



Improved assistance for graduating and graduated least developed countries *

The Committee decided to improve the effectiveness of the existing monitoring mechanism, including through a crisis response process, and called upon Member States and the United Nations system to support and endorse the enhancement of the monitoring mechanism in the

context of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Doha. The Committee also reviewed the continuation of initiatives to improve support to graduating countries.

A. Enhancing the monitoring mechanism for countries graduated and graduating from the least developed country category

The Committee is mandated to monitor the development progress of countries graduated and graduating from the list of least developed countries. In its resolution 67/221, the General Assembly invited graduating and recently graduated countries to report annually to the Committee on the preparation or implementation of their smooth transition strategies. However, since the adoption of the resolution, the Committee has received only a few reports from countries being monitored, thereby severely limiting its ability to adequately monitor their development progress and alert the Council of any setbacks. The Committee found that the monitoring mechanism was not effective, as there is little incentive for Governments to take part in the monitoring exercise.

The Committee therefore believes that it is necessary to enhance the monitoring mechanism in order to ensure a smooth transition from the least developed countries category. It aims to make a concrete proposal at the Asia-Pacific Regional Review to be held as part of the preparatory process of the Fifth United Nations

Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The main elements of the proposal are likely to include:

(a) Establishing a crisis response process within the monitoring mechanism to react to crises and emergencies happening within the annual monitoring cycle. The process should enable the Committee, in consultation with the country concerned and relevant United Nations entities, to analyse the impacts of the crisis or emergency on the smooth transition and to prepare concrete policy responses under the guidance of the Council. Possible responses could include, among others, the convening of a round table of development and trading partners by the United Nations resident coordinator and an extension of the preparatory period by the General Assembly. The process could be triggered either upon request by the country itself, the resident coordinator or the Committee, or on the basis of data, utilizing specific indicators and thresholds;

(b) Mobilizing the existing crisis management expertise of the United Nations system and other international entities;

* Excerpt from Committee for Development Policy, Report on the twenty-third session, See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2021, Supplement No. 13 (E/2021/33)

responsible for recommending which countries should be placed on the United Nations list of least developed countries (LDCs).

(c) Utilizing the convening power of the United Nations to address issues identified in the course of regular monitoring, for example through the establishment of a dedicated session on the graduation of least developed countries at the Development Cooperation Forum (see below);

(d) Expanding the coverage of monitoring reports prepared by the Secretariat, on the basis of increased cooperation with country focal points, United Nations country teams, United Nations regional commissions and members of the inter-agency task force on graduation of least developed countries, increased

capacity-building in graduating and graduated countries and utilization of virtual meetings on these reports;

(e) Increasing capacity within the Secretariat and other United Nations entities for the analysis and identification of the type of support needed;

(f) Harnessing existing reporting processes to avoid duplication;

(g) Establishing rapporteurs within the Committee for each graduating and recently graduated country.

B. Graduation process improvements

The Committee reviewed the progress in piloting the graduation assessments for the 2021 triennial review. These pilot assessments represent a consolidated United Nations voice and appraisal regarding graduation from the least developed country category and contain a synthesis of the ex-ante impact assessments and vulnerability profiles prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNCTAD, respectively; an overall description of the country's development prepared with the involvement of the United Nations country team; and forward-looking elements that could be considered for a smooth transition strategy. After reviewing the pilot graduation assessments prepared for the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar, the Committee decided that the practice of preparing graduation assessments for least developed countries when first identified for graduation should continue, and further improved the process by setting deadlines for submission of inputs and imposing page limits. It requested the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNCTAD to prepare succinct impact assessments and vulnerability profile reports (within the proposed page limits and submission deadlines set by the Committee and its secretariat) to be used for the preparation of the graduation assessments.¹

The Committee discussed the appointment of Committee rapporteurs. Their main role at the 2021 triennial review was to lead the review conducted by the Committee with a view to deciding whether to recommend countries for graduation. The rapporteurs were in charge of reviewing the relevant documentation; identifying and analysing country-specific risks and other important factors that the Committee needed to take into account; keeping the rest of the Committee informed of developments; and presenting the country case at the expert group meeting held in preparation for the triennial review. The Committee found the introduction of rapporteurs to have been very valuable and decided to continue with the appointment of rapporteurs for graduating countries within the Committee.

The Committee also decided to continue to recommend the holding of country-level meetings on graduation, led by the United Nations resident coordinator, if supported by the graduating country. The Committee noted that such meetings should feed directly into the expert group meeting organized prior to the triennial review. The Committee also suggested holding a separate validation session on the graduation assessment, prior to the country-level meeting.

¹ Independently of the succinct reports prepared as inputs for the graduation assessments, the two entities could also prepare a more detailed report containing the findings of the research conducted for the impact assessments and vulnerability profiles. These

detailed findings could be posted on the Committee's website and serve as a background document for the Committee, officials at the country level and other stakeholders.