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Groups of countries in special situations: follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Ms. Prathma Uprety (Nepal)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 23 (see [A/76/535](#), para. 3). Action on sub-item (a) was taken at the 9th meeting, on 23 November 2021. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary record.¹

II. Consideration of draft resolution [A/C.2/76/L.57](#)

2. At its 9th meeting, on 23 November 2021, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" ([A/C.2/76/L.57](#)), submitted by the Rapporteur of the Committee, Prathma Uprety (Nepal), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution [A/C.2/76/L.10](#).

3. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that draft resolution [A/C.2/76/L.57](#) had no programme budget implications.

4. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.2/76/L.57](#) (see para. 7).

5. Following the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America, Canada (also on behalf of Bangladesh), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Turkey.²

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in three parts, under the symbols [A/76/535](#), [A/76/535/Add.1](#) and [A/76/535/Add.2](#).

¹ See [A/C.2/76/SR.9](#).

² Ibid.



6. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution [A/C.2/76/L.57](#), draft resolution [A/C.2/76/L.10](#) was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

7. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration¹ and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,² adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul, Turkey, from 9 to 13 May 2011, and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution [65/280](#) of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Programme of Action, and recalling also the Political Declaration adopted by the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, held in Antalya, Turkey, from 27 to 29 May 2016, and endorsed by the Assembly in its resolution [70/294](#) of 25 July 2016,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve the internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

Reaffirming also 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 – 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 further 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,

Reaffirming the Paris Agreement³ and its early entry into force, encouraging all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change⁴ that have not yet done so to deposit their

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 Adopted under the UNFCCC in [FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1](#), decision 1/CP.21.

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

instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible,

Reaffirming also the New Urban Agenda, adopted at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito, Ecuador, from 17 to 20 October 2016,⁵ and acknowledging that, in implementing the New Urban Agenda, particular attention should be given to the unique and emerging urban challenges by the least developed countries,

Recalling the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030⁶ and its guiding principles, recalling also its promotion of regular disaster preparedness, response and recovery exercises, at the national and local levels, with a view to ensuring a rapid and effective response to disasters and related displacement, including access to essential food and non-food relief supplies, as appropriate to local needs, and acknowledging that its implementation can contribute to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,

Highlighting the synergies between the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement, and noting with concern the findings contained in the special report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, taking note with appreciation of the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, hosted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, in Glasgow, in partnership with the Government of Italy, from 31 October to 13 November 2021, and looking forward to the twenty-seventh session of the Conference, to be held in Egypt,

Noting with great concern the severe negative impact on human health, safety and well-being caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as the severe disruption to societies and economies and the devastating impact on lives and livelihoods, and that the poorest and most vulnerable are the hardest hit by the pandemic, reaffirming the ambition to get back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by designing and implementing sustainable and inclusive recovery strategies to accelerate progress towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to help to reduce the risk of and build resilience to future shocks, crises and pandemics, including by strengthening health systems and achieving universal health coverage, and recognizing that equitable and timely access for all to safe, quality, effective and affordable COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics are an essential part of a global response based on unity, solidarity, renewed multilateral cooperation and the principle of leaving no one behind,

Recalling its resolution [75/227](#) of 21 December 2020,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution [2021/19](#) of 21 July 2021 on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,

Recalling further its resolutions [59/209](#) of 20 December 2004 and [67/221](#) of 21 December 2012 on a smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries,

⁵ Resolution [71/256](#), annex.

⁶ Resolution [69/283](#), annex II.

Recalling its resolutions [74/270](#) of 2 April 2020 on global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and [74/274](#) of 20 April 2020 on international cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19,

Recognizing that the least developed countries are severely hit by the adverse impacts of COVID-19 owing to the fragility of their health systems, limited access to vaccines, limited coverage of their social protection systems, limited financial and other resources, and vulnerability to external shocks,

Taking note of the 2021 Ministerial Declaration of the Least Developed Countries,⁷

Reaffirming its resolution [71/243](#) of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, as well as its resolution [72/279](#) of 31 May 2018 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system, and emphasizing the importance of their full and timely implementation,

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,⁸ on the implementation, effectiveness and added value of smooth transition measures and graduation support⁹ and on the review of the first three years of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries;¹⁰

2. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other actors to further strengthen the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development for the least developed countries in all priority areas of the Istanbul Programme of Action in order to ensure the timely, effective and full implementation of the Programme of Action during the remainder of the decade, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹¹ the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,¹² which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, supports and complements it and helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and the New Urban Agenda;

3. *Invites* the private sector, civil society, academia and foundations to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in their respective areas of competence, in line with the national priorities of the least developed countries;

4. *Recalls* the agreement contained in the 2030 Agenda that effective linkages will be made with the follow-up and review arrangements of all relevant United Nations conferences and processes, including on the least developed countries, underlines the importance of strong synergy in the implementation of the recently adopted agendas and the Istanbul Programme of Action at all levels, and encourages coordination and coherence in the follow-up of their implementation;

⁷ [A/76/394](#), annex.

⁸ [A/76/71-E/2021/13](#).

⁹ [A/76/271](#).

¹⁰ [A/76/272](#) and [A/76/272/Corr.1](#).

¹¹ Resolution [70/1](#).

¹² Resolution [69/313](#), annex.

5. *Reaffirms* that the least developed countries, as the most vulnerable group of countries, need enhanced global support to overcome the structural challenges, as well as the recent devastating impacts of COVID-19, that they face in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in this regard calls upon the international community to prioritize and strengthen support from all sources to facilitate the coordinated implementation and coherent follow-up to and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in the least developed countries;

6. *Calls upon* the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to focus, within existing resources, its analytical work on the least developed countries, with an emphasis on productive capacities, and their measurement, on structural transformation and on their trade and development linkages, as a contribution to the understanding of the fundamental mechanisms leading the least developed countries to overcome their structural handicaps and reach their development goals;

7. *Recognizes* that significant additional domestic public and private resources, including at the subnational level, supplemented by international assistance and foreign direct investment, as appropriate, will be critical for the realization of sustainable development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda acknowledge the centrality of domestic resource mobilization, underscored by the principle of national ownership;

8. *Also recognizes* that, while the least developed countries have made considerable efforts to mobilize domestic resources and attract private investment, further progress is needed;

9. *Welcomes* the increase in bilateral official development assistance to the least developed countries by 2.6 per cent between 2018 and 2019, according to preliminary data from the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, and expresses its appreciation to those countries that have met or surpassed their commitments to providing at least 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to developing countries and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries, urges all others to step up efforts to increase their official development assistance and to make additional concrete efforts towards the official development assistance targets, reiterates that the fulfilment of all official development assistance commitments remains crucial, calls upon developed countries to fulfil their respective official development assistance commitments to the least developed countries, and encourages official development assistance providers to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.2 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries, while reiterating that an important use of international public finance, including official development assistance, is to catalyse additional resource mobilization from other sources, public and private;

10. *Remains encouraged* by those countries that are allocating at least 50 per cent of their official development assistance to the least developed countries;

11. *Welcomes* continued efforts to improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of development cooperation and other international efforts in public finance, including adherence to agreed development cooperation effectiveness principles;

12. *Calls upon* the developing countries, guided by the spirit of solidarity and consistent with their capabilities, to provide support for the effective implementation of the Istanbul 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;

13. *Recalls with concern* that exports of goods and services of the least developed countries declined by 1.6 per cent in 2019 compared with 2018, expresses its concern that the share of goods and services exports, which stood at 0.91 per cent in 2019, remains far from the target of 2 per cent of global exports called for in the Istanbul Programme of Action and target 17.11 of the Sustainable Development Goals, also expresses its concern that the overall trade deficit of the least developed countries continues to increase and has doubled since 2011, and calls upon the least developed countries and their development partners to take the measures necessary to further accelerate progress, with a view to achieving the targets of the Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda;

14. *Urges* the least developed countries and their development partners to make use of existing initiatives and programmes, such as the relevant ministerial decisions of the World Trade Organization on duty-free and quota-free market access for the least developed countries and on preferential rules of origin for those countries, as well as aid for trade, reiterates its commitment to increasing aid-for-trade support, in particular for the least developed countries, striving to allocate an increasing proportion of aid for trade to the least developed countries, in accordance with development cooperation effectiveness principles, welcomes additional cooperation among developing countries to that end, and encourages the least developed countries to mainstream trade in their national development plans;

15. *Recognizes* that the least developed countries face significant infrastructure gaps, including in the areas of transport, energy, water, sanitation and information and communications technology, and reaffirms the need to promote quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure and to enhance infrastructure connectivity with concrete actions, maximizing synergies in infrastructure planning and development;

16. *Emphasizes* that the acute energy gap faced by the least developed countries is a severe constraint on their structural transformation, and stresses that special attention should be given to the least developed countries, focusing on the specific sustainable energy challenges of the least developed countries with specific programmes and multi-stakeholder partnerships tailored to meet the needs of those countries, throughout the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All (2014–2024), including UN-Energy, with a view to ensuring the realization of the objective of access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030 and to addressing the infrastructure needs of the least developed countries;

17. *Recognizes* the significant potential of regional economic integration and interconnectivity to promote trade, inclusive growth and sustainable development in the least developed countries, and stresses the need to strengthen regional cooperation to improve connectivity and competitiveness, increase productivity, lower transaction costs, expand markets and enable the least developed countries to integrate into regional and global value chains;

18. *Also recognizes* that maintaining sustainable debt levels is the responsibility of the borrowing countries, while acknowledging that lenders also have a responsibility to lend in such a way that does not undermine a country's debt sustainability, recalls the need to strengthen information-sharing and transparency to make sure that debt sustainability assessments are based on comprehensive, objective and reliable data, encourages Member States to work towards global consensus and best practices on guidelines for debtor and creditor responsibilities in borrowing by and lending to sovereigns, building on existing initiatives, and underlines that the debt sustainability framework for the least developed countries should systematically

take into account their structural constraints and longer-term investment requirements for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;

19. *Expresses its deep concern* that a number of the least developed countries are in debt distress or at high risk of debt distress and that the ratio of debt service to exports has worsened sharply, rising from 5 per cent in 2010 to 14.4 per cent in 2019, underlines the urgent need to address the debt problems of the least developed countries, stresses the need for the international community to remain vigilant in monitoring the debt situation of the least developed countries and to continue to take effective measures, preferably within existing frameworks, when applicable, to address the debt problem of those countries, including through coordinated policies aimed at fostering debt financing, debt relief, debt restructuring and sound debt management, as appropriate, for the multilateral and bilateral debt owed by the least developed countries to creditors, both public and private, reiterates its commitment to working through existing initiatives, such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, and reaffirms the importance of transparency in debt management;

20. *Notes* that foreign direct investment flows to the least developed countries fell by 5.7 per cent in 2019 compared with 2018 and continued to concentrate on extractive and related industries, and underlines the need to take the measures necessary at all levels to further accelerate foreign direct investment in the least developed countries;

21. *Encourages* the least developed countries, in accordance with their national plans and priorities and with the full support of their development partners, to develop their capacities to track financial transactions, administer taxation and regulate customs and to redouble their efforts to substantially reduce illicit financial flows by 2030, with a view to eventually eliminating them, including by combating tax evasion and corruption through strengthened national regulation, and also encourages the United Nations and other relevant international bodies to help to support these efforts, in accordance with their respective mandates;

22. *Recalls* target 17.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, in which the General Assembly decided to adopt and implement investment promotion regimes for the least developed countries, and underlines the need for its early implementation, invites the Secretary-General, in his capacity as the Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to retain the issue of investment promotion regimes for the least developed countries on the agenda of the Board, with a view to enhancing the overall effectiveness of the support provided by the United Nations system to increase the flow of foreign direct investment to the least developed countries and the ability of those countries to attract such investment, and in that context recalls the initiative of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, jointly with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the International Labour Organization, the Enhanced Integrated Framework and the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies, to set up a capacity-development programme for the investment promotion agencies of the least developed countries, and calls for financial support to operationalize this programme;

23. *Notes* the importance of the work of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries in improving the scientific research and innovation base of such countries, promoting networking among researchers and research institutions, helping such countries to access and utilize critical technologies, and drawing together bilateral initiatives and support by multilateral institutions and the private sector, and implementing projects contributing to the use of science, technology and innovation

for economic development in the least developed countries, recalls with appreciation the contributions that Bangladesh, Guinea, India, Norway and Turkey have made, as well as the pledges made by the Sudan, and invites Member States, as well as international organizations, foundations and the private sector, to provide voluntary financial contributions and technical assistance to the Technology Bank to ensure its effective operation;

24. *Expresses its deep concern* that the least developed countries are facing unprecedented challenges owing to rapidly escalating climate risks and significant capacity constraints and are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change as well as the impact and the rise in frequency of natural and human-made disasters, which further threaten food security, health and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and expresses its concern that women and girls are often disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and other environmental issues;

25. *Recalls* the 2019 Climate Action Summit convened by the Secretary-General on 23 September and the multi-partner initiatives and commitments presented during the Summit;

26. *Recognizes* that disasters, many of which are exacerbated by climate change, and which are increasing in frequency and intensity, significantly impede progress towards sustainable development, and also recognizes the synergies between the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, acknowledges the importance of continued support for and international cooperation on adaptation and mitigation efforts and on strengthening resilience, stresses the necessity of adequate and predictable financial resources from a variety of sources, including public and private ones, highlights the specific needs and special circumstances of developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, recognizes that effective disaster risk management contributes to sustainable development, and in this regard underlines the importance of strengthening disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in order to minimize the consequences of disasters;

27. *Underlines* the need to reduce the vulnerability of the least developed countries to economic, natural and environmental shocks and disasters, as well as climate change, and to enhance their ability to meet these and other challenges by strengthening their resilience, and in this regard stresses that it is important that all countries and other actors work together to further develop and implement concrete measures, on an urgent basis, at the national and international levels so as to build the resilience of the least developed countries to withstand economic shocks and mitigate their adverse effects, to withstand and overcome the adverse effects of climate change, to enhance sustainable growth and protect biodiversity and to withstand natural hazards in order to reduce the risk of disasters, as agreed upon in the Istanbul Programme of Action;

28. *Also underlines* the need to address the economic, social and environmental impacts of climate change, and emphasizes the need for national and international action to enhance efforts to build resilience, especially for the most vulnerable, including by mainstreaming resilience into investment decision-making, building resilience through the sustainable management of ecosystems and value chains, building the resilience of health systems and building resilience to reduce the impact and cost of natural disasters;

29. *Further underlines* the importance of improving the coordination and effectiveness of resilience-building initiatives for the least developed countries by leveraging existing measures at the national, regional and global levels to respond to various types of disasters and shocks, as elaborated in the report of the Secretary-

General on crisis mitigation and resilience-building for the least developed countries;¹³

30. *Encourages* countries to develop national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 in accordance with target (e) of the Sendai Framework, recognizes the importance of promoting their alignment and integration with sustainable development and climate change adaptation strategies, also recognizes that the development of climate change adaptation and national disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 is an opportunity to maximize synergies across the Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework, and in this regard calls for disaster risk reduction to be considered in the review of and follow-up to the Istanbul Programme of Action;

31. *Reiterates* the call to substantially enhance international cooperation with developing countries through adequate and sustainable support to complement their national actions for the implementation of the Sendai Framework by 2030;

32. *Underlines* the importance of peaceful and inclusive societies for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and recalls the objectives of the Istanbul Programme of Action of enhancing good governance at all levels by strengthening democratic processes, building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions and the rule of law; increasing efficiency, coherence, transparency and participation; advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; protecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms; reducing corruption and curbing illicit financial flows; and strengthening the capacity of the Governments of the least developed countries to play an effective role in their economic and social development;

33. *Recognizes* the importance of developing domestic capital markets in the least developed countries, which can help to channel the growing pool of domestic savings towards productive investments, reaffirms its commitment to enhancing international support in developing domestic capital markets in developing countries, in particular in the least developed countries, and reaffirms its commitment to working to strengthen capacity-building in this area, including through regional, interregional and global forums for knowledge-sharing, technical assistance and data-sharing, on mutually agreed terms;

34. *Reaffirms* that achieving gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and the full realization of the human rights of all people is essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and reiterates the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies in the least developed countries;

35. *Recalls with concern* that continued rapid population growth in the least developed countries, which is currently 2.3 per cent annually, was projected to double the population of many of them between 2019 and 2050, notes that, in the least developed countries, the number of adolescents and youth aged from 15 to 24 years was projected to grow from 207 million in 2019 to 336 million in 2050, and underlines the importance of integrating population dynamics into national development strategies and plans to facilitate targeted investment in the health and modern science-based education of the young people who will soon join the labour force, with a view to ensuring their successful integration into the labour market and leveraging the opportunities presented by the demographic dividend;

¹³ A/72/270.

36. *Recognizes* that particular efforts are needed to ensure that all young people, including girls, enjoy access to lifelong learning opportunities and equal access to quality education at all levels, inclusive of early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education, as well as technical and vocational training, notes with concern, in this regard, the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to, retention in and completion of secondary education, recognizes the need to continue to provide and encourage, as appropriate, institutes of higher education to allocate places and scholarships for students and trainees from the least developed countries, in particular in the fields of science, technology, business management and economics, and to strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels, and also recognizes that the least developed countries have the most to gain from sustainable development and utilizing the full skills and talents of their people, including women and girls;

37. *Also recognizes* that increasing participation, supporting the empowerment of civil society, youth and women and strengthening collective action will contribute to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development;

38. *Congratulates* those countries that have met the criteria for graduation from least developed country status, notes with appreciation that several of the least developed countries have expressed their intention to reach the status of graduation by 2020, invites those countries to start the preparations for their graduation and transition strategy, and requests all relevant organizations of the United Nations system, led by the Office of the High Representative, to extend the necessary support in this regard, in a coordinated manner;

39. *Acknowledges* that the graduation of a country symbolizes its considerable long-term socioeconomic progress, prevailing over the structural handicaps to socioeconomic development, and that it also presents many challenges for graduated countries, which continue to face vulnerabilities to various shocks and crises;

40. *Invites* the least developed countries and development partners to integrate graduation and smooth transition strategies into their respective national development and aid strategies, as appropriate, including capacity-building and technical assistance to diversify sources of financing;

41. *Notes with appreciation* that some development partners have extended some of the benefits specific to the least developed countries to countries that have graduated, taking into account the challenges that they continue to face, and invites all development partners to strengthen their support for graduation and smooth transition so that graduating and recently graduated countries can minimize disruption in their development trajectory;

42. *Invites* countries that are found eligible for graduation to establish a consultative mechanism, in line with General Assembly resolution [67/221](#), to prepare the transition strategy as early as possible, engaging all relevant donors and stakeholders;

43. *Recognizes* that the activities relating to the least developed countries carried out within the Secretariat need to be further coordinated and consolidated in order to ensure the effective monitoring and follow-up of the Istanbul Programme of Action, led by the Office of the High Representative, and to provide well-coordinated support to realizing the goal of enabling half of the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020;

44. *Welcomes* the work of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group for Least Developed Countries, led by the Office of the High Representative, notes the steps taken by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the

High-level Committee on Programmes in supporting the coordination and follow-up of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action on a system-wide basis, and reiterates its invitation to the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the Chief Executives Board, to include the implementation of the Programme of Action in the agenda of the Board;

45. *Reiterates* its acceptance of, and appreciation for, the generous offer of the Government of Qatar to host the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Doha from 23 to 27 January 2022, to be held at the highest possible level, including Heads of State and Government, in line with the mandate specified in its resolutions [73/242](#) of 20 December 2018, [74/232](#) A of 19 December 2019, [74/232](#) B of 11 August 2020 and [75/227](#), urges all relevant stakeholders to actively engage in the preparatory process, and looks forward to its successful and ambitious outcome;

46. *Takes note* of the substantive and organizational preparations for the Conference, including the successful holding of the meetings of the intergovernmental preparatory committee in New York, from 24 to 28 May 2021 and from 26 to 30 July 2021, and the two regional review meetings, with one meeting for the least developed countries in Africa and Haiti, jointly organized by the Government of Malawi, the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and the Economic Commission for Africa and held in a virtual format from 22 to 26 February 2021, from Lilongwe, and one meeting for the least developed countries in Asia-Pacific and Yemen, jointly organized by the Government of Bangladesh, the Office of the High Representative and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in a hybrid format, from 30 August to 2 September 2021 in Geneva, and also takes note of the outcomes of those meetings;

47. *Invites* Qatar to host, with the assistance of the Office of the High Representative, within its existing mandate and resources, a segment during the Conference to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Group of Least Developed Countries, and encourages relevant representatives of Member States to participate therein;

48. *Invites* the Secretary-General to convene a United Nations system high-level event during the Conference, with a view to ensuring the full mobilization of the United Nations system in support of the least developed countries;

49. *Reiterates its request* to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council to organize a half-day dedicated thematic event, in order to provide substantive input to the Conference;

50. *Stresses* the importance of the effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, including parliamentarians, civil society and the private sector, in the Conference and its preparatory process, and recalls its decision:

(a) To invite non-governmental organizations that are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to register with the Secretariat in order to participate in the Conference and its preparatory process;

(b) To request the President of the General Assembly to draw up a list of representatives of other relevant non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions and the private sector who may participate in the Conference and its preparatory process as observers, taking into account the principles of transparency and of equitable geographical representation and with due regard for the participation of women, and to submit the proposed list to Member

States for their consideration on a non-objection basis and bring the list to the attention of the Assembly;¹⁴

51. *Requests* the organs, organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system to undertake sectoral appraisals in their respective fields of competence on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, with special emphasis on areas where implementation has remained insufficient, and to make proposals for new measures, as necessary, as further inputs to the preparation for the Conference, and in this regard affirms that appropriate inter-agency meetings should be convened in order to ensure the full mobilization and coordination of the entire United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund and regional bodies according to their respective mandates;

52. *Recalls* its decision that the Office of the High Representative shall be the focal point for the substantive and organizational preparations for the Conference, in accordance with mandates given in General Assembly resolution 56/227 of 24 December 2001, to ensure that those preparations are carried out effectively and to mobilize and coordinate the active involvement of the entire United Nations system;

53. *Also recalls* its decision that the Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States shall serve as the Secretary-General of the Conference and be responsible for making the arrangements necessary for carrying out the work of the Conference;

54. *Reiterates* the critical importance of the full and effective participation of the least developed countries in the Conference and its preparatory processes at the national, regional and global levels, stresses that adequate resources should be provided, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to mobilize voluntary contributions in order to cover the cost of the participation of government representatives from the least developed countries;

55. *Invites* 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 to support the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the participation of the representatives from the least developed countries in the high-level political forum on sustainable development of the Economic and Social Council as well as in other relevant forums and the Conference and its preparatory process, and in this regard expresses its appreciation to those countries that have made voluntary contributions to the trust fund;

56. *Requests* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, including the Department of Global Communications of the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Office of the High Representative, to take the measures necessary to intensify their public information efforts and other appropriate initiatives to enhance public awareness of the Conference, including by highlighting its objectives and its significance;

¹⁴ The list of proposed as well as final names will be brought to the attention of the General Assembly. Where a name is objected to, the objecting Member State will, on a voluntary basis, make known to the Office of the President of the General Assembly the general basis of its objections and the Office will share any information received with any Member State upon its request.

57. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session a report on the follow-up to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, and decides to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-seventh session, under the item entitled “Groups of countries in special situations”, a sub-item entitled “Follow-up to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries”;

58. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session a progress report, within existing resources, on the implementation, effectiveness and added value of smooth transition measures covering both graduating and recently graduated countries, including new and dedicated support measures to graduated countries in moving forward on their development path and initiatives taken by the United Nations system to support countries during their graduation from the least developed country category, and further requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session, under the item entitled “Groups of countries in special situations”, a report, within existing resources of the trust fund of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, on the operations of the Technology Bank.
