



**United  
Nations**

Committee for  
Development  
Policy

**23<sup>rd</sup> session of CDP Plenary**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Opening Session 1, 8:30-9:15AM**  
**22 February 2021**

- I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you! Given the current ongoing pandemic, for the first time in CDP's history we will not be able to see each other in person. But, although not in person, I am very grateful that we can continue our work and advance important topics related to the LDCs and beyond.
- During the week we will deal with a variety of important topics. Let me touch upon some items of the work ahead of us:
- We will conduct our triennial review of the least developed countries. We will take into account the conclusions of our Covid-19 comprehensive study as well as the analysis of each of the countries that are candidates for graduation. In preparation for the review, we held a virtual expert group meeting from January 8 to 15, during which we looked closely at the situation of the countries that may become eligible for graduation, as well as that of other countries in the graduation pipeline.
- We will also monitor the development progress of countries graduating and graduated from the LDC category. This year the monitoring reports will include Angola, Bhutan, Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Solomon Islands, Samoa and Vanuatu. In addition, the CDP is working to improve its monitoring of graduating and graduated countries, which, among others, should enhance country involvement in the monitoring process and enable the international community to keep track of the impacts of the pandemic on these countries over the coming years. We will have a specific session on that. I also look forward to discussing the recommendations for the Graduation Assessment and other graduation process improvements we have piloted.
- The Fifth UN Conference on the LDCs (LDC V) has been postponed to January 2022. It 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 the new programme of action. It also proposed that the new programme address the need to strengthen LDCs’ means to increase resilience to economic and environmental vulnerabilities; incorporate measures that enable the remaining LDCs to benefit more effectively from the support provided specifically to LDCs; and emphasize support to graduating countries. This year we will discuss the need to reiterate the call to use expanding productive capacity for sustainable development as the organizing framework for the next Programme of Action.

- Furthermore, Covid-19 and our analysis in the comprehensive study will also shape our substantive input to this Conference. Supporting health systems, providing effective debt relief and new efforts to bridge the digital divide will be essential to support LDCs in building back better from the pandemic. Our input will also focus on improving support to graduating countries. We will also mention our capacity development work, including the Graduation Support Facility, and ePing which allows countries to receive electronic alerts regarding changes to foreign requirements on their exports.
- As we can see from the agenda ahead of us, we don’t just focus on LDCs. The CDP released a policy document last year addressing development policy and multilateralism in the context of the pandemic, which responds to multiple aspects of this year’s ECOSOC theme. This 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. We should discuss the need to reiterate last year’s recommendation that the Council have an open, consultative process with the objective of reforming multilateral rules to make them conducive to a global transition towards equitable and sustainable development. This recommendation has acquired renewed relevance and urgency with the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences.
- Not least, the CDP has been analyzing the voluntary national reviews since 2017. This year we will be reflecting 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.
- On the last day of the plenary (Friday 26) there will be an exchange of views with Member States and a briefing on LDC issues. We continue with this practice as this type of exchange was very much welcomed in the past and in 2020 the Council explicitly requested for a substantive exchange through a dedicated session.
- As a reminder, during this week the Committee will need to develop concise and clear messages so that ECOSOC can make good use of our inputs and expertise. We will have to agree on the content of the chapter to be submitted to ECOSOC, including the points to highlight under the sections of the report on matters calling for action by the Council or to bring to the attention of the Council.
- I look forward to work with you in our new virtual environment and wish us all a great week ahead.