



Economic and Social Council

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Agenda item 18 (a)

Economic and environmental questions: sustainable development

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 8 June 2021

[on a proposal considered in plenary meeting (E/2021/L.18)]

2021/11. Report of the Committee for Development Policy on its twenty-third session

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions [59/209](#) of 20 December 2004 and [67/221](#) of 21 December 2012, both on a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the category of least developed countries,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution [65/280](#) of 17 June 2011, by which the Assembly endorsed the Istanbul Declaration¹ and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,²

Recalling further General Assembly resolution [69/15](#) of 14 November 2014, by which the Assembly endorsed the outcome document of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, entitled “SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway”, as well as Assembly resolution [74/3](#) of 10 October 2019, by which the Assembly adopted the political declaration of the high-level meeting to review progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing States through the implementation of the Samoa Pathway,

Recalling the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,³ in which it was recognized that the least developed countries warrant particular attention in view of their higher vulnerability and risk levels, which often greatly exceed their capacity to respond to and recover from disasters, and recognizing the relevance of disaster risk and the impact of disasters in the process of graduation from the least developed country category,

¹ *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9–13 May 2011 (A/CONF.219/7)*, chap. I.

² *Ibid.*, chap. II.

³ General Assembly resolution [69/283](#), annex II.



Recalling also its resolutions 1998/46 of 31 July 1998, 2007/34 of 27 July 2007, 2013/20 of 24 July 2013, 2018/27 of 24 July 2018 and 2020/10 of 2 July 2020,

Reiterating its conviction that no country graduating from the least developed country category should have its development progress disrupted or reversed,

Bearing in mind the importance of maintaining stability in the criteria and in the application of the established procedures for inclusion in and graduation from the least developed country category so as to ensure the credibility of the process and, consequently, of the category of least developed countries, while giving due consideration to the specific challenges and vulnerabilities and the development needs of countries potentially graduating or being considered for graduation from the least developed country category,

Expressing its deep concern that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has caused immense human suffering and triggered the worst economic and social crisis in generations, with the least developed countries being disproportionately affected,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its twenty-third session;⁴
2. *Notes* the work carried out by the Committee on (a) sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development; (b) the impact of COVID-19 on the least developed country category; (c) the 2021 triennial review of the list of least developed countries; (d) the monitoring of countries that are graduating or have graduated from the list of least developed countries; (e) an enhanced monitoring mechanism and graduation process; (f) contributions to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries; and (g) the analysis of the 2020 voluntary national reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;⁵
3. *Also notes* the limited planning, statistical and analytical capacities and the need for some least developed countries and countries recently graduated from the least developed country category to incorporate impacts of COVID-19 into national sustainable development strategies, and encourages the Committee to continue to engage with those countries so that the full extent of the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 are understood, in line with the work of the Committee on sustainable development and resilient recovery from COVID-19 pandemic;
4. *Requests* the Committee, at its twenty-fourth session, to examine and make recommendations on the annual theme of the 2022 session of the Economic and Social Council;
5. *Also requests* the Committee to monitor the development progress of countries graduating and graduated from the category of least developed countries, in accordance with paragraph 21 of General Assembly resolution 67/221;
6. *Notes* that the Committee will pay special attention to the impacts of the pandemic on achieving the 2030 Agenda when monitoring graduating and recently graduated countries in the coming years, and in this context calls upon Member States and relevant United Nations entities to support the efforts of the Committee to enhance the existing monitoring mechanism;

⁴ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2021, Supplement No. 13 (E/2021/33).*

⁵ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

7. *Endorses* the recommendation of the Committee that Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Nepal graduate from the list of least developed countries, notes that the Committee finds that a five-year preparatory period is necessary for all countries recommended for graduation at the 2021 triennial review to effectively prepare for a smooth transition, as those countries will need to prepare for graduation while planning for a post-COVID-19 recovery and implementing policies and strategies to reverse the economic and social damage incurred by the COVID-19 shock, recommends that the General Assembly take note of that recommendation and that finding, and also recommends that the Assembly decide that the graduations of Bangladesh, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Nepal become effective five years after the Assembly takes note of the recommendations to graduate those countries;

8. *Recalls* its decision to defer the consideration of the graduation of Kiribati and Tuvalu to no later than 2021, and, recognizing the unprecedented socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic, decides on an exceptional basis to defer the consideration of the graduation of Kiribati and Tuvalu to 2024;

9. *Calls upon* the Committee to continue due consultations with the countries concerned, while conducting the triennial reviews of the list of least developed countries and monitoring the countries that are graduating and have graduated from the list, and requests the Committee to include in these consultations those least developed countries whose graduation may have been deferred;

10. *Notes* that, if the General Assembly decides on a five-year preparatory period, the Committee will analyse at its 2024 triennial review whether this period has been adequate to manage the effects of COVID-19 and make any recommendation, including on whether a further extension would be necessary;

11. *Recognizes* that graduating and recently graduated countries face major challenges in addressing the social and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic and disasters, and the importance of integrating disaster risk reduction into the smooth transition strategies of graduating countries to promote sustainability of development progress, and encourages development and trading partners of graduating and recently graduated countries to support those countries in reducing disaster risk and building resilience;

12. *Requests* the entities of the United Nations development system to provide assistance to graduating countries in the formulation and implementation of their national transition strategies and to consider country-specific support for graduated countries for a fixed period of time and in a predictable manner;

13. *Invites* least developed countries and their development and trading partners to consider the findings of the Committee on the impact of COVID-19 on the least developed country category when designing, implementing and supporting strategies and policy measures to address the impacts of COVID-19;

14. *Acknowledges with satisfaction* the contributions made by the Committee to the various aspects of the programme of work of the Council, reiterates its invitation for increased interactions between the Council and the Committee, and encourages the Chair and, as necessary, other members of the Committee to continue that practice, as specified in Council resolution 2011/20 of 27 July 2011, within existing resources and as appropriate, and calls upon the Committee to continue to ensure a substantive exchange with Member States, including through a dedicated session during its twenty-fourth session in 2022, within existing resources.

*8th plenary meeting
8 June 2021*