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Groups of countries in special situations: follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Menelaos Menelaou (Cyprus), on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution [A/C.2/72/L.35](#)

Follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024, adopted at the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries, held in Vienna from 3 to 5 November 2014,¹ at which all relevant stakeholders expressed their commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Vienna Programme of Action of addressing the special development needs and challenges of landlocked developing countries arising from their landlockedness, remoteness and geographical constraints in a more coherent manner and thus contributing to an enhanced rate of sustainable and inclusive growth, which can contribute to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty,

Recalling its resolutions [70/197](#) of 22 December 2015 and [71/239](#) of 21 December 2016,

Reaffirming its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions —

¹ Resolution [69/137](#), annexes I and II.



economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012, entitled “The future we want”,²

[final text pending agreement]

Recalling also the Sendai Declaration and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,³ while recognizing that landlocked developing countries face some specific disaster risk challenges, and reiterating the commitment to addressing disaster risk reduction and building resilience to disasters within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication,

[final text pending agreement]

Taking note of the launch of the World Customs Organization transit guidelines at the Global Transit Conference held in Brussels in July 2017,

Welcoming the holding of the 2017 Global Infrastructure Forum, in Washington, D.C., on 22 April 2017, on the theme “Delivering inclusive and sustainable infrastructure” and taking note of its outcome,

Recognizing the specific needs and special circumstances of developing country parties, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, as provided for in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,⁴

Recognizing also that the lack of territorial access to the sea, aggravated by remoteness from world markets and high transit costs and risks, continues to impose serious constraints on export earnings, private capital inflow and the domestic resource mobilization of landlocked developing countries and therefore adversely affects their overall growth and socioeconomic development,

Recalling the Almaty Declaration⁵ and the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries,⁶ the first programme of action for the landlocked developing countries,

Acknowledging the importance of promoting collaboration between landlocked developing countries and transit countries on the basis of common interest, and noting

² Resolution 66/288, annex.

³ Resolution 69/283, annexes I and II.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

⁵ *Report of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation, Almaty, Kazakhstan, 28 and 29 August 2003 (A/CONF.202/3)*, annex II.

⁶ *Ibid.*, annex I.

that collaboration efforts need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national priorities, while remaining consistent with international rules and commitments,

Recognizing the need to promote both public and private investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies, and the special vulnerabilities and needs of landlocked developing countries,

Acknowledging the need to promote meaningful regional integration to encompass cooperation among countries and the importance of enhancing existing transport infrastructure facilities for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action,

Reaffirming that achieving food security and improving nutrition, ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all, achieving inclusive and equitable quality education, achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, as well as ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, are important for achieving sustainable development, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Taking note of the declaration of the Annual Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked Developing Countries held at United Nations Headquarters on 20 September 2017 on the theme “Accelerating the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

Welcoming the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development,⁷

Recognizing that the Vienna Programme of Action, which is integral to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is based on renewed and strengthened partnerships for accompanying landlocked developing countries in harnessing benefits from international trade, structurally transforming their economies and achieving more inclusive and sustainable growth,

Taking note of the Livingstone Call for Action for the Accelerated Implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, adopted at the high-level follow-up meeting to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries held in Livingstone, Zambia, in June 2015,

[final text pending agreement]

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024;⁸

2. *Welcomes* the recognition of the special needs and challenges of landlocked developing countries in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁹ and in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,¹⁰ and affirms that the effective implementation of those outcomes, together with the six priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024,¹¹ can drive the social

⁷ Resolution 71/312, annex.

⁸ A/72/272.

⁹ Resolution 70/1.

¹⁰ Resolution 69/313, annex.

¹¹ Resolution 69/137, annex II.

and economic progress of landlocked developing countries and assist in their transformation from landlocked to land-linked countries;

3. *Recalls* paragraph 11 of its resolution 67/290 of 9 July 2013, and stresses that the concerns and specific challenges of landlocked developing countries should be given consideration, as appropriate, in the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

4. *Recognizes* that landlocked developing countries face specific challenges in their efforts towards the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and the pursuit of sustainable development, and in this regard underscores the importance of continued international support to complement the efforts of landlocked developing countries;

5. *Also recognizes* that efforts will need to be scaled up and sustained in order to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030 in landlocked developing countries;

6. *Invites* the landlocked developing countries, transit countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other actors to implement at all levels the relevant actions that have been agreed upon in the Vienna Programme of Action in its six priority areas in a coordinated, coherent and expeditious manner;

7. *Reiterates its invitation* to development partners to provide targeted technical and financial support, as appropriate, towards the implementation of the specific actions listed in the Vienna Programme of Action;

8. *Invites* Member States that have not yet done so to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into their national and sectoral development strategies in order to ensure its effective implementation;

9. *Encourages* landlocked developing countries that have not yet done so to mainstream the 2030 Agenda into their national development planning and foster coherence in its implementation with the Vienna Programme of Action;

10. *Stresses* that the harmonization, simplification and standardization of rules and documentation should be promoted, including the full and effective implementation of international conventions on transport and transit and bilateral, subregional and regional agreements, stresses also that cooperation on fundamental transit policies, laws and regulations between landlocked developing countries and their transit neighbours is crucial for the effective and integrated solution of cross-border trade and transit transport problems, and underlines that this cooperation should be promoted on the basis of the mutual interests of both landlocked developing countries and transit countries;

11. *Recognizes* the importance of addressing the special needs of landlocked developing countries, inter alia, by establishing and promoting efficient transit transport systems, including roads, railroads and inland waterways, that link landlocked developing countries to international markets, reaffirms that the Vienna Programme of Action constitutes a fundamental framework for genuine partnerships between landlocked and transit developing countries and their development partners at the national, bilateral, subregional, regional and global levels, and in this regard highlights the need to establish secure, reliable, efficient, high-quality, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including transit transport systems, renewable energy and information and communications technology, with the support of development partners, multilateral financial and development institutions and regional banks;

12. *Notes* that, despite the continued growth of air passenger and freight transport, landlocked developing countries are still faced with low volumes of freight transported by air, and stresses that air transport is particularly important, as it provides landlocked developing countries with direct access to international markets;

13. *Invites* landlocked developing countries and transit countries to consider ratifying, as appropriate, relevant international trade and transport facilitation conventions;¹²

14. *Underlines* that infrastructure development plays a key role in reducing the cost of development for landlocked developing countries and that the development and maintenance of transit transport infrastructure, information and communications technology and energy infrastructure are crucial for landlocked developing countries in order to reduce high trading costs, improve their competitiveness and become fully integrated into the global market;

15. *Stresses* that the magnitude of the resources required to invest in infrastructure development and maintenance remains a major challenge and requires the forging of international, regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation on infrastructure projects, the allocation of more resources from national budgets, the effective deployment of international development assistance and multilateral financing in the development and maintenance of infrastructure and strengthening of the role of the private sector, and recognizes that both public and private investment have key roles to play in infrastructure financing, including through development banks, development finance institutions and tools and mechanisms such as public-private partnerships, blended finance, which combines concessional public finance, non-concessional private finance and expertise from the public and private sector, special-purpose vehicles, non-recourse project financing, risk mitigation instruments and pooled funding structures;

16. *Calls upon* the landlocked developing countries and transit countries, in a coordinated manner, to develop and upgrade international transport and transit corridors encompassing all modes of transportation, such as inland waterways, roads, rail networks, ports and pipelines, to address the special development needs and challenges of landlocked developing countries;

17. *Acknowledges* that impediments to private investment in infrastructure exist on both the supply and the demand side and that insufficient investment is due in part to inadequate infrastructure plans and an insufficient number of well-prepared investable projects, along with private sector incentive structures that are not necessarily appropriate for investing in many long-term projects and risk perceptions of investors, encourages landlocked developing countries to embed resilient and quality infrastructure investment plans into their national sustainable development strategies, while also strengthening their domestic enabling environments, and calls upon the international community to provide technical support to landlocked developing countries to translate plans into concrete project pipelines, as well as support for individual implementable projects, including for feasibility studies, the negotiation of complex contracts and project management;

18. *Encourages* multilateral development banks, including regional banks, in collaboration with other stakeholders, to address gaps in trade, transport and transit-related regional infrastructure, including by completing missing links connecting, inter alia, landlocked developing countries within regional networks, and in this regard notes that, at the 2017 Global Infrastructure Forum, multilateral development banks agreed to deepen their collaboration to encourage private sector investment in infrastructure development by joining forces to co-finance projects and helping to

¹² Including the Customs Convention on Containers (Geneva, 2 December 1972), the Customs Convention on the Temporary Importation of Commercial Road Vehicles (Geneva, 18 May 1956), the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets (Geneva, 14 November 1975), the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods (Geneva, 21 October 1982) and the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade Facilitation (2013).

generate interest among private sector investors in public-private partnerships and the development of infrastructure as an asset class for institutional investors;

19. *Invites* the multilateral financial and development institutions to consider how they can best support landlocked developing countries with infrastructure development, including through project financing, planning for operations and maintenance, technical and regulatory advice, and project preparation;

20. *Stresses* the importance of universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy services, and also stresses the need for accelerating sustainable energy for all in landlocked developing countries, including through innovative partnerships;

21. *Underlines* that greater integration of landlocked developing countries into world trade and global value chains is vital for increasing their competitiveness and diversification and ensuring their economic development;

22. *Recognizes* that services sectors are important enablers of trade in goods and effective participation in international trade and global value chains, that efficient services sectors enhance productivity, reduce the cost of doing business and promote job creation and that landlocked developing countries should be supported so as to increase the share of services in their economies and exports, including through enabling policies;

23. *Stresses* that improved trade facilitation, including through further streamlining and harmonization of customs and transit procedures and formalities and transparent and efficient border management and coordination of agencies involved in border clearance, would help landlocked developing countries to enhance the competitiveness of their export products and services;

24. *Welcomes* the entry into force of the World Trade Organization Trade Facilitation Agreement, calls for its full and timely implementation by all members of the World Trade Organization, calls upon those members that have not yet done so to deposit their instrument of acceptance, where appropriate, as soon as possible, and in this regard urges members to continue to provide and enhance technical and capacity-building assistance, particularly for the effective implementation of the provisions of articles on the release and clearance of goods, border agency cooperation, formalities connected with importation, exportation and transit, freedom of transit and customs cooperation, which are very relevant for landlocked developing countries;

25. *Stresses* the need to promote meaningful regional integration to encompass cooperation among countries in a broader range of areas than just trade and trade facilitation, including investment, research and development and policies aimed at accelerating regional industrial development and regional connectivity, that this approach is aimed at fostering structural change and economic growth in landlocked developing countries as a goal, and also as a means of collectively linking regions to global markets, that this would enhance competitiveness and help to maximize benefits from globalization and that documentation and the sharing and dissemination of best practices are important to allow cooperating partners to benefit from each other's experience;

26. *Recognizes* that the economies of many landlocked developing countries are still reliant on a few export commodities, which often have low value addition, stresses the need for renewed and strengthened partnerships for development to support landlocked developing countries in diversifying their economic base and enhancing value addition to their exports by entering and moving up global value chains through the development of their productive capacities, including through private sector involvement, and the development of small and medium-sized

enterprises, with a view to increasing the competitiveness of the products of landlocked developing countries in export markets, and welcomes the establishment of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

27. *Underlines* that, in order for landlocked developing countries to fully utilize their export and trade potential, it is important to undertake measures, consistent with relevant international rules and obligations, that promote structural economic transformation capable of reducing the negative impact of their geographical disadvantages and external shocks, creating jobs and ultimately leading to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions and inclusive and sustainable growth and development, stresses that each landlocked developing country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized, and in this regard stresses that the national development efforts of landlocked developing countries need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment;

28. *Emphasizes* that infrastructure, industry and innovation are strongly connected, share the common goal of achieving inclusive and sustainable economic development and contribute to poverty eradication, and recognizes that inclusive and sustainable industrialization is integral to the structural transformation of the economies of all countries, including the landlocked developing countries;

29. *Recognizes* that landlocked developing countries remain highly vulnerable to external economic shocks and to the multiple other challenges faced by the international community;

30. *Also recognizes* that landlocked developing countries are vulnerable to and remain negatively affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, land degradation, desertification, deforestation, floods, including glacial lake outburst floods, and droughts, recognizes the potential benefits of mutually addressing these challenges, and calls upon the international community to continue to support the efforts of landlocked developing countries to address these challenges in an integrated manner, as appropriate;

31. *Further recognizes* that landlocked developing countries are vulnerable to climate change, which is exacerbating desertification and land degradation, and that they remain negatively affected by desertification, land degradation and drought;

32. *Notes* the entry into force of the Multilateral Agreement for the Establishment of an International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries in October 2017, invites the International Think Tank to undertake its role of supporting the development efforts of the landlocked developing countries, urges those landlocked developing countries that have not yet done so to ratify, at their earliest convenience, the Multilateral Agreement, and invites relevant stakeholders to support the International Think Tank;

33. [final text pending agreement]

34. *Recognizes* that landlocked developing countries and their transit country neighbours need to effectively mobilize adequate domestic and external resources for the effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, reaffirms that, for all countries, public policies and the mobilization and effective use of domestic resources, underscored by the principle of national ownership, are central to the common pursuit of sustainable development, including the implementation of the Programme of Action, and also recognizes that international public finance plays an important role in complementing those efforts, especially in the poorest and most vulnerable countries with limited domestic resources;

35. *Underlines* the critical role of the private sector, including through foreign direct investment, in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;

36. *Also underlines* the prominent role that foreign direct investment plays in accelerating development and poverty reduction through employment, the transfer of managerial and technological know-how, on mutually agreed terms, and non-debt-creating flows of capital, recognizes the considerable role and potential of private sector involvement in infrastructure development for transport, telecommunications and utilities for landlocked developing countries, encourages Member States to facilitate foreign direct investment flows to landlocked developing countries in this regard, and calls upon landlocked and transit developing countries to promote an enabling environment to attract foreign direct investment and private sector involvement;

37. *Reiterates* that the fulfilment of all official development assistance commitments remains crucial, with providers of official development assistance reaffirming their respective commitments;

38. *Recognizes* the essential role of the private sector in the development of landlocked developing countries, and in this regard underlines the need to continue promoting the participation of the private sector in achieving sustainable development and the critical importance of mobilizing private resources for the development of landlocked developing countries, taking into account the leading role of States in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Vienna Programme of Action;

39. *Invites* developing countries, guided by the spirit of solidarity and consistent with their capabilities, to provide support for the effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action in mutually agreed areas of cooperation within the framework of South-South cooperation, which is a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation,

40. *Invites* development partners to effectively implement the Aid for Trade initiative in assisting landlocked developing countries to address their special needs and requirements, including capacity-building for the formulation of trade policies, participation in trade negotiations and the implementation of trade facilitation measures, as well as the diversification of export products;

41. *Calls upon* relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, and invites international organizations and relevant regional and subregional organizations, to integrate the Vienna Programme of Action into their programmes of work, as appropriate, within their respective mandates, and to support landlocked and transit developing countries in their implementation of the Programme of Action in a well-coordinated and coherent manner;

42. *Underlines* the importance of increasing the availability and use of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by sex, age, geography, income, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, stresses the need to enhance capacity-building support for developing countries, including landlocked developing countries, for this purpose, and reaffirms the commitment to strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data;

43. *Recognizes* that it is important for all countries, including landlocked developing countries, to commit to a world in which all women and girls enjoy full gender equality with men and boys and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment and equality have been removed;

44. *Reaffirms* its resolution 71/243 of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations development system, in which it urged the United Nations development system to enhance its support for, inter alia, the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, and calls upon the entities of the United Nations development system to integrate and mainstream it fully into their operational activities for development;

45. [final text pending agreement]

46. *Urges* that coherent and effective linkages be made between the implementation, follow-up and review arrangements for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and those of all relevant United Nations conferences and processes, including the Vienna Programme of Action;

47. *Underlines* the importance of the successful implementation of, follow-up to and review of the Vienna Programme of Action at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

48. *Stresses* that, in accordance with the mandate given by the General Assembly, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should continue to ensure the coordinated follow-up to, effective monitoring of and reporting on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and undertake advocacy efforts at the national, regional and global levels;

49. *Decides* to convene, as called for in paragraph 78 of the Vienna Programme of Action, a comprehensive high-level midterm review on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Decade 2014–2024, to be held no later than December 2019, that the Office of the High Representative shall coordinate the preparatory process, that all relevant United Nations system organizations, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Development Programme, the regional commissions and other relevant organizations, within their respective mandates and within existing resources, shall be invited to provide support to the review process, that the high-level midterm review shall be preceded by regional preparatory meetings, as appropriate and within existing resources, and that the high-level midterm review shall adopt an intergovernmentally negotiated and agreed outcome in the form of a political declaration, also decides that the midterm review and its preparation shall be conducted within existing resources and that all costs relating to the midterm review and its preparation shall be financed through voluntary contributions, and further decides to consider the modalities of the review before the end of its seventy-second session;

50. *Also decides* that the comprehensive high-level midterm review shall review progress made by the landlocked developing countries, transit countries and development partners in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and shall be a forum to share best practices and lessons learned, identify obstacles and constraints encountered and actions and initiatives needed to overcome them, as well as new challenges and emerging issues, in order to further accelerate the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;

51. *Strongly encourages* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, major groups and other donors to contribute in a timely manner to the trust fund in support of activities undertaken by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, to support the implementation of, follow-up to and monitoring of the Vienna Programme of Action, including the preparations for and

organizations of the high-level midterm review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action;

52. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session a report on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session, under the item entitled “Groups of countries in special situations”, the sub-item entitled “Follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries”[final text pending agreement].
