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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Management Segment

Agenda item 7 (c)

**Introduction of Report of the UN High level Committee
on South-South cooperation**

by

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Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to be here today to share with you highlights from the Report of the UN High-level Committee on South-South cooperation **A/76/39**.

At the outset let me thank H.E. Ms. María del Carmen Squeff, Permanent Representative of Argentina, and other members of the Bureau on their leadership and successful conclusion of the 20th session of the High-level Committee.

The 20th session of the High-level Committee on South-South cooperation took place on 1-4 June 2021. The report presented to you today provides an overview of documents considered by the Committee, plenary and thematic discussions, decisions adopted, a list of participants and an overview of other organizational matters.

The Report presents two decisions adopted by the Committee.

The decision **20/1** on South-South cooperation places focus on the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery efforts. It highlighted that the COVID-19 crisis has laid bare systemic weaknesses. It exacerbated our world's vulnerabilities and inequalities within and among countries, accentuated systemic challenges and risks, and threatens to halt or obliterate progress made in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals by all countries, especially developing countries, including countries in special situations and countries facing specific challenges.

Among others, the decision calls upon Member States, other partners and donors to urgently support funding and close the funding gap for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator and its mechanisms, such as the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility and support equitable distribution of diagnostics, therapeutics and vaccines, and further explore innovative financing mechanisms aimed at ensuring continuity and strengthening of essential health services.

The decision recognizes that some United Nations entities have stepped up their support to South-South initiatives and also notes with appreciation the establishment of the United Nations Inter-Agency Mechanism for South-South and Triangular Cooperation.

Member States also reaffirmed the mandate and the central role of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation as the focal point for promoting and facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation for development on a global and United Nations system-wide basis.

In its decision **20/2**, the High-level Committee approved the provisional agenda for its twenty-first session, to be held in 2023.

Mr. President,

The Report also presents the **discussion during the 20th High-level Committee**, which took place virtually and included, among others, a Prime Minister and many high-level Government officials speaking from capitals around the world who highlighted the increased significance of South-South cooperation owing to the heightened need for solidarity, multilateralism, partnerships and regional cooperation in COVID-19 response and recovery, as well as climate change.

Some delegations saw the 20th session of the Committee as a critical milestone and an opportunity to take stock of progress in and support for South-South and triangular cooperation after they endorsed the **Buenos Aires outcome document** of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (BAPA+40). Many delegations expressed the view that the principle of solidarity that underpins South-South cooperation yielded many benefits for developing countries in COVID-19 response.

A number of delegations called upon developed countries to fulfil their official development assistance commitments in support of developing-country efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic and implement the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Echoing the 2009 **Nairobi outcome document**, some delegations reiterated that South-South solidarity should not be used as a

justification for developed countries to neglect the fulfillment of their ODA commitments as well as technology transfer and capacity-building.

Delegations also highlighted that meeting the objectives of **the 2030 Agenda** was another major reason to support South-South and triangular cooperation.

While reiterating their need for coherent and coordinated United Nations support for their South-South initiatives, a number of delegations expressed strong support for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (**UNOSSC**) and its role in promoting policy dialogues, building capacities, sharing knowledge, managing trust funds and organizing the twentieth session of the Committee. Delegations also commended the Office for leading the formulation of the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation for sustainable development.

Several delegations shared the view that **triangular cooperation** significantly supplemented South-South cooperation and contributed to enabling developing countries to achieve sustainable development through efficient partnerships.

Many delegations also highlighted a greater need to **access digital technologies** and a broadband connection to enhance the impact of South-South and triangular cooperation while increasing the speed of COVID-19.

Mr. President,

In looking towards recovering better, the Reports notes **several points from the general discussion regarding a need to ensure equal access to vaccines**, noting that production would need to be improved globally, which would involve improving capacity-building, regulatory and technological support. There was also a need to continue to share good practices across regions and countries as well as a need to do more to build back better, making cities resilient, rethinking urban development, and seeing how South-South cooperation could expand into that area.

Thank you, Mr. President.