

Costa Rica

Statement
Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries
High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
“Ensuring that no one is left behind”

July 18-20, 2016. New York

Mr. President

- I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of a core Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries: Armenia, Belarus, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama and the Philippines.
- We would like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this 4th High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council and which constitutes an important milestone during the first year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- While recognizing the primary responsibility of our Governments in the implementation, follow-up and review process of the Agenda 2030 at the national level; we would like to highlight the central role of the HLPF in overseeing the follow-up and review at the global level. (based on para 47 Agenda 2030)
- We also recognize the importance of the universal intergovernmental character of the Forum, the political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development that it provides, as well as its key role in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels. (based on OP2 Res 67/290)
- In this regard, we highlight the need to maintain adequate support to all those Member States that present their voluntary reviews this year and the following years. We are convinced in the importance of advertising lessons learned and best practices, promoting knowledge-sharing and the transfer of technology, always with the intention to strengthen national capacities and support countries, particularly developing countries, in the fulfillment of their road-maps towards the achievement of sustainable development.
- Hardly any SDG will be achieved without significant progress in the access to technologies for developing countries. Mechanisms and other processes to

develop and facilitate knowledge sharing and technology transfer for developing countries will be essential to create an enabling international environment and to support the reduction of inequalities within and among countries. The UN Development System should play a key role in this regard through the full and effective operationalization of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

- We would like to reaffirm the importance of addressing the challenge of financing for development, ensuring adequate and predictable means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, respecting each country's policy space and creating an enabling international economic environment that can support national development efforts.
- We strongly believe, Mr. President that the meetings of this Forum should concentrate in the discussion of the sustainable development challenges facing developing countries, including the most vulnerable countries as well as the particular challenges facing middle-income countries.
- We advocate for the promotion of the principles of universality, integrity, and the need to ensure that no one is left behind, as recognized in the 2030 Agenda. Our efforts should target those most in need, regardless of their geographical location. We should therefore target the people in need and not only the countries. The 2030 Agenda must be relevant to all countries and we have to respond to the sustainable development needs of all of us, leaving no one behind and ensuring that challenges and vulnerabilities faced by middle-income countries do not cause regression of their development efforts.
- As recognized in the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and also highlighted during the meetings of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UNDS and in several sessions of this forum last week, we stress that under the principle of leaving no one behind, the sustainable development needs and specific challenges and vulnerabilities of middle-income countries should be properly addressed and adequately supported by the international community, in various forms, taking into account the broad and complex diversity of these countries and their capacity to support the implementation process of the Agenda.
- In addition, even though we celebrate UN efforts to enhance coordination, particularly at the operational level, we highlight the need to improve that coordination and work on a long term-wide strategic planning towards middle-income countries. In this regard we strongly believe that the United Nations Development System should establish an inter-agency and system-wide coordination action plan for sustainable development in middle-income countries. This mechanism should be built upon a solid evidence-base, and be defined by clear objectives, indicators and sources of financing.

- We reiterate our call on the United Nations Development System, in consultation with the IFIs and as agreed in paragraphs 129 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and 48 of the 2030 Agenda, to develop transparent measurements of progress on sustainable development that go beyond income criteria, building on existing initiatives as appropriate. These should recognize poverty in all of its forms and dimensions, and the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of domestic output and structural gaps at all levels. We commend the efforts undertaken by DESA on this issue and reiterate the importance of achieving further progress in this regard.
- Capacity-building to strengthen national institutions, including national statistical institutions, will be crucial for the achievement the SDGs and new data sources and technologies for data collection should be explored. We believe that high-quality, timely, disaggregated and reliable data is vital for Governments in order to make informed decisions, based on evidence and therefore, achieve better results through public policy implementation. And in this regard, we call for enhanced international support and the establishment of multi-stakeholder partnerships for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building mechanisms in middle-income countries, to support national development plans to implement all the SDGs.
- Thank you Mr. President