

Economic and Social Council
Management Segment

**Presentation to ECOSOC of the 2019 Report
of the Committee for Development Policy (CDP)**

by

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Madame President,
Distinguished delegates,
Colleagues,

I am pleased to introduce the Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its 21st Session. The Committee met in plenary session in New York from 11-15 of March. We started the week by extending a warm welcome to the new membership of the Committee which will be in office from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2021. It is a great group of experts with a diverse and balanced background. The members worked tirelessly and in harmony and we are proud to have put together a good report with solid recommendations.

Madame President,

The CDP agenda this year was very rich. In my statement today, I will focus on our main conclusions and recommendations.

Firstly, regarding the ECOSOC theme the Committee emphasized that current levels of inequality are unacceptable and unsustainable. We concluded that moving towards inclusiveness and equality will require overturning processes that disempower people and communities. Furthermore, climate change risks are a major factor in the disempowerment of communities. With little more than a decade left for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Committee believes that there is an urgent need to rethink the factors that determine the direction of investment and innovation; the terms under which people are included in production, consumption and financial systems; and the distribution of the benefits, costs and risks of economic activity. There is a window of opportunity for a transformation grounded in equality, inclusion and human rights, where both the empowerment of those at risk of being left or pushed behind and the mechanisms that enable the concentration of wealth and power at the top are addressed.

Madame President,

The Committee this year continued its analysis of the voluntary national reviews. In the view of the Committee, the reviews could become more effective instruments to share lessons learned and promote mutual learning with the inclusion of more explicit and detailed discussions on national strategies for implementing the 2030 Agenda. Substantive coverage of the voluntary national reviews should be more comprehensive; reporting should not be selective and leave out major areas, especially since the 2030 Agenda is intended to be indivisible and integrated.

The Committee also discussed the comprehensive review of the least developed country criteria. The latter will be concluded at the next plenary of the Committee, in 2020, so that the refined criteria can be applied at the 2021 triennial review of the least developed country category.

With regard to the monitoring of countries that are graduating and have graduated from the least developed country category, the Committee reviewed their development progress. While noting that none of the countries appear at risk of falling back to the least developed country category, the Committee highlighted the vulnerability of Vanuatu to economic and environmental shocks. It also remains concerned at the continuing imbalance between the per capita income and the level of human assets in Equatorial Guinea and Angola, as well as the macroeconomic challenges caused by their overreliance on the oil sector.

We, as a Committee, noted that the least developed country category has been useful in attracting political support for the least developed countries, but has, to a much lesser extent, led to explicit assistance, even from the United Nations development system. The Committee in its 2019 report urged the United Nations development system organizations to use the least developed country category more in programming and budgeting and to develop common guidelines in this regard. The Committee also noted with concern that most United Nations development system entities do not have specific graduation support programmes or mechanisms.

Furthermore, we emphasized that many least developed countries are concerned about the prospect of graduation and losing international support measures and underscored that it is necessary to provide an incentive to those countries that qualify to graduate from the category. The Committee decided that the focus should first be geared towards improvements in the graduation support process and related mechanisms. In this regard, we decided to pilot a series of new recommendations aimed at strengthening support to graduating and graduated countries.

Lastly, the Committee proposed that the theme of “Expanding productive capacity for sustainable development” should be used as the organizing framework of the new programme of action for the LDCs, and that the programme of action should be meaningfully aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Madame President,

The items I elucidated are big challenges in a diversified agenda, ranging from long-standing development topics to emerging issues. We as a Committee feel privileged to contribute to the ECOSOC process and support your work by providing analysis and

policy advice, and we look forward to continue working with the Council in the coming years.

I thank you for your kind attention.