs and priorities established by the Council with a view to contributing effectively to the Council’s deliberations and assisting it in the performance of its functions.

81. For its sixteenth session, the Committee will undertake work on the theme of the 2014 annual ministerial review, “Addressing ongoing and emerging challenges for meeting the MDGs in 2015 and for sustaining development gains in the future”. In this regard, it will analyze how current rules and global governance structures promote effective responses to international problems and a fair distribution of development opportunities among countries. In this regard, the Committee will also consider the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for monitoring global governance.

82. In preparation of the triennial review of the list of least developed countries the Committee will review and fine tune current methodological approaches and criteria used to classify countries as LDCs. It will also monitor, as applicable, the development progress of graduating and graduated countries as established by General Assembly resolution A/67/221 and in accordance with the guidelines recommended in this present report.

83. The Committee will also address the effectiveness of an international support system based on a country classification framework in view of the increasing heterogeneity of developing countries, the problems of incentives these classifications generate and the persistence of challenges to be addressed.
Chapter VII

Organization of the session

84. The Committee for Development Policy held its fifteenth session at the United Nations Headquarters from 18 to 22 March 2013. Twenty-three members of the Committee, as well as observers from several organizations within the United Nations system, attended the session. The list of participants is contained in annex I.

85. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat provided substantive services for the session. The Secretary of the Committee opened the session and welcomed the participants. Subsequently, Assistant-Secretary General for Economic Development, Ms. Shamshad Akthar addressed the Committee. The meeting proceeded with the election of the Bureau as follows: Jose Antonio Ocampo (Chair), Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (vice Chair) and Norman Girvan (Rapporteur). The President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Néstor Osorio, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations also addressed the Committee. Statements are available at http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/cdp_statements.shtml

86. The agenda for the fifteenth session and the list of documents before the Committee are contained in annexes II and III.
ANNEX I

List of participants

1. The following members of the Committee attended the session:

   Lu Aiguo
   José Antonio Alonso
   Nouria Benghabrit-Remaoun
   Giovanni Andrea Cornia
   Diane Elson
   Sakiko Fukuda-Parr (*Vice-Chair*)
   Norman Girvan (*Rapporteur*)
   Ann Harrison
   Stephan Klasen
   Keun Lee
   Thandika Mkandawire
   Adil Najam
   Leonce Ndikumana
   Jose Antonio Ocampo (*Chair*)
   Tea Petrin
   Patrick Plane
   Victor Polterovich
   Pilar Romaguera
   Onalenna Selolwane
   Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo
   Madhura Swaminathan
   Zenebework Tadesse Marcos
   Dzodzi Tsikata
2. The following entities of the United Nations system were represented at the session:

- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
- United Nations Children's Fund
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia
- United Nations Environment Programme
- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
- UN-Habitat
- United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
- World Food Programme
- World Intellectual Property Organization
ANNEX II

Agenda

1. Inaugural session
2. Organizational session
3. The international development agenda beyond 2015: addressing emerging issues in the global environment (cont.)
4. Addressing the vulnerabilities and development needs of the small island developing States (SIDS)
5. The Least Developed Country (LDC) category: selected issues
6. Science, Technology and Innovation for achieving sustainable development
7. The CDP Programme of Work
8. Adoption of the CDP report
**ANNEX III**

List of documents before the Committee at its fifteenth session

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