



**United
Nations**

Committee for
Development
Policy

23rd session of CDP Plenary

ECOSOC interaction
New York, 26 February 2021
Venue: Virtual meeting

Statement by Mr. Ocampo

- The Committee for Development Policy has held its 23rd plenary session from 22-26 February and I am grateful for this opportunity to share the outcome of our deliberations with you.
- The Committee is deeply concerned about the impact the COVID-19 pandemic on the world's poor. We released a policy document last year addressing development policy and multilateralism in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The document proposed solutions for the re-empowerment of governments for green, equitable and resilient development, inequality and leaving no one behind, and elements of a new multilateralism in the world that will emerge from the pandemic. Many of its central ideas have become even more urgent.
- The Committee recommends that the Council urgently take stock of the lessons learned from the shortcomings of the multilateral and regional responses to COVID-19 and, in line with the calls for an inclusive and networked multilateralism, put in motion an open and transparent process to identify and implement the changes that will ensure that the system supports equitable, sustainable and resilient development.
- Let me underscore some special recommendations that we make to strengthen multilateral cooperation under the current unprecedented and multidimensional crisis:
 - ✓ Support rapid vaccinations of the population in developing countries, and particularly in LDCs, to ensure the most vulnerable countries are not once again left behind.
 - ✓ Supporting health systems and building robust public health infrastructure for pandemic control.

- ✓ Support a sustainable and inclusive transformation of developing countries, and particularly of LDCs' economies, including new efforts to bridge the digital divide.
 - ✓ Provide effective debt relief and debt restructuring mechanisms, going beyond debt servicing suspension.
 - ✓ Increase support from multilateral financial institutions, which should be on highly concessional terms for LDCs.
- The CDP has been analyzing the voluntary national reviews since 2017. This year we have reflected on how the reviews referred to pandemic preparedness, leaving no one behind, inequality, gender, and productive capacity, as well as on the SDG targets that are underreported.
 - Recovery from the ongoing crisis should not aim to return to pre-crisis development patterns but to reframe development towards equality, resilience and environmental sustainability. Based on our review, the Committee recommends that ECOSOC and Member States give greater attention in their VNRs to the neglected agendas of structural change, climate change and inequality, the latter particularly in the context of the effects of the pandemic that is amplifying inequalities.
 - The Committee further recommends that attention be given to the VNR process to enhance its impact, such as ensuring that lessons learned are fed back to ensure continuous improvement in policy. To this end, it also recommends active engagement with independent civil society inputs, including the presentation of shadow reports.
 - This week the CDP conducted its triennial review of the least developed countries category. In preparation for the review, we held a virtual expert group meeting from January 8 to 15, during which we held consultations with countries eligible for graduation and also closely examined the situation of the countries that may become eligible for graduation in the near future, as well as that of other countries in the graduation pipeline.
 - Recommendations are made on the basis of the application of the LDC criteria and additional information provided by supplementary data and reports prepared by DESA and UNCTAD, as well as inputs received from the countries. The Committee has furthermore taken into account the conclusions of a comprehensive study undertaken on the impacts of COVID-19 on LDCs and graduating countries (mandated by the Council), as well as other country specific considerations as presented by the graduating countries.
 - Today the Committee has finalized its decision to recommend that Bangladesh, Lao PDR and Nepal graduate from the list of LDCs. Due to the unprecedented challenges

posed by the COVID-19 pandemic we are also recommending an extended 5-year graduation period during which we will carefully monitor their development progress and pandemic recovery to ensure that they remain on course for graduation. The Committee advises the Council of the importance for development partners to support graduating countries with concrete measures to facilitate a smooth transition.

- The CDP is also working to improve its monitoring of graduating or graduated countries through an improved monitoring mechanism, including the introduction of a crisis response process within the monitoring mechanism when the countries are facing crises and emergencies. This will enable the Committee to keep track of the impacts of the pandemic as well as other emergencies on these countries over the coming years.
- Let me finally say that we will be making recommendations to the Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs (LDC V), which is expected to adopt the next programme of action for LDCs for the next decade. In 2019, the CDP proposed that the theme of “Expanding productive capacity for sustainable development” should be used as the organizing framework of this new program of action. We are reiterating that call this year. But we will also include recommendations that are derived from our analysis of the effects of Covid-19 on LDCs, including on improving the health system and access to vaccines, bridging the digital divide, financing with an emphasis on grants rather than loans and stronger debt relief.
- In the briefing on LDCs, which will follow this meeting with ECOSOC, we will present more in-depth details on all LDC-related issues discussed by the Committee.
- Thanks very much for your attention.