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Macroeconomic policy questions: promoting investments for sustainable development

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Vladamir Budhu (Trinidad and Tobago), on the basis of informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/77/L.9

Promoting investments for sustainable development

The General Assembly,

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 – 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,

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 resolutions 74/199 of 19 December 2019, 75/207 of 21 December 2020 and 76/197 of 17 December 2021,

Underscoring that international project finance is increasingly important for Sustainable Development Goal and climate change investment and that the strong growth performance of international project finance can be explained by favourable financing conditions, infrastructure stimulus and significant interest on the part of financial market investors to participate in projects that require multiple financiers, recognizing that international project finance can enable Governments to leverage public investment through private finance participation, and noting that developing countries are disadvantaged in this regard and that efforts to enhance private finance mobilization in developing countries are particularly crucial,

Emphasizing that the bulk of tracked climate change investments is concentrated in renewable energy and energy-efficiency projects, that international private investment in climate change sectors is directed almost exclusively to mitigation, with only 5 per cent going to adaptation projects, and that more than 60 per cent is invested in developed countries, where 85 per cent of projects are purely privately financed, whereas almost half of the projects in developing countries require some form of public sector participation, while noting that investments in adaptation are underreported,

Highlighting the need for sustainable and innovative investments in water and sanitation to ensure progress on the implementation of water-related goals and targets,

Noting the urgent need to halve malnourishment, achieve zero hunger, reduce extreme poverty and ensure rapid, inclusive and sustainable income growth in developing countries by adopting the right policies and step up investments, research and the sharing of technology on mutually agreed terms, with the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals as the ultimate objective,

Noting with concern that the global environment changed dramatically in 2022, with rising geopolitical tensions and conflicts and the current multiple crises, which increased pressure on food, energy and finance, affecting many countries around the world, increasing investor uncertainty and putting significant downward pressure on global foreign direct investment in 2022,

Noting that the crises underscore the imperative to embed long-term and risk-informed thinking and sustainability into corporate and investment practices, and stressing that in order to respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis all stakeholders will have to work in tandem, at the same time, while the global fight against the pandemic and climate change has accelerated the momentum of sustainability finance and investment, with the value of sustainability-themed investment products in global capital markets amounting to 5.2 trillion United States dollars in 2021, recognizing that the vast majority of these funds have been invested in developed countries, leaving developing country investment opportunities significantly lacking, and that it is critical to scale up sustainable investments in all countries, especially in developing countries, including countries in special situations, *Emphasizing* that success in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions depends on the creation of enabling environments at all levels to strengthen investments towards activities that promote the Goals,

Recognizing that a revitalized global partnership will facilitate an intensive global engagement in support of the implementation of all of the Goals and their targets, bringing together Governments, civil society, the private sector, the United Nations system and other actors and mobilizing all available resources,

Recalling that, in the 2030 Agenda, it was acknowledged that the implementation of sustainable development will depend on the active engagement of both the public and private sectors and other relevant international organizations, including international financial institutions and multilateral development banks,

Noting the convening of the seventh World Investment Forum, in Geneva from 18 to 22 October 2021, welcoming the fourth Sustainable Development Goals Investment Fair, held in New York from 26 to 28 April 2022, and recalling the establishment of the Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance by the Secretary-General,

Taking note of the *World Investment Report 2022*, the *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2022*, the *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2022* and the outcome document of the 2022 Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up,[1]

Noting the work of the United Nations in the area of investments for sustainable development, including the World Investment Forum of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the Sustainable Development Goals Investment Fair and the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up,

Noting also all initiatives at the global, regional and local levels that are aimed at scaling up the mobilization of public and private finance towards investing for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in its three dimensions and deepening international cooperation,

Noting further the potential of impact investment for the financing of sustainable development in supporting national development policies, plans, priorities and needs in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will require a shift towards long-term investment horizons, including early-stage financing, in this regard encouraging investors to take measures to incentivize greater long-term investment and early-stage financing, and recognizing that international public and private finance for development complemented by other innovative financing mechanisms, including blended finance, can play an important role in upscaling our collective efforts to cover the finance needs to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing also that entrepreneurship can help achieve the 2030 Agenda, underlining the importance of advancing sustainable consumption and production patterns, and stressing the need to promote sustainable and innovative financing opportunities and mechanisms to unlock new capital for sustainable investment and upscale sustainable business models, with a special focus on micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises,

Emphasizing that national development efforts need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment, including coherent and mutually

[1] See E/FFDF/2022/3.

supporting world trade, monetary and financial systems, and strengthened and enhanced global economic governance, and in this regard stressing that the likelihood of an increase in global foreign direct investment is further tempered by a series of risk factors,

Emphasizing also that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals is not possible without private and public investment, including long-term foreign investment, which can be mobilized when there is an enabling environment at all levels,

Recognizing the importance of corporate sustainability, including reporting on environmental, social and governance impacts, as appropriate, to help to ensure transparency and accountability and avoid practices that counteract efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,

Reaffirming the commitment to significantly increase investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at the global, regional and national levels,

Noting with concern that investments critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals remain underfunded, and recognizing that additional public and private investment and financing at the national and international levels will be required to meet the large investment needs, associated with gaps, for achieving the Goals, including in quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all,

Recognizing that international public finance, including official development assistance, is important to the efforts of developing countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including through its capacity to catalyse additional resource mobilization from other sources, public and private, as it can support improved tax collection and help to strengthen domestic enabling environments and build essential public services,

Emphasizing that the call for the contribution by the private sector to Sustainable Development Goals financing is not a substitute for but rather an important complement to public financing,

Underlining that, in order to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, both public and private finance should be sustainable and provided at affordable terms,

Emphasizing the need to continue to scale up investments in climate action, including by making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development, in line with the Paris Agreement,[2] and reiterating the need to accelerate the transfer and deployment of environmentally sound and low-emission technologies on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, and mutually agreed terms,

Noting with concern that, although global foreign direct investment flows increased in 2021, flows to developing countries grew more slowly than those to developed countries, and that the recovery in foreign direct investment is projected to continue to benefit regions unevenly, with Africa, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries receiving small or negligible levels of foreign direct investment,

Stressing that transparency and inclusion in the international financial, monetary and trading systems and solid institutions at all levels and the design and implementation of policies, including capital market regulations, where appropriate,

[2] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

that promote incentives along the investment chain, that are aligned with long-term performance and sustainability indicators and that reduce volatility, are essential for investment promotion, sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and employment creation that goes hand-in-hand with technical education and vocational training in developing countries, and in this regard stressing the need for further international support as well as competitive investment climates at all levels for developing countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recognizing that socially and environmentally responsible and accountable national and international private business activity, investment, entrepreneurship and innovation, including equal access for all women and youth, are major drivers of productivity, inclusive economic growth and job creation, in order to leave no one behind,

Noting the role of the United Nations Development Programme Istanbul International Centre for Private Sector in Development in its engagement with the private sector to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and promote inclusive markets and sustainable business development,

Recognizing the importance of investments in technological industry and the digital economy to promote connectivity and digital partnerships, and that development and transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms is a powerful driver of sustainable development and that there is a need to foster linkages between multinational companies and the domestic public and private sectors, as appropriate, to facilitate technology development and transfer on mutually agreed terms,

1. *Emphasizes* that promoting investments in value addition and in the processing of natural resources and productive diversification ensures more inclusive and sustainable development, and in this regard encourages accelerated national efforts and the strengthening of international cooperation in areas that support policies and programmes that increase public and private, domestic and international investments for structural change in the economies of developing countries;

2. *Encourages* the promotion of sustainable and innovative financing opportunities and mechanisms to unlock new capital for sustainable investment and upscale sustainable business models, with a special focus on micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises;

3. *Notes with concern* that many of the least developed countries and small island developing States continue to be largely sidelined by foreign direct investment that could help to diversify their economies, despite improvements in their investment climates;

4. *Also notes with concern* the gap in access to capital and adequate support services for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular for businesses led by women, young entrepreneurs and persons with disabilities, and recognizes that financial markets as well as business support organizations can be powerful vehicles for sustainable and inclusive economic growth and poverty alleviation, including when they support businesses that have a sustainable development impact and when access to credit is inclusive across all segments of an economy;

5. *Recognizes* that foreign direct investment can have positive spillovers, such as know-how and technology, including through establishing linkages with domestic suppliers, as well as encouraging the integration of local enterprises, in particular micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries, into regional and global value chains;

6. *Emphasizes* that foreign direct investment may have different impacts on Sustainable Development Goals, and underlines the need to strengthen the alignment

of foreign direct investment with national policies and sustainable development strategies and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[3] and invites States preparing integrated national financing frameworks to include and implement plans for mobilizing and aligning private finance with national development plans;

7. *Recognizes* the need to develop and strengthen policies to better align private sector incentives with Sustainable Development Goals, and acknowledges that sustainable finance taxonomies can be a helpful tool in creating more transparency and can thus incentivize the private sector to adopt and invest in sustainable practices and foster long-term quality investment;

8. *Encourages* national and international efforts to integrate sustainability into the financial system and thus to further reorient capital flows towards investments that are sustainable from an economic, social and environmental perspective;

9. *Calls for* increased foreign direct investments, particularly in developing countries, which have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and current multiple crises, while recognizing the key role of foreign direct investments for economic growth and development and that foreign direct investments can reduce inequalities and can help commodity-dependent countries to transition to manufacturing activities and other higher-value-added activities;

10. *Encourages* financial actors at all levels to work towards the establishment of inclusive, representative and responsible financial practices, including practices related to transparency, disclosure and standards, as appropriate;

11. *Welcomes* the progress made by many countries in strengthening the enabling environment for private sector businesses and investments, but notes that more can be done to create competitive business and investment climates, including by increasing efforts to combat corruption, promoting market transparency, improving access to market information and easing the process of setting up businesses, that are well placed to attract private sector investment and participation in support of sustainable development;

12. *Reiterates* that greater gender equality in the distribution of economic resources can provide the means for women to generate income and creates positive multiplier effects for the achievement of inclusive, equitable and sustainable economic growth, and in this regard reiterates the need for targeted actions and investments;

13. *Recognizes* the importance of private sector engagement with national, international and intergovernmental organizations, Member States and other relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in an effective, accountable and consultative manner;

14. *Notes* the importance of sustainable corporate practices, including integrating environmental, social and governance factors into company reporting, as appropriate, with countries deciding on the appropriate balance of voluntary and mandatory rules, and encourages businesses to adopt principles for responsible business and investing;

15. *Acknowledges* the importance of corporate sustainability reporting, encourages companies, especially publicly listed and large companies, to integrate sustainability and due diligence information into their reporting cycles, encourages industry, interested Governments and relevant stakeholders, with the support of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to enhance existing models and develop new models for best practice and to facilitate action for the integration of sustainability

[3] Resolution 70/1.

reporting, taking into account experiences from already existing frameworks and paying particular attention to the needs of developing countries, including for capacity-building, and welcomes in this context the collaboration of the United Nations Global Compact with the Global Reporting Initiative and the World Business Council for Sustainable Development;

16. *Calls upon* Member States to reduce tensions and other risk factors and to foster environments that are conducive to scaling up long-term and sustainable investments, characterized by, inter alia, open, transparent and non-discriminatory investment policies;

17. *Notes with concern* the growing number of slum dwellers and the adverse effects on their health, safety and livelihood opportunities, and in this regard encourages targeted investments to ensure affordable and adequate housing as well as sustained investment for Sustainable Development Goal targets in these sectors by 2030;

18. *Emphasizes* that the private sector can contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in many ways, including through applying creative and innovative solutions to solving sustainable development challenges, the alignment of its business models with the Sustainable Development Goals, and supporting the efforts of the public sector in, inter alia, disaster risk reduction, climate action and skills development, in accordance with national plans and policies;

19. *Welcomes* the growing interest among investors in taking sustainability issues into account in their investment decisions, but acknowledges that further work is needed to analyse, monitor and measure its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals and maximize its positive development impact;

20. *Acknowledges* that reducing disaster risk, as outlined in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,[4] is a cost-effective investment in preventing future losses, encourages Member States to develop standards, legislation and regulations, as appropriate, for disaster risk-informed public and private sector investments, including on risk disclosure in investments and transactions, and to ensure that pipeline and bankable projects include multi-hazard and other measures that assess, prevent and mitigate risks, including in infrastructure and the real estate sector, and in this regard encourages Member States to routinely conduct stress testing of infrastructure systems;

21. *Encourages* Member States to achieve sustainable development in its three dimensions in an innovative, integrated, transparent, inclusive and equitable manner, which requires sufficient, sustainable and predictable investment through both the public and the private sectors;

22. *Invites* all relevant stakeholders to explore the possibilities of taking sustainability factors into account in credit rating assessments and to strengthen credit markets to promote the growth of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, in particular those owned by women;

23. *Recognizes* the growing momentum around sustainable investment and finance, including through investments in Sustainable Development Goal bonds, and invites private companies to adopt sustainable practices that foster long-term value;

24. *Acknowledges with great concern* the devastating economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which undermines countries' ability to implement the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement and threatens to upend the progress made recently in promoting investment in the Sustainable Development

[4] Resolution 69/283, annex II.

Goals, notes the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships, including with the public and private sectors, to foster strategic investment in the Sustainable Development Goals, especially in areas that could contribute more to combat COVID-19 and its resulting socioeconomic impacts, including through innovative financing, inter alia, in health-care systems, including universal health coverage; food security, including agricultural and food production and related supply chains; digital connectivity; job creation; sustainable and quality infrastructure development and growth in productivity; as well as to ensure an environment-responsive approach to COVID-19 recovery and to counter the shortfall in investment that the pandemic entails, calls upon all stakeholders to cooperate in order to enhance resilience and sustainability in global supply chains and strengthen international investment, including by aligning investments with the 2030 Agenda, and encourages cooperation to facilitate cross-border travel of persons for essential purposes, without undermining efforts to prevent the spread of the virus;

25. *Stresses* the need to take stock of public and private initiatives to measure investment impacts on the Sustainable Development Goals, identify their similarities and differences, and lay out potential gaps;

26. *Welcomes* in this regard the request, in the outcome document of the 2019 Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up, to the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development to further its analysis on the impact and metrics for measurement of the contribution of private sector investments and instruments to the Sustainable Development Goals at the global level,[5] and encourages international support for Member States, according to national circumstances and priorities, to voluntarily develop practical tools on measuring and collecting timely and reliable data on the private sector contribution towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level, as appropriate;

27. *Emphasizes* that international public finance plays an important role in complementing the efforts of countries to mobilize public resources domestically and that official development assistance, as a critical source for development finance, helps developing countries to secure sufficient public resources to invest in sectors that could accelerate the delivery of the transformational ambition of the 2030 Agenda, and notes in this regard the need to intensify efforts to meet respective commitments, focusing the most concessional resources on those with the greatest needs and least ability to mobilize other resources;

28. *Notes* the potential of blended finance, including its ability to crowd in, leverage or catalyse additional financing, and stresses that projects should be aligned with national priorities, have long-lasting development impact and be in the public interest, while recognizing that, for different Sustainable Development Goal investment areas, different types of finance may represent the most effective financing modalities;

29. *Encourages* Member States to promote shareholder and consumer engagement that may encourage companies to take into account consumers' sustainability preferences;

30. *Calls upon* development partners to continue to support efforts to strengthen policy frameworks to incentivize finance for productive investment, including building capacity to access available, additional and sustainable sources of financing, including concessional finance, particularly in the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and

[5] See E/FFDF/2019/3.

African countries, and taking into account the specific challenges faced by middle-income countries;

31. *Notes* the policy proposals put forward by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in its *World Investment Report 2022: International Tax Reform and Sustainable Investment*, in particular that the international community should support developing countries, especially in Africa and the least developed countries, including through scaling up technical assistance to take advantage of international tax reforms, and calls upon the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to work in collaboration with multiple stakeholders to help developing countries to avail themselves of these recommendations;

32. *Encourages* States, development partners and the private sector to invest in technological development, to build more resilient supply chains, increase productive capacity and economic diversification in developing countries, share and transfer technology and know-how on mutually agreed terms and improve domestic investment climates to facilitate mass production, especially of safe, quality, effective and affordable vaccines, therapeutics and medical equipment, promote job creation, adequate training and capacity-building and wealth creation, increase investment in quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including through the full utilization of the United Nations development system, the World Bank and other multilateral institutions in addressing the capacity and funding gaps, building a pipeline of bankable, quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure projects and exploring innovative platform approaches to coordinating, scaling up and channelling public and private finance and technical assistance, increase all components of international public finance, including the catalytic use of official development assistance, domestic and international private sector finance, domestic resource mobilization, and trade, and reduce the average transaction cost of migrant remittances;

33. *Emphasizes* the need for technical assistance and capacity-building support for investment promotion and developing project pipelines and bankable projects, in particular for developing countries;

34. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and all relevant stakeholders to support the capacity-building of developing countries in their efforts to close the Sustainable Development Goals investment gaps, especially at the country programme level, on the use of public finance to leverage private investment for projects benefiting sustainable development;

35. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to inform the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session of the implementation of the present resolution, based on their ongoing research, through a dedicated section of the *World Investment Report*, with a special focus on promoting investments for sustainable development as well as concrete recommendations, including on strategic sectors to invest for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and looks forward to the continuing consideration of these issues in the forthcoming reports of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development;

36. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-eighth session, under the item entitled “Macroeconomic policy questions”, the sub-item entitled “Promoting investments for sustainable development”.