



**Statement of the
Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries
At the
ECOSOC: Operational Activities for Development Segment 2020**

Mr. Chair,

- The Like-Minded Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries commend the Presidency and Bureau of the Economic and Social Council for convening this year's Operational Activities for Development Segment against a backdrop of unprecedented challenges. We value this meeting to update on the implementation of the 2016 Resolution on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review, including on the outstanding components in the repositioning of the UN development system (UNDS) in the context of the 2030 Agenda and the 2020 report of the Secretary-General on QCPR implementation.
- We likewise commend the Secretary-General and his team for the efforts and concrete gains achieved in improving and strengthening the UNDS to ensure that it delivers efficiently and effectively on the ground.
- We stand in solidarity with the UN family in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, cognizant that the pandemic has impacted us indiscriminately, has added further stress to the SDG implementation gaps and has proven to be the first real test to the UNDS reforms.

Mr. Chair,

- As we enter the Decade of Action, and amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to work together to protect, as much as possible, the development gains thus far achieved and to build back better, while ensuring that no one is left behind in our collective efforts and shared commitment to achieve the SDGs.
- We support the call for solidarity made by the Secretary-General during this human crisis. We welcome the launch of the COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund that supports middle-income countries (MICs) to respond to the crisis and recover from its socio-economic shocks.

- We also welcome the statements made by the Secretary-General¹ and the President of ECOSOC² during the 2020 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development Follow-up that recognize the specific needs and challenges of MICs and the importance of including them in the global coordinated response to the pandemic.
- We note, with concern, the impacts and increasing vulnerability of MICs as detailed in the ILO Monitor 2nd edition: COVID-19 and the world of work,³ and the SG Report on Debt and Covid-19.⁴
- We recall the GA resolution on Development Cooperation with Middle-Income Countries adopted on 19 December 2019 (A/RES/74/231),⁵ and look forward to the convening by the President of the General Assembly of a high-level meeting to discuss the gaps and challenges of middle-income countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a focus on the economic dimension of sustainable development. We also look forward to the Report of the Secretary-General at the 75th session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the resolution.

Mr. Chair,

- For middle-income countries, the UNDS operational activities play a fundamental role in promoting innovation, capacity-building, support in designing public policies based on experiences and the transfer of technologies as powerful drivers of economic growth and sustainable development. A more coordinated assistance of the system is needed in this regard.
- We have consistently advocated that the UNDS should move away from traditional schemes to evaluate development based on macroeconomic indicators because we believe that national averages (based on criteria such as per capita income) do not reflect the actual particularities and challenges of developing countries nor the multidimensional nature of the 2030 Agenda on sustainable development.
- We believe that the UNDS should take the lead in defining the trend of international support to middle-income countries, influencing and fostering new partnerships with the international financial institutions, regional organizations, regional development banks and other stakeholders.
- We also consider crucial to have further and stronger initiatives on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, public-private partnerships and innovative funding mechanisms. Middle-income countries play a strategic role in international cooperation and can provide shared experiences and good practices for sustainable development in this regard.

¹ <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-04-23/secretary-generals-remarks-the-ecosoc-forum-financing-sustainable-development-the-context-of-covid-19-delivered>

² <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/sites/www.un.org.ecosoc/files/files/en/president/2020/opening-statement-ecosoc-president-23-april-2020.pdf>

³ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@dgreports/@dcomm/documents/briefingnote/wcms_740877.pdf

⁴ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_policy_brief_on_debt_relief_and_covid_april_2020.pdf (page 4)

⁵ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/74/231>

- In view of the above:
 1. We appreciate the call of the Secretary-General for the UNDS to evolve its support to middle-income countries in all their diversity, including in efforts to advance the multidimensional measurements of sustainable development;
 2. We take note of his recommendation for a gradual shift from a traditional model of direct support and service provision to middle-income countries towards a greater emphasis on integrated high-quality policy advice, capacity development and support for the leveraging of partnerships and financing.
 3. We welcome and request to be updated on the development of a joint framework of collaboration with multilateral development banks to improve regional and country-level synergies, with specific attention to middle-income countries; and
 4. We also welcome the enumeration of steps that the UN is taking to strengthen its work in the area of South-South cooperation, including in the development of a system-wide strategy on South-South and Triangular Cooperation, which is expected to put into action a coordinated, coherent approach for a system wide South-South cooperation policy and program, following the priorities and requests defined by the countries. We recall the historic BAPA+40 Conference held in Buenos Aires in 2019 and its contribution in this regard.
- Mr. Chair, our Group stands ready to actively work with the UN system, including with the UN Chief Economist and MICs focal person as well as with the UN Sustainable Development Group, on the above initiatives and future steps to advance the interests of middle-income countries which are major engines of global growth and development, contributing to 1/3rd of global GDP and representing 75% of the world's population and 62% of the world's poor.⁶
- Please be assured of our Group's full support and cooperation in ensuring the success of OAS 2020.
- Thank you, Chair.

⁶ https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_policy_brief_on_debt_relief_and_covid_april_2020.pdf (page 4)