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Report on the twenty-fourth session (21–25 February 2022)

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Report on the twenty-first session
(21–25 February 2022)
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 Committee for Development Policy at its twenty-fourth session. The Committee addressed the following items: the contribution to the ECOSOC annual theme for 2022, “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”; the Committee’s inputs to the review by ECOSOC of its subsidiary bodies; an analysis of the 2021 voluntary national reviews (VNRs) of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the monitoring of countries that are graduating or graduated from the list of least developed countries; the work of the Committee on developing and implementing an Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism for countries that are graduating or have recently graduated from the least developed country category; and, additional matters related to the least developed countries (LDCs).

On the theme of the Economic and Social Council for 2022, the Committee focused on how industrial policies can be used to address the simultaneous challenges faced by governments as they build forward from the COVID-19 crisis as well as the pre-existing crises of climate change and inequality. Industrial policies should contribute to the development of productive capabilities that can span across sectors and products and ensure productivity growth, with support from the education, skills-training and science and technology systems, and from the development of adequate infrastructure. Industrial policies should also strongly back the integration of micro-, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) into broader productive networks. Post-pandemic industrial policies will need to take into account new realities, challenges and opportunities, including those associated with the green and blue economies, but they can draw important lessons from past experiences to ensure their effectiveness. Among these are the need to have clear goals, be integrated in an economy-wide structural transformation strategy, be time-bound and incorporate accountability mechanisms as well as transparent and inclusive-decision-making processes. Fulfilling the potential of industrial policy requires effective regional and global frameworks, effective institutions and cooperation – including South-South cooperation – oriented pragmatically to help developing countries overcome constraints in finance, technology, and information.

In response to the ECOSOC review of subsidiary bodies, the Committee assessed its working methods, program of work and engagement with ECOSOC in accordance with the guidance provided by the ECOSOC Vice-Presidency. The Committee found its work to be closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda, noting its mandate to provide recommendations to ECOSOC on the graduation of countries from the LDC category, the work on analysis of the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) and its annual contributions to the ECOSOC theme. In the assessments of its working methods, the members found them generally effective, highlighting the formation of thematic subgroups, the assignment of country rapporteurs and the organization of virtual expert group meetings and webinars. The Committee also noted its engagement with ECOSOC through the events organized during its plenary session, the participation in events of the HLPF/HLS as well as interactions with other subsidiary bodies and entities from within and outside the UN system.

The Committee’s analysis of the VNRs indicates that those presented in 2021 show welcome improvements over earlier reports in the broader capture of all aspects of the 2030 agenda and in increased attention to previously underreported goals and targets, in particular those related to the environment. Two key continuing concerns are the lack of substance and analysis, which limits the potential of the reports to share
meaningful experiences and lessons learned; and the lack of attention given to the transformative and integrated objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

In its monitoring of countries that are graduating and have graduated from the LDC category, the Committee reviewed the development progress of one recently graduated country – Vanuatu – and seven graduating countries - Angola, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao PDR, Nepal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Solomon Islands. The Committee expressed its concern on the limited national capacity of these countries to address diverse challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, and debt sustainability. It urges the countries to continue reporting to the CDP on their progress on preparing and implementing the smooth transition strategy. The Committee will continue to monitor the countries closely, especially Angola and Solomon Islands, in terms of the recovery from the crises, focusing on socio-economic as well as environmental sustainability issues.

The Committee also reviewed progress in developing and implementing its enhanced monitoring mechanism for countries that are graduating and have graduated from the LDC category. It welcomed the positive feedback and interest by the countries in the mechanism. It adopted the procedures for an improved annual monitoring and agreed on next steps to finalize the new crisis response process within the mechanism as well as the development of strengthened measures that better link monitoring to special graduation support.

The Committee considered the ongoing preparations for the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and noted the agreement by Member States on the Doha Programme of Action. It highlighted the need to start implementation of the Doha Programme of Action on an expedited basis. In this regard, the Committee reviewed the progress in developing the integrated sustainable graduation support facility, now called iGRAD, and notes a scaling-up of the iGRAD pilot with an additional seven countries in 2022. It stressed the urgency for operationalizing the facility in 2022 and the importance of coordination and resource mobilization support from member states and the wider international community. The Committee expressed its concern on the ongoing devastating socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on the LDCs and committed itself to carefully considering the impacts in all its upcoming work on the LDCs.
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Matters brought to the attention of the Council</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOSOC review of subsidiary bodies</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IV</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of the 2021 voluntary national reviews (VNRs)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter V</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The monitoring of countries that are graduating or have graduated from the list of least developed countries</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Introduction</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Graduated country</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Graduating countries</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Deferred countries</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter VI</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced monitoring mechanism</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter VII</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional matters related to the least developed countries</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter VIII</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future work of the Committee for Development Policy</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IX</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization of the session</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex I</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of participants</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex II</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agenda</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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

ECOSOC annual theme for 2022 “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

1. The Committee recommends that ECOSOC encourage Member States to adopt and implement evidence-based industrial policies – defined as policies targeting the development of selected productive capabilities – as a means to build forward from the pandemic-induced crisis, address the pre-existing crises of climate change and severe and growing inequalities, and overcome low- and middle-income traps. These policies must be time-bound, include accountability mechanisms to avoid capture by special interests, and be subject to regular evaluation. The Committee further recommends that ECOSOC call on the relevant United Nations entities to support developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, in this regard. This includes, in addition to the provision of finance, facilitating the exchange of experiences and providing information services that support decision-making in the post-pandemic global economic reconfiguration. Those aspects of the multilateral system that are holding countries back from reaching their potential in developing science, technology and innovation capabilities should also be addressed, including issues-related to intellectual property rights.

2. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that ECOSOC call on development and trading partners to put the development of productive capacities at the centre of their support to least developed countries. The Committee also calls on the international community for an orderly workout from the unsustainable debt problems that several countries are facing, and which are a major obstacle for their development and the recovery from the COVID-19 crisis.

Voluntary national reviews

3. The Committee recommends that ECOSOC continues to explore how the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) can be made more effective for the purpose of sharing experiences on implementation of the 2030 agenda. This should be achieved by incorporating into these reports more specific and substantive discussions and analysis on national and international policies, actions and strategies taken as part of the global social contract in pursuit of the SDGs. Such reflections should review in particular the challenges of achieving the transformative and integrated objectives of the 2030 Agenda and include a reference to the key constraints faced by countries and support needed.

4. The Committee also recommends that ECOSOC and Member States undertaking VNRs strengthen the role of the reviews to share lessons learned among Member States and other stakeholders. Member States undertaking their second and successive VNRs should report on how findings from earlier reviews have been used to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 agenda nationally and internationally.

5. The Committee further reiterates its recommendation that ECOSOC and Member States undertaking VNRs explore ways to tap into new opportunities to make the VNR processes more inclusive, while ensuring adequate representation of groups that are disadvantaged. This requires continued engagement of civil society and space in the VNR process for independent input from all stakeholders, including the presentation of shadow reports.
Monitoring of countries that are graduating and have graduated from the list of LDCs

6. The CDP recommends ECOSOC to call on the international community to continue providing assistance to graduating and recently graduated countries. In particular, the Committee recommends ECOSOC to call for increased financing for development, particularly for strengthening public health systems in preparation of possible future pandemics and for expanding productive capacities, including for sustainable infrastructure, while ensuring the sustainability of external debt. Special attention should also be given to building climate resilience, taking into account the non-linear nature of climate risks and difficulties for LDCs to access climate financing, and disaster risk reduction, including assistance to the recovery of livelihoods and the provision of insurance coverage.

7. The Committee urges that trade-related international support measures, including access to all LDC-specific trade preferences, and the special and differential treatment in the WTO agreements, especially in Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), be extended for an appropriate time beyond graduation.

Enhanced monitoring mechanism for countries graduating and graduated from the list of LDCs

8. The Committee recommends ECOSOC to reiterate its call for support by Member States and relevant UN entities to the enhanced monitoring mechanism developed by the Committee for countries graduating and graduated from the list of LDCs. As called for by the new Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs, the enhanced monitoring mechanism aims to improve responsiveness to emerging crises and to better link monitoring to specific support. The Committee further recommends that ECOSOC calls upon graduating and recently graduated countries to integrate monitoring of the implementation of smooth transition strategies into the country’s monitoring and evaluation frameworks and to establish effective links to the Committee’s enhanced monitoring mechanism. Details of the mechanism are further outlined in chapter VI of this report.

Graduation support facility

9. The Committee appreciates that the Doha Programme of Action welcomes the establishment of the integrated sustainable graduation support facility, iGRAD – the country-led and partnership-based global platform of dedicated capacity development support for countries moving up and out of the LDC category. It recommends that ECOSOC calls upon Member States and the wider international community to support resource mobilization efforts to operationalize iGRAD. Such country-led graduation support mechanism would be an important element in enabling countries to achieve graduation with momentum.

Information on international support for the least developed countries

10. The Committee recommends that ECOSOC calls on United Nations system organizations and Member States to disseminate information on the support measures they extend specifically to the countries in the LDC category, as well as information on support to countries that are graduating from the category, through the LDC Portal on International Support Measures for Least Developed Countries (www.un.org/ldcportal) by submitting this information to ldcportal@un.org.

B. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

Review of the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council

11. The Committee welcomes the ECOSOC review of the subsidiary bodies and looks forward to enhanced interactions with the Council and its subsidiary bodies and other UN entities. In contributing to the review, the Committee evaluated its working methods and programme of
work and found them to be effective and closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda and made a number of suggestions as further detailed in Chapter III.

**Monitoring of countries that are graduating and have graduated from the list of LDCs**

12. The Committee monitored the development progress of eight countries that have graduated or are graduating from the list of LDCs. Bangladesh, Bhutan and Lao PDR, Nepal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Vanuatu appear to be well on track towards smooth transition. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, a prolonged economic recession, volatile commodity market, and with the scheduled graduation in 2024, Angola needs careful monitoring over the coming months for possible immediate attention or actions by the Government, and the international community, including the Committee. Solomon Islands faces challenges from COVID-19 and other shocks but remains on track towards a sustainable graduation, while the CDP needs to continue to closely monitor the development progress of the country, which is scheduled for graduation in 2024.

13. All countries monitored are facing challenges in maintaining macroeconomic stability to varying degrees. With reduced fiscal space due to the impacts of COVID-19, it is difficult for these countries to pursue two policy objectives - achieving short-term recovery and long-term sustainable development - at the same time. Policy interventions in each country need to be carefully designed and implemented to manage potential trade-offs.

14. The Committee recommends that all graduating countries include the following critical elements when developing their smooth transition strategies: (i) enhancing effective development governance, political stability and inclusiveness; (ii) addressing inequalities and measures to reduce them, including those due to COVID-19; (iii) building resilience against climate shocks and reducing disaster risks; (iv) promoting South-South cooperation; (v) customizing the smooth transition strategies to promote productive capacity and diversification; (vi) promoting technological upgrading and strengthening innovation systems; and (vii) developing and adhering to a concrete timeline to complete the smooth transition strategy within 2 years after the General Assembly resolution on graduation is adopted.

**Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism for countries graduating and graduated from the list of LDCs**

15. The Committee will implement the Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism in stages, continuously improving and customizing it for each country monitored, as outlined in chapter VI of this report. It welcomes the valuable consultations it had with countries that are graduating, have graduated or whose graduation has been deferred. The Committee notes that the rising number of graduating and graduated countries is increasing the workload associated with preparing analytical reports and conducting consultations and, therefore, highlights the need to provide its Secretariat with adequate resources in this regard. CDP will review the implementation of the mechanism and report to ECOSOC on lessons learnt in the development and implementation in 2025.

**Graduation support facility**

16. The Committee welcomes the commitment by international entities to cooperate through iGRAD to build the capacity of graduating and recently graduated countries. The Committee requests its Secretariat to operationalize iGRAD, jointly with OHRLLS and in cooperation with the Inter-Agency Task Force on LDC Graduation (IATF). This forms part of the work of the CDP in improving assistance to graduating and graduated countries. It will further strengthen coordination and coherence of UN System support in brokering and delivering integrated country-specific graduation-related advisory and capacity building services. The Committee looks forward to receiving updates by its Secretariat on the implementation of
iGRAD in the coming years and will inform ECOSOC on any relevant issues that may arise in this regard.

Other least developed country matters

17. The Committee welcomes the significant progress made towards graduation from the LDC category over the last decade, with more than a third of LDCs in various formal stages of the graduation process, and acknowledges the new target of the programme of action to enable another fifteen of the LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2031. However, the CDP is deeply concerned that a significant number of LDCs, particularly those in Africa, would remain far behind and struggle to achieve graduation. It reiterates its previous findings that the lack of productive capacity is among the main root causes of underdevelopment of LDCs. Therefore, the CDP recommends that priority should be given to those elements of the Doha Programme of Action that enable LDCs to expand productive capacities for sustainable development. These efforts should ensure that modalities of international support and concrete deliverables take the heterogeneity of LDCs into account, so that no LDC is left behind.

18. The Committee remains concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on the development of all LDCs. While the Committee welcomes that many of its key recommendations on this matter from 2021 have been shared and reflected in many policy documents adopted subsequently by ECOSOC and other international forums, the slow pace of implementation must be addressed urgently. Most LDCs continue to lag far behind all other countries in terms of vaccinations; the external debt of several LDCs remains unsustainable and the Common Framework for Debt Treatment is not delivering on its promises; and there is very limited support for a sustainable and inclusive transformation of the economies of LDCs.
Chapter II

Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

19. Governments worldwide are facing simultaneous challenges: recovering from an economic crisis of unprecedented scale, addressing deep and growing inequalities, securing the transition to low-carbon and environmentally sustainable economies, adapting to climate change, and increasing resilience to shocks. Industrial policies – defined as policies that aim to develop productive capabilities with a view to contributing to productivity growth and other development objectives – can be instrumental in pursuing those simultaneous goals and addressing potential trade-offs, as well as overcoming low- and middle-income traps. The creation of stable and well-paying jobs and the formalization of workers and firms through industrial policies can reduce inequality, including gender inequality.

20. Industrial policy has been central to the countries that have managed to advance on a path of structural transformation. Future industrial policies will need to be designed to reflect new realities, challenges and priorities such as digitalization, decarbonization, the post-pandemic restructuring of firms and sectors, and the need to build resilience to shocks and adapt to climate change. It will also need to be embedded with strategies to develop the green economy, the blue economy, and the care economy. Even considering this new and dynamic context, the experiences of the past provide important lessons for the effectiveness of future industrial policies.

21. In the past, industrial policy often focused on manufacturing. What was traditionally defined as the manufacturing sector was, and is, embedded in a complex network of services. What gave manufacturing its value as a catalyst of productive development were the capabilities developed and deployed in interaction with that network. Industrial policy should not be thought of only in terms of sectors or specific products. It should also pay attention to developing the productive capabilities that can ensure productivity growth and promote the move to higher value-added activities within and across sectors. Each country must set its priorities in terms of education and training, infrastructure (including digital infrastructure), as well as developing science, technology and innovation capabilities.

22. There is no one-size-fits-all model or single theoretical framework for industrial policies, but experience shows that, for them to be effective they must have clear goals, be pragmatic, and reflect the resources, capabilities, socio-political and environmental contexts so that their implementation is feasible. They must be central in an integrated economy-wide structural transformation strategy, in line with macroeconomic, science and technology, trade, energy, environment, and gender policies. Their design must consider potential geographic impacts, including consequences for internal migration and urbanization and opportunities for de-concentrating investments.

23. Effective industrial policy also requires mechanisms to avoid abuse, including rent-seeking behaviours. While businesses that benefit from industrial policy should not be paralyzed by the risk of failure, as innovation requires risk-taking, they should be held accountable. Enforceable innovation commitments, time-bound support, sunset clauses and regular evaluation of performance can help ensure that both governments and businesses are focused on producing results and that ineffective policies are not perpetuated. The relevant decision-making processes must be transparent and inclusive.
24. Industrial policy must reflect the diverse and dynamic nature of firms and sectors. Production networks that bring capabilities together are moving away from the boundaries of the large corporation or conglomerate towards mosaics of firms, including micro-, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), cooperating across borders under diverse legal arrangements. Capability-based industrial policy requires a new generation of support services, particularly for MSMEs, such as providing adequate financing, technological services, business information, support to adopt better practices and export marketing services through public and joint private-public agencies. This would also include training and opportunities for entrepreneurs to share ideas, discuss challenges, and address issues through lessons and peer learning from success in other countries.

25. Better integrating MSMEs into broader productive networks, which can play a role in reducing inequality, also requires building their capabilities, including technological capacity, as well as incentivizing larger firms to develop local supplier networks. It also requires innovative financing solutions to lower the transaction costs that have kept many MSMEs outside the scope of interest of private capital and the opportunities in regional and global supply chains.

26. In countries where national development banks possess strong governance and risk assessment capabilities, these institutions can play an important role in supporting firms and sectors with potential for productivity growth, as well as financial inclusion, including access of MSMEs to credit. They, along with multilateral development banks, need to be part of a broader financing framework that is agile, inclusive and meets the needs of diverse firms and sectors. Financing frameworks also need to be able to mobilize private funds in a way that is compatible with a decentralized and fragmented network of firms, most often operating outside the boundaries of a single corporation or traditional conglomerates.

27. Fulfilling the potential of industrial policy and productive capacity requires effective regional and global frameworks, effective institutions and cooperation – including South-South cooperation – oriented pragmatically to help developing countries overcome constraints in finance, technology, and information. The international community should increase the resources being invested in identifying the sector- and capability- specific lessons that can be of most practical use to policymakers.

28. The pandemic, climate change, and other current crises of sustainable development require a revision of intellectual property frameworks that would provide developing countries access to the latest advances in technology, such as those for COVID-19 vaccines and treatment or clean energy technologies. This would provide opportunities for developing countries to participate in co-development of technology, rather than rely on the largely undelivered promise of technology transfer.

29. Innovative regional and global platforms should be explored to bring together elements of value chains, taking advantage of advances in technology and clean energy. Innovation in international cooperation for industrial policy starts with open dialogue across trade, climate, environmental and other relevant international arenas.

30. Of immediate concern for the multilateral system are the implications of industrial policies aiming at advancing a green transition towards low-carbon economies. Many countries are starting their transition, but often pursue this objective in a competitive manner, resorting to protectionist measures. Many developing countries are integrating into emerging value chains by providing natural resources for low-carbon technologies, perpetuating or even increasing their reliance on primary sectors. The green transition should promote rather than hinder the sustainable development of the most vulnerable countries. Commodity-dependent LDCs in
particular require support from the international community to secure diversification and structural transformation in this new and dynamic context.
Chapter III

ECOSOC review of subsidiary bodies

31. The Committee welcomes the ECOSOC review of its subsidiary bodies and looks forward to supporting the review process over the coming months. The Committee assessed its working methods, program of work and engagement with ECOSOC and its subsidiary system in line with the guidance provided by the ECOSOC Vice-Presidency and found them to be effective and closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda and relevant conferences.

32. The Committee is mandated to provide recommendations to ECOSOC on the graduation of countries from, and inclusion into, the LDC category. These recommendations are evidence-based and rooted in a comprehensive methodology to assess progress on LDC criteria and indicators, as well as country-specific analyses. The Committee recently further strengthened the evidence-based nature of the graduation process by introducing supplementary graduation indicators into the methodology and by developing an enhanced monitoring mechanism for countries that are graduating and have graduated from the LDC category (see chapter VI).

33. The Committee undertakes analysis on key development challenges affecting all LDCs and provided proposals for the new Doha Programme of Action for the least developed countries. These analyses and proposals are well reflected in, among others, the draft Programme of Action and the 2021 HLPF Ministerial Declaration, indicating the impact of the Committee in this area of work. The Committee also guides the capacity building and information services of its Secretariat on LDCs in general and LDC graduation in particular.

34. The Committee has established a VNR subgroup that has been analysing VNRs presented at the HLFP every year since 2017. The CDP report provides points for consideration by governments and other stakeholders participating in the VNRs. Its recommendations are aimed at enhancing the role of the VNRs as an effective instrument in accelerating SDG implementation.

35. Guided by the ECOSOC theme, the Committee produces reports and policy papers with analysis to inform its recommendations. The CDP has consistently advocated for the centrality of productive capacity to achieve the SDGs, both in LDCs and other developing countries. In response to this year’s theme, Chapter II discusses how industrial policy can help address multiple and simultaneous challenges related to climate change, inequality, and recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. The CDP intends to work on green transition and issues of debt and international finance in response to the ECOSOC theme for 2023.

36. The Committee is actively involved and in contact with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies and other UN entities. Committee Members participated in the High-Level Segment, the Integration Segment in the past and, since 2022, the Coordination Segment, the Development Cooperation Forum, the HLPF and its side events, and other ECOSOC events as well as other fora within the UN. The Committee has engaged in collaboration with OHRLLS, UNCTAD, RCOs, Regional Commissions, UNDRR and, outside the UN system, WTO, ITC, OECD, the Enhanced Integrated Framework, and multiple other partners in the area of coordination of support to graduating countries and policy analysis. Since 2018, it

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1 Recent examples include the comprehensive study on the impact of COVID-19 and the multi-year work on expanding productive capacities.
has conducted briefings on LDC issues for ECOSOC members. In 2021 the Committee also introduced an “ECOSOC interaction” held after the conclusion of its plenary, which allowed for a more open discussion between ECOSOC members and the CDP. Concrete feedback on these events could assist the CDP in effective dissemination of its findings and recommendations as well as enhanced engagement with ECOSOC.

37. In terms of good practices with respect to its working arrangements, the Committee notes that activities are undertaken in sub-groups, thereby allowing members to focus on certain aspects of the workplan (ECOSOC theme, LDC issues and VNRs). In its work on one of the key mandates, identifying countries for graduation from the LDC category, the Committee appoints, among its members, country rapporteurs to ensure continuity of participation in the graduation process during the years leading to a country’s exit from the LDC category and closer engagement at the country level.

38. Through the establishment of the LDC graduation assessment, the Committee fostered closer interaction with the LDCs and RCO offices, allowing the LDC graduation process to be more inclusive and transparent. The CDP has also been organizing virtual webinars and Expert Group Meetings over the past two years and found them to be an efficient, effective, transparent, and inclusive means to disseminate work and engage with Member States and other stakeholders.

39. The CDP integrates its analytical work with the inter-governmental process as well as (through its Secretariat) undertakes important capacity development work that informs the analysis and recommendations of the Committee to ECOSOC.

40. With respect to the ECOSOC reform and review of subsidiary bodies, the Committee is looking forward to receiving additional guidance, and to learn from the experiences of other subsidiary bodies. In particular, the CDP invites ECOSOC to identify more targeted and specific questions or problems related to the broader ECOSOC theme to which it could contribute its unique and diverse experience and expertise. The CDP would also welcome a review by the Council of how the policy recommendations made by ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, including the CDP, are implemented by Member States and United Nations entities.

41. While a central resource for accessing the proceedings and schedules of subsidiary bodies exists in the “ECOSOC subsidiary bodies” webpage on the UN Secretariat website, a more comprehensive and searchable repository consolidating all events, reports and outputs/publications of different subsidiary bodies and their secretariats could facilitate coordination and collaboration among ECOSOC’s subsidiary bodies.
Chapter IV

Analysis of the 2021 voluntary national reviews (VNRs)

42. The Committee has conducted analysis of the VNRs presented at the HLPF every year since 2018. This year, it conducted an analysis of the 40 VNR reports presented in 2021. While there are welcome advances, key concerns raised by the Committee in the past on the scope and content of the reports remain. The VNRs reviewed are not reflecting the transformative ambition of the 2030 Agenda, nor do they appear to be effectively used as tools for taking lessons learned into policy debates and processes.

43. VNR reports are largely descriptive and lack the substantive assessments and analyses required to serve their intended purpose of sharing experiences of national governments, civil society, businesses and international partners. More detailed attention to and reflection on policies, strategies and actions taken, nationally and internationally and their impact, would facilitate identifying experiences and lessons learned, which could support improvements to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

44. COVID-19 pandemic impact and response. All VNRs report on the severe impact of the pandemic on SDG progress, with most reports putting more emphasis on socio-economic impacts than on health impacts. Many reports describe the disproportionate impact the pandemic has had on marginalized and disadvantaged groups but do not reflect on why this is the case. Most reports detail the health response and social protection support, but a number of reports leave out any mention of vaccine access. Only about a third of the reports refer to target 3.d on pandemic preparedness.

45. Leaving no one behind. The committee is encouraged by the increasing attention given to the pledge to leave no one behind, which is mentioned in all reports. However, the focus of policy response, such as on the effects of the pandemic on vulnerable groups, is mostly on social protection measures for the vulnerable and marginalized groups with less reflection on structural issues. Furthermore, only two reports mention reaching the furthest behind first and none refer to actions to avoid pushing people further behind. When identifying marginalized and disadvantaged groups, disabled persons, women and girls, the elderly and children are widely recognized, while references to indigenous people, religious or ethnic groups, LGBTIQ and people living with HIV/AIDS are rarer.

46. Income inequality. A trend of increasing attention given to income inequality in the VNRs continues. However, there is underreporting of important targets of SDG10, in particular those referring to financial market regulation and enhanced representation of developing countries in international decision making. Furthermore, the notion of structural change, nationally and internationally is still absent, as is the focus on social safety nets and redistribution rather than on underlying fundamental causes of inequality.

47. Gender inequality. Three-quarters of the reports have a dedicated section on SDG5, which is a lower share than in previous years. Even fewer reports refer to specific targets and treatment of gender inequality; it is superficial in most VNRs. Only around half of the reports recognize gender pay gaps, and only one in four reports refers to any policies or strategies to address this issue.

2 See CDP website.
48. **Environment.** The Committee found that there was a substantial increase in the attention given to climate action and clean energy, which it found to have been underreported in the VNRs presented in 2020. Sustainable consumption and production is discussed in almost all reports but, aside from waste reduction and management, the attention to individual targets is modest, suggesting the topic is not treated in much depth. Very few reports mention resource mobilization for ecosystem protection and sustainable management of forests. Based on a mapping of the interlinkages among environmental targets, as well as between environmental and other targets, the Committee explored how the reports address and refer to such interdependencies. For instance, the relationship between access to clean water and education is referred to in some reports.

49. **Partnerships and means of implementation.** Resource mobilization in general receives the most attention in the reporting of SDG 17. Other aspects, such as international commitments and creating enabling environments, have less coverage in the 2021 VNRs. As an example, only one quarter of the reports refer to policy coherence. This could indicate a failure of many reports to recognize and address the integrated nature of the sustainable development challenge and the transformative change needed to realize the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee is also concerned that targets, such as investment promotion and market access that specifically support the development of least developed countries, remain among the least reported targets overall. Furthermore, the importance of policy space is scarcely mentioned in any reports.

50. **Under-reported goals and targets.** A general trend in past reports and again in the reports presented in 2021 is the lack of attention to means of implementation targets. Targets and themes related to technology transfer, capacity building and inclusive and equitable globalization and trade remain among the least reported. This is true for the reporting on all goals.
Chapter V

The monitoring of countries that are graduating or have graduated from the list of least developed countries

A. Introduction

51. Mandated by E/RES/2021/11 and A/RES/67/221, the Committee monitored the development progress of one recently graduated country – Vanuatu – and seven graduating countries – Angola, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao PDR, Nepal, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Solomon Islands. The Committee also consulted with Tuvalu, as mandated by E/RES/2021/11. The detailed monitoring reports, with recommendations on policy priorities and support needs, are available on the Committee’s website. Table 1 shows LDC criteria and productive capacity index scores for the countries monitored, to highlight longer term socio-economic development progress vis-à-vis the established criteria and the central role of expanding productive capacities for graduation (see Chapter VI, para 74).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least developed country criteria</th>
<th>Graduation threshold</th>
<th>Human Assets Index (HAI)</th>
<th>Economic and Environmental Vulnerability Index (EVI)</th>
<th>Productive capacities index (PCI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduation threshold</td>
<td>&gt;=$1,242</td>
<td>&gt;=66.0</td>
<td>&lt;=32.0</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduated country</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>$3,050</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>46.3</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduating countries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>$2,791</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>$2,004</td>
<td>76.2</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>$3,045</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lao PDR</td>
<td>$2,539</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>$1,198</td>
<td>76.5</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sao Tome and Principe</td>
<td>$1,978</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solomon Islands</td>
<td>$2,343</td>
<td>73.5</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>26.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Averages</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LDCs</td>
<td>$1,391</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other developing countries</td>
<td>$9,259</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>31.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Committee for Development Policy Secretariat and UNCTAD.
Note: Details of the LDC criteria and sub-indicators of HAI and EVI are available at the CDP website. For details on construction and interpretation of the PCI, see UNCTAD website. PCI values refer to 2018.

B. Graduated country

Vanuatu

52. Vanuatu graduated in December 2020. The country was heavily affected by Cyclone Harold in 2020 and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Services exports, particularly tourism as major income source of the country, has reduced significantly, but the economy is expected to rebound to grow 4-4.5 per cent in coming years.
The Government of Vanuatu has been implementing the smooth transition strategy (STS) and is a pilot country of the sustainable graduation support facility iGRAD. The Government held a country consultation meeting with the Committee, although it has not submitted its annual report on the STS to the Committee. The CDP recommends the country implements the strategy in a phased approach. Promoting productive capacity, for instance, through digitalizing the economy, should be the central part of the short-term recovery, as well as building resilience in the long run. Vanuatu is suggested to continue making efforts to overcome the limited statistical capacity with assistance from development partners.

C. Graduating countries

Angola

54. Angola is scheduled to graduate in February 2024. The CDP takes note that the COVID-19 pandemic has aggravated the overall macro-economic situation in Angola, leading to the fifth consecutive year of economic recession in 2020 and high public debt. Despite some recent improvements in 2021, along with higher oil prices, in 2023 the GNI per capita in Angola could fall below the income-only graduation threshold which was the basis of the CDP’s recommendation for Angola’s graduation in 2015. The country continues to be far from reaching the graduation thresholds in the other two LDC criteria, with only small improvements in HAI and further worsening of EVI.

55. The CDP considers the situation in Angola fragile and highlights the need to continue to monitor closely the situation. This will be through the new enhanced monitoring mechanism (see chapter VI), which will also inform any further recommendation regarding the graduation of Angola.

56. The CDP welcomes the recent information provided by Angola regarding their efforts towards the preparation of the smooth transition strategy, while expressing concern on the very slow progress made in the preparation of such strategy in the past six years. The CDP recommends that Angola should urgently finalize its STS. Structural transformation is most critical for Angola as an oil-dependent country, which also requires addressing trade-offs between long-term objectives and short-term macroeconomic stability. This transformation can be achieved only with a strong national commitment, assisted by international support.

Bhutan

57. Bhutan is scheduled to graduate in February 2023. Bhutan has been highly successful in containing the COVID-19 pandemic through lockdowns and border closures at the earlier stages of the pandemic and through an effective vaccination program in 2021. However, the strict containment measures did have severe economic implications and GDP dropped by an estimated 10 per cent in 2020. Growth has now returned, and the economy is projected to grow by 5 per cent in the 2021/22 financial year.

58. Bhutan has submitted its second annual report on the preparation of a smooth LDC graduation and has been responsive to CDP communications. The STS is being integrated into the 13th national development plan and the country seems well on track for its graduation preparations. The CDP’s main concerns are the country’s heavy reliance on hydropower exports, tourism and agriculture. The Committee
recommends that the Government continues its efforts to foster economic diversification, supporting in particular the development of small and medium sized enterprises and cottage industries to help expand domestic production and reduce import dependency. It also recommends that Bhutan strengthens and diversifies its linkages with trading partners, and particularly diversifies its exports to India.

**Bangladesh**

59. Bangladesh is scheduled to graduate in November 2026. Bangladesh achieved robust economic growth, between 6-8 per cent annually during 2015-2019, and a positive growth of 3.5 per cent in 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government’s fiscal balance decreased by 5.5 per cent, as the Government used existing fiscal space for active responses to the COVID-19 pandemic to protect the living conditions of the population. Debt to GDP ratio rose to around 40 per cent but remains sustainable.

60. The CDP found the Government of Bangladesh is well placed to prepare and implement the smooth transition strategy. The commitment and progress shown to date are commendable. The Committee suggests Bangladesh’s STS should give attention to accelerating structural transformation within and across sectors, with research and development, technological learning, innovation, and digitization as priorities. Domestic value chains should be promoted, and productive capacities developed further, particularly human capital and institutions. Diversifying destination markets of the export sector is recommended, while continuing negotiations with trading partners on smooth transition. A premature loss of preferential market access to key export markets may result in setbacks for a sustainable graduation.

**Lao PDR**

61. Lao PDR is scheduled to graduate in November 2026. Lao PDR had robust economic growth, averaging over 6 per cent per annum over 2015-2019, but the growth slowed down significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The negative impacts of the COVID-19 added additional difficulties for the country to maintain macroeconomic stability and manage its national debt – around 70 per cent of GDP, owing to the high volume of loans contracted for large scale infrastructure projects. The country has limited fiscal space to simultaneously maintain macroeconomic stability and recover from the COVID-19 at the same time.

62. The Government of Lao PDR presented a strong commitment on graduation from the LDC category and has established the consultative mechanism with trading and development partners, while drafting the STS. The CDP suggests that Lao PDR includes concrete plans and activities in the STS to reduce macroeconomic instability and achieve long-term sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

**Nepal**

63. Nepal is scheduled to graduate in November 2026. The Committee found that, while the country continues to meet HAI and EVI criteria with solid margins, its GNI per capita is still below the graduation threshold despite fast growth in recent years. It is partly due to the large impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector. Government expenditure for public health and welfare increased, but social protection for vulnerable people remained limited.
64. The Government of Nepal has taken steps to prepare its STS and submitted the annual report to the CDP. The Committee recommends the country to take concrete measures to promote productive capacity, including promoting cottage industry and diversifying the economy.

Sao Tome and Principe

65. Sao Tome and Principe is scheduled to graduate in December 2024. The CDP notes that Sao Tome and Principe has been able, with external support, to effectively mitigate the socio-economic impacts of the COVID pandemic. The contraction of the tourism sector during the pandemic was more than compensated by higher public spending, including in social areas. Public debt remains sustainable, but accumulated arrears with bilateral partners are a main challenge.

66. The country continues to show improvement in all LDC criteria indicators, and its graduation is not at risk. Nevertheless, the CDP notes the need for continuous monitoring, as the country remains highly dependent on external support and both the economy and the social sector are still fragile. The CDP regrets that it has neither received an STS report from the Government nor be able to hold consultations. It strongly urges the Government of Sao Tome and Principe to finalize and present the country’s smooth transition strategy.

Solomon Islands

67. Solomon Islands is scheduled to graduate in December 2024. The Solomon Islands continues to make slow but steady progress in building human assets and increasing national income. The CDP notes progress in diversification away from logging towards sectors such as fisheries and minerals. However, the country remains very vulnerable due to the high market concentration both in terms of products and markets as well as the high disaster risk. During the country consultation meeting, the Government reported that the country is severely affected by the recent outbreaks of civil unrest and the COVID-19 pandemic. Progress in preparing a smooth transition strategy has been stalled. Solomon Islands has yet to submit an annual report to the CDP, though it has been successful in ensuring continuous duty-free quota-free market access in the European Union and the United Kingdom.

68. The CDP further observes that the Solomon Islands are facing substantial development challenges with preservation of macroeconomic stability, strengthening transparency and governance of public financial management as well as extractive industries, improvement in the business environment, and progress on financial market development among the key issues. The CDP stresses the importance of good governance and public sector reforms to make progress in these areas.

D. Deferred countries

69. Mandated by E/RES/2021/11, the Committee reached out to the countries whose graduation has been deferred, namely, Kiribati and Tuvalu, to discuss development challenges the countries are facing. The CDP held a virtual consultation meeting with Tuvalu. While there is no COVID-19 case yet, the pandemic is having significant economic and social impacts. The Government is strongly committed to participate in the Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism that the CDP is developing, and to establish a regular communication channel with the CDP. Tuvalu requested the UN system for continued assistance, not only on short-term response measures for crises but also on long-term sustainable development. The Committee is looking forward to
continuing the dialogue with Tuvalu and trusts it will be able to hold country consultations with Kiribati as well.
Chapter VI

Enhanced monitoring mechanism

70. The Committee reviewed the progress in developing and implementing an enhanced monitoring mechanism for countries that are graduating or have recently graduated from the least developed country category. It welcomes the positive feedback and strong interest in its proposal received during the country consultations (see chapter V), the affirmative recognition in the Doha Programme of Action (DPoA, para. 310) and the call by ECOSOC on Member States and relevant UN entities to support CDP’s efforts (E/RES/2021/11, para. 6).

71. The mechanism will complement rather than duplicate existing national and international monitoring processes, by focusing on disruptive events that may affect the smooth transition out of the LDC category and the short- and long-term implications of socio-economic and environmental trends. The mechanism must be closely linked to a country’s own monitoring of its preparation and implementation of the smooth transition strategy.

72. The Committee decided that the enhanced monitoring mechanism will be implemented in stages and consists of three main elements: the improved annual monitoring, the new crisis response process and strengthened support measures linked to the monitoring.

73. For all three elements, effective communication between the Committee and the graduating country is essential. Therefore, the Committee will (re)appoint for each graduating and recently graduated country one of its members as a country rapporteur, who will guide the CDP’s monitoring of the country concerned, supported by the Secretariat. Each monitored country is invited to appoint a graduation focal point who will communicate with the CDP country rapporteur, through the Secretariat. However, this does not preclude other channels of communication between the country and the Committee.

Improved annual monitoring

74. The improved annual monitoring includes the following steps:

a. The Secretariat sends a request to the country to submit an annual report. In line with resolution A/RES/67/221, the report by graduating countries should include information on: i) establishing a consultative mechanism, or utilizing an existing one, with development and trading partners; ii) commitments for and delivery of international support for graduation; iii) the development of a smooth transition strategy; and, iv) if relevant, the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on graduation from the LDC category. Reports by graduated countries should cover similar points, focusing on the implementation of the smooth transition strategies and challenges arising from the graduation.

b. The Committee and the country hold a consultation meeting to discuss progress in the development and/or implementation of the smooth transition strategy, persistent and emerging development challenges and international support needs. These meetings would normally take place in the last quarter of each calendar year. Relevant UN entities are invited to participate in the consultations. The Committee will also hold consultations with countries
whose graduation has been deferred, in line with ECOSOC resolution E/2021/11 and the new Doha Programme of Action.

c. Under the guidance of the country rapporteur, the Secretariat prepares a draft annual monitoring report. The report contains: i) an overview of main socio-economic developments in the country, including a set of economic indicators; ii) the LDC criteria and supplementary graduation indicators; iii) the productive capacity index; iv) an assessment of statistical capacity; and v) a description of the progress in preparing and implementing the smooth transition strategy, based on the report submitted by the country and the country consultations.

d. The Committee will include key points from the annual monitoring and policy recommendations agreed upon at the CDP plenary session in its annual report to ECOSOC. It will alert ECOSOC in case development progress of a graduating or graduated countries has been or is at the risk of being reversed. The full monitoring reports and reports by the country will be made available on the CDP website.

Crisis response process

75. The crisis response process enables the enhanced monitoring to react in a timely manner to an adverse situation that may arise in a graduating or graduated country during the course of a year. There are two ways the crisis response process can be triggered. The primary way is a request by the country, directly or through the United Nations Resident Coordinator, alerting the CDP that it faces a crisis situation caused by external events that potentially impacts the smooth transition of the country out of the LDC category.

76. The secondary way is an automated trigger, utilizing a set of pre-determined crisis indicators that are monitored against defined thresholds. These indicators will be based on high-frequency – at least quarterly, but preferably monthly or weekly – data. Initial draft sets of indicators have been prepared by country rapporteurs based on discussions with the Government and with assistance of the Secretariat. The final selection of the indicators and thresholds will be made in consultation with the Government and accompanied by data mapping and data management plans. The Committee will keep crisis indicators and thresholds under review and revise them in consultation with the Government as appropriate.

77. Once the crisis response process is triggered, the rapporteur conducts a brief crisis assessment on the nature of the crisis and the potential impact on graduation within two weeks, assisted by the Secretariat and other CDP members, as appropriate. The CDP Bureau reviews the assessment within two weeks and suggests a course of actions to be taken. During this time, it may hold further consultations with the country and relevant UN entities.

78. The Committee will share the crisis assessment with the Government, the ECOSOC President and the United Nations Resident Coordinator. When sharing the assessment, CDP will also indicate whether it views additional, crisis-specific graduation support measures as necessary.

Strengthened support measures

79. As highlighted by CDP and emphasized in the draft DPoA, to be effective, the enhanced monitoring mechanism must be linked to support measures. This holds both for crisis responses and for the regular annual monitoring.
80. The CDP will include observations on graduation support needs in its crisis assessments as well as in its annual monitoring reports. In case CDP finds that additional graduation support is necessary, its Chair will send a letter to the High Representative for the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS and the President of ECOSOC, alerting them of the need to mobilize the crisis management expertise of the United Nations and other international entities, if necessary. Underscoring the need for further development of the link between monitoring and country specific support and bearing in mind that the Enhanced Monitoring Mechanism will be developed in stages, the Committee considered a number of initial proposals.

81. It suggests that the UN Resident Coordinator, in agreement with the country concerned, organizes a roundtable with development and trading partners, including providers of South-South cooperation, to discuss measures to address additional graduation support. Alternatively, graduation aspects may also be integrated into other relevant roundtable discussions.

82. The Committee also reiterated its proposal to include dedicated sessions on graduation support in appropriate forums or other events under ECOSOC, such as the Development Cooperation Forum. LDCs could be invited to share their experiences with their smooth transition strategies at the global level, for example at the Annual Ministerial Meeting of LDCs.

83. Whenever the CDP views that a country’s development requires an extension of the preparatory period, it will include such views in its report to ECOSOC and/or its crisis assessment. The Committee stresses that recommending an extension requires detailed information on the status of preparation and/or implementation of the smooth transition strategy. Hence, the Committee would normally be unable to recommend extensions for countries who have not participated in the annual monitoring exercises.

Next steps

84. The Committee agreed that the enhanced monitoring mechanism should continue to be implemented in stages. The improved annual monitoring has been successfully implemented during the current cycle, and the CDP will continue to explore further improvements.

85. The Committee notes that details of the crisis response process, including the country-specific crisis indicators, the exact specification of the trigger process and the formal steps of the follow-up process must be defined in consultation between CDP, countries concerned and relevant UN entities.

86. Further work is required on linking the enhanced monitoring to support measures. The Committee considers it important to develop more specific graduation support measures by development and trading partners, including the United Nations system, whether in reaction to crises or more general. It also emphasizes the need for integrating monitoring of the implementation of smooth transition strategies into the country’s monitoring and evaluation framework, which highlights the need for data-related capacity-building. It recalls the role of iGRAD in this regard (see chapter VII).

87. The Committee notes that the successful implementation of the enhanced monitoring mechanism requires close cooperation among relevant entities of the
United Nations. It highlights the critical role of the IATF on graduation at the international level and the Resident Coordinator at the national level. Consultations with these entities will be needed to ensure that appropriate working methods are put in place to support the implementation of the enhanced monitoring mechanism.

88. The Committee also noted that the increased number of countries to be monitored and the inclusion of countries whose graduation has been deferred in the consultation processes increases the demand on the Secretariat to assist the Committee in preparing analysis and reports. Hence, it reiterates its call to increase the capacity of the Secretariat in this regard and to provide it with resources that are adequate to enable the Committee effectively implementing its monitoring mandates.
Chapter VII

Additional matters related to the least developed countries

89. The Committee welcomes the significant progress made towards graduation from the LDC category over the last decade, with more than a third of LDCs in various formal stages of the graduation process, and acknowledges the new target of the new Doha programme of action to enable another fifteen of the LDCs to meet the criteria for graduation by 2031. However, the CDP is deeply concerned that a significant number of LDCs, particularly those in Africa, would remain far behind and struggle to achieve graduation.

90. Least developed countries, their development and trading partners as well as the international community should translate the Doha Programme of Action into the adoption and, most importantly, the implementation of concrete policies and activities. Experience has shown that if countries lack the capability of implementing the ‘right’ policies, such policies will fail to achieve the desired objectives.

91. The Committee reiterates its previous findings that the lack of productive capacity is among the main root causes of underdevelopment of LDCs. Therefore, the CDP recommends that priority should be given to those elements of the Doha Programme of Action that enable LDCs to expand productive capacities for sustainable development. These efforts should ensure that modalities of international support and concrete deliverables take the heterogeneity of LDCs into account, so that no LDC is left behind.

92. The Committee remains highly concerned about the impact of COVID-19 on the development of LDCs, which often face the most severe socio-economic impacts of the pandemic and the recovery. It reconfirmed it will pay close attention to COVID-19 impacts when holding consultations in the context of the monitoring of graduating and graduated countries (see chapters V and VI) and the preparations for the 2024 triennial review. It will also consider this issue in its upcoming 2023 review of the LDC criteria and their application procedures. As in the past, the Committee will make refinements to the current methodological approaches and criteria used to classify countries as least developed countries, if deemed necessary, within the scope of its mandates and longstanding principles.

93. The Committee is looking forward to reviewing, at its next plenary, preliminary drafts of the graduation assessments for the countries to be considered for graduation at the 2024 triennial review, as outlined in its 2021 report to ECOSOC (chapter VI.B). This will provide an opportunity for the Committee to identify any other issues that may require further analysis for successfully conducting the next triennial review.

94. The Committee also reviewed the progress made in developing the integrated sustainable graduation support facility, now called iGRAD, which the Committee had suggested in 2019. It appreciates the inclusion of iGRAD in the Doha Programme of Action as a country-led support mechanism established by the CDP secretariat of UN DESA in collaboration with OHRLLS, as Chair of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on LDC Graduation. The Committee welcomed the iGRAD partnerships initiated by its Secretariat with non-UN entities, including the Organization for Economic and...
Development Cooperation (OECD) Development Centre on production transformation policy reviews in graduating LDCs. Strengthened UN coordination, new partnerships with non-UN entities and support with resource mobilization efforts from member states and the wider international community will be necessary to operationalize iGRAD and to fulfil commitments to graduating and graduated countries for sustainable graduation in the decade of action.

95. The Committee reiterates the importance of sharing accurate information on the LDC graduation process, including the LDC criteria. It highlights the recent LDC Handbook published in 2021 together with DESA and notes the increased availability of graduation related data on the CDP’s website. It invites LDCs to make use of this information in their preparations for graduation and, in this regard, calls upon relevant UN entities to assist LDCs in these efforts. It also welcomes the recent revisions to the LDC Portal (www.un.org/ldcportal) and invites all countries and stakeholders to provide necessary information on the provision and utilization of support measures. This would facilitate reducing information barriers that impede the utilization of international support measures.

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Chapter VIII
Future work of the Committee for Development Policy

96. The Committee for Development Policy will continue to align its work programme to the needs and priorities established by the Economic and Social Council, with a view to contributing effectively to the Council’s deliberations and assisting it in the performance of its functions. In this context, the Committee, in addressing the theme of the Council for 2023 “Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels”, intends to work on green transition and issues of debt and international finance. In parallel, the Committee will also continue its research and analysis on the voluntary national reviews as a key feature of discussions related to the Sustainable Development Goals.

97. In preparation of the triennial review of the list of least developed countries in 2024, for its session in 2023, the Committee will review and fine-tune current methodological approaches and criteria used to classify countries as least developed countries.

98. In accordance with the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 2021/11 and General Assembly resolution 67/221, the Committee will also monitor the development progress of Vanuatu, which has graduated from the least developed country category, and the following graduating countries: Angola, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Nepal, Sao Tome and Principe and Solomon Islands. The Committee will hold consultations with these countries as well as with Kiribati and Tuvalu, countries whose graduation has been deferred, in accordance with the provisions of Council resolution 2021/11.

99. In accordance with the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 2017/29, the Committee will undertake the necessary preparations to brief the Council on how the United Nations development system is applying the least developed country category. It will also continue its work related to support for graduating and graduated countries, including on the enhanced monitoring mechanism as outlined in chapter VI of this report.
Chapter IX
Organization of the session

100. The Committee held its twenty-fourth session virtually from 21 to 25 February 2022. Twenty-two members of the Committee, as well as observers from several international organizations, attended the session. The list of participants is included in Annex I to the present report.

101. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs provided substantive services for the session. The Chair of the Committee opened the session and welcomed the participants. Subsequently, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs addressed the Committee. Statements are available on the Committee’s website at https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/cdp-plenary-2022/.

102. The agenda for the twenty-fourth session is contained in Annex II to the present report.
Annex I

List of participants

1. The following members of the Committee attended the session:
   - Ms. Adriana Abdenur
   - Ms. Sabina Alkire
   - Mr. Debapriya Bhattacharya
   - Ms. Sofia Borges
   - Mr. Ha-Joon Chang
   - Mr. Stefan Dercon
   - Ms. Sakiko Fukuda-Parr
   - Mr. Ha-Joon Chang
   - Mr. Stefan Dercon
   - Ms. Sakiko Fukuda-Parr
   - Mr. Ahmed Galal
   - Mr. Arunabha Ghosh
   - Ms. Trudi Hartzenberg
   - Mr. Rolph van der Hoeven
   - Ms. Anne-Laure Kiechel
   - Mr. Carlos Lopes
   - Ms. Jacqueline Musiitwa
   - Mr. Keith Nurse
   - Mr. José Antonio Ocampo Gaviria
   - Ms. Annalisa Prizzon
   - Ms. Liliana Rojas-Suarez
   - Mr. Taffere Tesfachew
   - Ms. Kori Udovicki
   - Ms. Natalya Volchkova
   - Mr. Xufeng Zhu

2. The following entities of the United Nations system and other international organizations were represented at the session:
   - Committee of Experts on Public Administration Secretariat
   - Economic Commission for Africa
   - Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
   - International Trade Centre
   - Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
   - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
   - Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
   - United Nations Capital Development Fund
Annex II

Agenda

1. Opening session.
2. CDP at a glance.
3. ECOSOC theme.
4. Review of ECOSOC’s subsidiary bodies.
5. Voluntary National Reviews.
6. LDC overview.
7. ECOSOC theme (continued).
8. LDC monitoring.
9. LDC capacity development issues.
10. LDC monitoring (continued).
11. LDC workplan.
13. ECOSOC interaction.