

**Revised Zero draft**

**Ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the 2021 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”**

**Ministerial declaration of the 2021 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, on the theme “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”**

**I. Introduction**

We, the Ministers and high representatives, during this challenging time of crisis, resilience, recovery and hope, have adopted the present declaration at the high-level segment of the 2021 session of the Economic and Social Council and the 2021 high-level political forum on sustainable development,

1. The COVID-19 crisis has laid bare systemic weaknesses and 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. While acknowledging its multidimensional nature and its severe impact on all countries, especially developing countries and countries in special situations, we emphasize the urgent need for a global renewed commitment to, sustainable development through solidarity. We reaffirm that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, and note with concern that, for the first time in decades, the trend of poverty reduction is being reversed.
2. As we have entered the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development, we reaffirm our commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda in its entirety as our first line of defense against the negative impacts of the global pandemic and future shocks. Accelerated progress towards implementing the 2030 Agenda is the global blueprint for us to respond to the negative impacts of the global pandemic and build back better, help prevent future pandemics, achieve a sustainable, resilient and prosperous future for all and respect, protect and fulfil human rights.
3. We also reaffirm the principles recognized in the 2030 Agenda, which is people-centered, transformative and universal in nature, leaving no one behind, and that its Goals and targets are integrated and indivisible, balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. We recognize the synergies between the

implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement .We need an integrated approach that will leverage interlinkages and minimize trade-offs across Goals and targets, Rapid change is possible and the Goals remain within reach if we embrace transformation and enhance sustainable investments aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a tool to raise ambition.

4. We recognize the central role of the United Nations system in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as effectively catalysing and coordinating the global response to control and contain the spread of COVID-19 and achieve sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery.

## **II Impact of the pandemic on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, enhancing coordinated global response on supporting recovery and building back better in the Decade of Action and Delivery**

5. The COVID-19 pandemic has forced businesses to shut down, pushed down commodity prices, investment and remittances, exacerbated pre-existing debt and vulnerabilities in many countries, disrupted global value and supply chains. The COVID-19 pandemic is a compelling reminder of the inextricable relationship between human health, and the environment and that addressing the environmental crises should be consistent with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, including efforts to eradicate poverty and create adequate incentives for sustainable livelihoods. We need to critically consider our consumption and production patterns and address environmental degradation, deforestation and forest fragmentation, biodiversity loss, combat climate change. We emphasize that biodiversity and health linkages should be addressed holistically to prevent and mitigate pandemics in the future. We recall in this regard decision 14/4 of 30 November 2018 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and resolution 3/4 of 30 January 2018 of the United Nations Environment Assembly, and we note with appreciation in this regard the establishment of the One Health High Level Expert Panel by WHO, OIE, FAO and UNEP and encourage further close (and also formalized) cooperation between these bodies.
6. At the centre of a global recovery is equitable, affordable access for all to safe, quality, efficacious, effective, accessible and affordable COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics. We stress the need to develop international partnerships particularly to scale-up manufacturing and distribution capabilities, in recognition of differing national contexts, and recognize the role of extensive immunization against COVID-19 as a global public good for health in preventing, containing and stopping transmission in order to bring the pandemic to an end. We resolve to work tirelessly to ensure timely access for all countries to COVID-19 vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics.

7. In order to effectively respond to and achieve sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery from health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and their consequences we need to enhance efforts to realize the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation , including hand-washing and hygiene , as well as enhance sustainable water management in order to ensure a sustainable supply of water for agriculture and food production and other ecosystem services.
8. We recognize the efforts made by Governments as well as health-care workers and other essential workers around the world to deal with the pandemic through measures to protect the health, safety and well-being of people We acknowledge the critical role that women are playing in COVID-19 response efforts, and recognize the need to ensure the full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making and equal access to leadership and representation in all spheres of society for women, as well as for older persons, people with disabilities, people of African descent,youth, and for the poor and those who are in vulnerable situations and to fully respect, protect and fulfil existing commitments and obligations with respect to the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, as part of the COVID-19 response.
9. *PLACEHOLDER ON COVID-19 VACCINES FROM WHA74 WHICH will take place virtually from 24 May to 1 June 2021*

**III. Assessment of Sustainable Development Goals under in-depth discussion (The paras on each SDGs to be reviewed in depth should include the implementation progress, challenges, actions and solutions, focusing more on the actions and solutions)**

10. We recognize the contribution of the Secretary-General’s Report on Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and the contribution of ECOSOC, the regional forums on sustainable development, functional commissions of the Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums, as well as other relevant stakeholders.
11. We commend the 42 countries<sup>1</sup> that presented voluntary national reviews at the 2021 high-level political forum on sustainable development. We also commend the 47 countries that conducted the reviews in 2020. We express our appreciation to the Group of Friends of Voluntary National Reviews and Follow up and Review of the 2030 Agenda. We urge the United Nations to further capitalize on the key findings and evidence extracted from the reviews and encourage peer learning. We encourage countries to share locally driven

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<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bhutan, Bolivia, Cabo Verde, Chad, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Germany, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Marshall Island, Mexico, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Paraguay, Qatar, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Uruguay, Zimbabwe.

development approaches and pathways to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

12. We reaffirm the importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development in addressing regional and transboundary challenges and scaling up action for and among countries. We welcome the work of the regional commissions and recognize the valuable contribution of the regional forums on sustainable development, as the multi-stakeholder platforms to support their member States in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda in the regions.
13. We reiterate that while our 2021 review emphasizes particular Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 17, the integrated, indivisible and universal nature of the Agenda and its Goals makes it essential that we pay particular attention to leveraging synergies and co-benefits across all dimensions of sustainable development, while avoiding or minimizing trade-offs.
14. SDG1: The triple threat of COVID-19, armed conflict and climate change makes the global goal of eradicating poverty by 2030 beyond reach. 3 billion people are still living in multidimensional poverty, this number continues to be significant and unacceptably high, the levels of inequality in income, wealth and opportunities remain high or are increasing within and between many countries, and the non-income dimensions of poverty and deprivation, such as access to quality education or basic health services, and relative poverty remain major concerns along with extreme and rural poverty. The COVID-19 pandemic is set to increase the number of poor by up to 124 million, causing the extreme poverty rate to rise for the first time in a generation, including in MICs, and especially among women. The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated the importance of social protection systems; yet 4 billion people worldwide are left without any social protection. We therefore call for all countries to ensure universal access to social protection.
15. SDG2: The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need to accelerate the transformation of food systems to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition, to reduce the negative impact of food systems on biodiversity, natural resources, ecosystems and the climate including through sustainable production and consumption and sustainable agriculture. The impact of economic slowdowns and downturns as well as transport restrictions on food security cannot be separated from the root causes of hunger and malnutrition, namely conflict, poverty, inequality and marginalization. National efforts in those areas need to be better coordinated. Interventions to build sustainable and inclusive food systems must take a holistic approach and be inclusive of all relevant actors, and address not only food production but also food access and utilization and the stability of food systems, including the importance of agricultural trade. We recognize the possibilities and opportunities of increasing food production from the ocean to bolster our long-term food security. We stress the need to reduce food loss and waste. We also call for countries

to take action to ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round and promote healthy and sustainable diets, noting that hunger and all form of malnutrition, including stunting, undernourishment, overweight and obesity rates are rising everywhere.

16. SDG3: COVID-19 related disruptions have halted or even reversed progress made in many health areas. We note the increasing burden that payments for health services place on household budgets and the impact this has had in pushing people into extreme poverty. We reaffirm the right of everyone to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, without distinction of any kind We call for increased action to achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all. Over the past decades, the total number of deaths from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) has increased substantially. NCDs now cause about 70% of all premature deaths, with 86% taking place in low- and middle-income countries. We note with great concern that only few countries are on track to meet the target on reducing premature deaths from NCDs by one third by 2030, and call for strengthened action to assist low- and middle income countries in their efforts to reduce mortality and morbidity from NCDs. We also note with concern that progress has been particularly slow on reducing maternal mortality and commit to accelerate action. We commit to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes . Particular action is needed to increase the proportion of births attended by skilled birth attendants, meet unmet family planning needs including enhancing access to contraceptive methods and reduce adolescent birth rates We also commit to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases, reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment, promote mental health and wellbeing, strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse and halve the number of global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents.
17. SDG8: The COVID-19 crisis has had significant negative effects on incomes, livelihoods, and safe working environments, particularly for women, young people, and migrants. We note the overrepresentation of young workers and women in informal jobs and informal market systems, and the persistence of the gender pay gap with men earning more than women per hour worked in 89 percent of countries. We will promote a sustainable and inclusive recovery of our economies, in particular enhanced efforts to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, including through ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns, to create conditions for decent work for all, including for those in the informal economy, support structural economic transformation, including expanding digital and mobile banking services support and facilitate access to

finance for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and build their capacity, to help restore jobs and incomes. Investment in the care economy is needed to spur sustainable economies, restore and create jobs, and close the labour force gender gap—in order to recognize, reduce and redistribute women’s disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work. Tourism as the one of the world’s major economic sectors and the source of employment, is to be supported in the manner of advancing its contribution to the 2030 Agenda, benefiting local communities and creating decent job opportunities for all. Supporting the MSMEs to continue their operations and to retain their employees could contribute to ensuring stability in the labor markets and preventing a surge in unemployment.

18. SDG10: We express our concern that COVID 19 has exacerbated inequalities and widened the gap within and among countries, leaving many behind. We commit to stepping our efforts to fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, stigmatization, hate speech and related intolerance, through cooperation, partnership and inclusion, and ensure people everywhere have access to basic services. COVID-19 has shown the key role that all digital technologies can play in the provision of financial and public services, including health and education, but also brought to light the great discrepancies in access to affordable information and communications technologies that still exist. We recognize the need for digital inclusion as an integral part of social and economic inclusion in order to ensure that the digital transformation does not widen inequality within and between countries or the gender digital divide. Artificial intelligence, and other emerging technologies will undoubtedly transform production and business, but without addressing the digital gap this transformation might widen income inequality. We note as well the need to address the security, data protection and privacy challenges related to digitalization. We acknowledge that the pandemic has exacerbated inequalities within and between countries, and call upon all governments and international financial institutions to strengthen cooperation to address such impacts. Furthermore, we recommit to promote faster, safer and cheaper remittances by further developing existing conducive policy and regulatory environments that enable competition, regulation and innovation on the remittance market and by providing instruments that enhance the financial inclusion of migrants and their families.
19. SDG12: For decades, scientists have been laying out how humanity is driving the climate crisis, the biodiversity crisis, and the pollution crisis, all linked to unsustainable production and consumption. The three crises are closely interlinked and reinforce each other. We need to explore more inclusive and equitable development models underpinned by sustainable consumption and production to build a more sustainable and resilient recovery. We call for accelerated enhancement of multi-stakeholder partnerships at all levels, including with the United Nations system and international financial institutions and Multilateral Development Banks, to advance innovative pathways to achieving sustainable

consumption and production, including through the sound management of chemicals and waste, prevention of plastic pollution, as well as enact accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance at national levels thereby creating job opportunities, promoting sustainable business practices, and fostering more sustainable and stable global supply chains. We acknowledge progress achieved under the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production patterns, which has strengthened multilateral cooperation and multi-stakeholder partnerships on sustainable consumption and production at all levels.

20. SDG13: In order to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C as called for in the Paris agreement, global efforts would need to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions globally around 2050. We therefore urge all parties to enhance their ambition and communicate enhanced NDCs with an increase in clarity and understanding, as well as to communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies well ahead of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021, as appropriate, as a way of providing clear signals to citizens, political actors and businesses. We urge all countries to institute sustainable and climate sensitive economic recovery policies from the COVID-19 crisis as an important element of a sustainable growth strategy and an immediate investment into a climate-resilient, inclusive and just transition while ensuring countries' national circumstances needs and priorities, taking fully into account the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. We stress the urgent need to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change and extreme weather events, and to continue to engage in adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring processes and to enhance cooperation, especially in adaptation and disaster risk reduction. We further stress that enhanced access to international climate finance is important to support mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and also recognizes the ongoing efforts in this regard. We recommit to taking collective action to further align public and private finance flows with the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement objectives. We recognize the importance of meeting the commitment by developed countries to jointly mobilize US\$ 100 billion by 2020 of climate finance per year through to 2025.
21. SDG16: The world is still a long way off from achieving the goal of peaceful, just and inclusive societies and effective, accountable and inclusive institutions as well as responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. Widespread and large-scale corruption, bribery, illicit financial and arms flows, as well as all forms of organised crime, increase inequality, produce poverty, destroy good governance, and breed destabilization of societies. We stress the urgent need to promote

financial accountability, transparency and integrity in order to increase the mobilization of resources for sustainable development. Some risks, such as corruption, have been exacerbated by the response to the pandemic and the implementation of stimulus packages. Progress toward peace, security and conflict prevention and management is being set back, as shocks from the pandemic have further intensified the vulnerabilities of countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. The pandemic has increased the need for concerted government action at the local, national and international levels, global cooperation, peace and solidarity and human rights, and the fostering of development through the principles of the rule of law at the national and international levels, equal access to justice for all, proper management of public affairs and public property, good governance and leaving no one behind. Achieving sustainable development and strengthening resilience require a long-term engagement and conflict-sensitive perspective in policymaking together with institution-building at all levels, based on effective governance for sustainable development and a commitment to peaceful, just and inclusive societies that are based on respect for human rights and equal access to justice. Adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding and sustaining peace is essential to the success of this work. We urge countries to ensure full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making and equal access to leadership and representation in all spheres of society for women, as well as for older persons and youth, and for the poor, those who are in vulnerable situations and to fully respect, protect and fulfil existing commitments and obligations with respect to the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including as part of their COVID-19 response

22. SDG17: We reaffirm the outcome of the Financing for Development forum of the Council, and note the report of the High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda (FACTI Panel). We commit to promote public engagement and innovative partnerships through a whole-of-government approach, regional and local mobilization and actions, and involvement of communities, people, civil society, academia and the private sector. We will continue to ensure the meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders in the high-level political forum. We also acknowledge the role of the civil society and volunteers in the implementation of the Goals, both individually and as part of multi-stakeholder partnerships.
23. 2020 targets: We welcome the review of the 2020 targets at this year's high-level political forum and commit to maintain the integrity of the 2030 Agenda and achieve these targets in an accelerated timeframe, reflecting the urgency conveyed in the Agenda, while keeping track of and taking fully into account the related ongoing intergovernmental processes to allow updated targets to reflect a suitable level of ambition for 2030.



#### IV. Other priority issues

24. LNOB: We are deeply concerned that many developing countries are unable to meet the essential health and humanitarian needs of people and to recover from the recession. We are concerned about the reversal of the trend of poverty reduction. We recognize that the poorest and most vulnerable people are the most affected by the COVID-19 crisis. We will place a focus on those people in our policies and actions. We will undertake every effort to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first. Those whose needs are reflected in the 2030 Agenda include all children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons and migrants. We also intend to see the Goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society.
25. Gender Equality and women empowerment: We reaffirm our commitment to achieving gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and the full realization of the human rights of all women and girls. To achieve inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies, we call for the leadership and full, effective and equal participation of women in decision-making in the design, budgeting, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes that affect their livelihoods, well-being and resilience, and we recognize that unequal gender roles as reflected in women's disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work hold women back in the economy and other areas. We reiterate the urgency to ensure women's equal access to, and control over, land and natural resources. We reaffirm our commitment to preventing and responding to gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment and harmful practices. Our efforts will reinforce the linkages between Sustainable Development Goal 5 and the other Goals. The systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is crucial. National responses to the COVID 19 pandemic must be gender-sensitive and ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls without discrimination of any kind. The participation of women's rights and girl's lead organisations, women-led movements and women human rights defenders must be ensured at all levels in order to build back better and more gender equal placing the interests, needs and visions of women and girls on local, national, regional and international agendas, including the 2030 Agenda. We highlight the Generation Equality Forum and will fully support UN Women's efforts to foster momentum on meaningful engagement and participation for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls on a global level.
26. MICs: We recognize that middle-income countries still face significant challenges to achieve sustainable development. In order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, efforts to address ongoing challenges should be strengthened through the exchange of experiences, improved coordination, and better and focused support of the United Nations development system, the international financial institutions, regional

organizations and other relevant stakeholders. We are concerned that eight out of ten new poor are in middle-income countries.

27. Recognize that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security and that peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights, including the right to development, on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions . Factors that give rise to violence, insecurity and injustice, such as inequality, corruption, poor governance and illicit financial and arms flows, are addressed in the 2030 Agenda. We must redouble our efforts to resolve or prevent conflict and to support post-conflict countries, including by ensuring that women have a role in peacebuilding and State-building. We call for further effective measures and actions to be taken, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right to self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment.
28. Human Rights: Recognizing that the 2030 Agenda and efforts to advance international human rights are mutually reinforcing, we emphasize that universal respect for human rights and human dignity, peace, justice, equality and non-discrimination is central to our commitment to leaving no one behind. Our commitment also includes respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity, and equal opportunity.. We are committed to a world that invests in its children and youth and in which every child grows up in a safe and healthy environment free from all forms of violence and exploitation. We envision a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. We will strive for a world where youth are key agents of change, supported by a culture of innovation, sustainability and inclusiveness, to enable a better future for themselves and their communities in a just, equitable, tolerant, open, creative and socially inclusive world in which the needs those in vulnerable situations are met. We will strive to promote and ensure the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for older persons, including by progressively taking measures to combat age discrimination
29. Children and Youth: We recognize that building sustainable, inclusive, equitable and resilient societies must begin with investing in all children, and youth, safeguarding their rights and ensuring that from early childhood they grow up in a safe and healthy environment, free from all forms of violence, including neglect, bullying, harassment, abuse and exploitation, online and offline, and through the elimination of all harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, paying specific attention to children affected by armed conflict. As critical agents of change and torchbearers of the 2030 Agenda for current and future generations, we emphasize the

importance of engaging and supporting the meaningful participation of children, adolescents and young people, particularly those in vulnerable situations, in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and of enabling their empowerment through information, knowledge and awareness of sustainable development. We commit to including youth in the development and assessment of strategies and programmes designed to address their specific needs and to ensure that youth education, skills development and decent employment are prioritized. We also note with concern that school closures have caused a regression in educational gains, and commit to scale up efforts for remedial and catch-up strategies to mitigate learning losses and ensure quality education and learning programs beyond the schools for out-of-school youth and illiterate adults.

30. Countries in special situations: We recognize the special challenges and needs facing the most vulnerable countries, in particular African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing many middle-income countries and countries in conflict and post-conflict situations in pursuing sustainable development. Taking into account the different levels of development and the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on countries in special situations, we will support them by taking urgent steps to help them address the impacts of COVID-19 for a sustainable, inclusive and resilient recovery, including through funding stimulus measures that take into account their special vulnerabilities. We note that those group of countries have faced particular challenges in dealing with multiple crises as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including significant impacts on trade, financial flows, food security and social impacts. We encourage the UN to look closely at economic criteria impacting graduation ~~for SIDS~~ from LDC status, including considering the temporary suspension of the graduation process in particularly acute cases, to ensure smooth graduation processes. We further encourage the UN, IFIs and vertical funds to continue to work hard to respond to the unique challenges of SIDS in obtaining better access to development and climate finance to facilitate creative and innovative solutions to the challenges facing SIDS.
31. Trade: We are concerned by the disruption of supply chains and the sharp reduction and slow recovery in world trade triggered by COVID-19. This has significantly affected developing countries. We will ensure that any emergency trade measures designed to tackle COVID-19 are targeted, proportionate, transparent, and temporary, protecting the most vulnerable and do not create permanent barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains, and are consistent with WTO rules. We recognize the growth in illicit trade fueled by the pandemic and countries' work to combat it. We recognize the need to scale up trade finance and trade-facilitation measures for the developing countries. We will continue to oppose protectionism and promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable,

inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization (WTO), as well as meaningful trade liberalization.

32. Biodiversity: Our relentless extraction of resources from the Earth is having a devastating impact on the natural world. Changes in consumption and production patterns can help promote decoupling of economic growth and human well-being from resource use and environmental impacts. It can also trigger the transformations envisaged by global commitments on biodiversity, climate and sustainable development at large. We note with concern that none of the biodiversity related targets with a 2020 timeline have been met. We recommit, with an increased sense of urgency and ambition to protecting wildlife and other living species and to reversing the trends in environmental degradation through the restoration of ecosystems, halting biodiversity loss and deforestation, and combating desertification and achieving land degradation neutrality, including combating sand and dust storms, We further recommit to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, as well as the fair and equitable benefit-sharing of the use of genetic resources, sound management of chemicals and waste, ending the illegal and unsustainable trade and consumption of wildlife, ,conserving and sustainably using oceans, seas and marine resources and promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns. These actions need to be an integral part of COVID 19 recovery strategies. In that regard we recognize the importance of investing in nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches. We will promote a coherent approach for addressing biodiversity loss, climate change and ecosystem degradation at land and at sea and at all levels , including between the secretariats of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and including through greater convergence between our climate and biodiversity finance. We recall the relevant initiative of the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. We welcome the development on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and look forward to its adoption at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Kunming, China in October 2021, with emphasis on actions to curb direct drivers of biodiversity loss, such as changes in land and sea use, direct exploitation of organisms, climate change, pollution, and invasive alien species, as well as addressing indirect drivers (such as consumption and production patterns. We reiterate the need for action, a this can only be achieved by addressing, in a balanced manner, the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, including through the reform of harmful incentives and aligning public and private financial flows with biodiversity objectives, and a strong mechanism for monitoring and reviewing biodiversity goals and targets and other means of implementation.

33. We reaffirm, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States.

## **V Accelerated Actions**

34. We reaffirm our commitment to the actions in the political declaration adopted at the 2019 SDG Summit and the preceding HLPF declarations and recognize the urgent need to accelerate action on all levels and by all stakeholders, including through COVID-19 response and recovery efforts, to fulfil the vision and Goals of the 2030 Agenda. We also encourage all countries to use the key findings of the voluntary national reviews in supporting the implementation and accelerated actions for the decade of action and delivery. We emphasize the need for concerted action to implement the outcomes of all relevant major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields. We recognize the synergies between the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement and urge action to fully realize them. We recognize the urgent need to support in particular those who are in vulnerable situations who are the most affected by COVID-19, including women and girls, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, people of African descent, local communities, refugees, displaced persons, migrants.
35. We will enhance our work to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels and ensure more responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision - making processes. We will strive to equip domestic institutions to better address interlinkages, synergies and trade-offs between the Goals and targets through a whole-of-government approach that can bring about transformative change in governance and public policy and ensure policy coherence for sustainable development. We encourage the empowerment of women and therefore the integration of a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national sustainable development strategies so as to promote greater policy coherence. We commit to involving and empowering local authorities to ensure local ownership of SDGs, in particular by citizens, and to best translate national development priorities into local realities and in this regard support voluntary local reviews as a useful tool to show progress in local implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.
36. Future risks will involve cascading, complex, systemic shocks. We are determined to accelerate action to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. We encourage comprehensive approaches to financing disaster risk reduction, including anticipatory action and forecast based financing. We will prioritize short term recovery actions which prevent the creation of new risks, build resilience to future shocks, crises and pandemics. We will invest in reducing hazard exposure and vulnerability, information and communication networks, early warning systems, and evidence-based policymaking.

37. We will continue to strengthen the science-policy interface through evidence-based policy making, support for research and development, particularly harnessing science, technology and innovation, leveraging technologies to promote inclusive digital economy and connectivity and build resilience across sectors. We encourage international cooperation, supporting statistical capacity-building in developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable countries, which face the greatest challenges in producing, collecting, analyzing and using high-quality, timely and reliable data and statistics. We commend the individual scientists, technologists and innovators across the world whose work is creating pathways out of the pandemic but also note the manifest inequalities in countries' capacities and experiences. We call upon the Secretary General to present the findings of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism on learning from the experience of the pandemic to better deploy STI for the SDGs, including through improved international cooperation, for consideration at the next HLPF. We take note with appreciation of the Secretary General's initiative for launching the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation. We commit to enhance and promote capacity-building, infrastructure, connectivity and technical assistance initiatives as well as innovation and technologies towards advancing the Goals and targets, with special focus on developing countries. We commit to strengthening cooperation to close the digital divide within and among countries. We also stress the importance of strengthening digital accessibility, digital skills and media and information literacy and to provide training to support data processing, transmission, and storage. We must also build public trust in science. We further welcome the holding of the sixth Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals.
38. We commit to pursuing multilateral solutions guided by global solidarity in responding to the pandemic and realizing the SDGs, including by ensuring equitable access to the vaccine by all countries and people. We will remain guided by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the agreed conclusions of ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum in order to mobilize resources to support the response to COVID-19 and close the financing gap for the Sustainable Development Goals and the Access to Covid-19 Tools Accelerator. Integrated National Financing Frameworks can play a positive role in support of nationally owned sustainable development strategies. We call on Governments, international financial institutions, the private sector and other stakeholders to increase the level of ambition in mobilizing resources to support the response to COVID-19 and invest in the sustainable development goals. We welcome continued efforts to improve the quality, effectiveness and impact of development cooperation and other international efforts in public finance, including adherence to agreed development cooperation effectiveness principles.
39. There is a need to invest the financing in the most socially, economically and environmentally impactful way to build resilience against future shocks and to build back better. Infrastructure impacts 92% of the SDGs. Investment in sustainable and resilient

infrastructure is critical for the COVID-19 recovery achievement of the SDGs and environmental goals. Many developing countries need support in project identification and development and mobilization of private and public investment. Private sector investment can and must be scaled up significantly especially in areas such as energy, communications, transport and technology. We recognize the important role of the UN system in addressing the funding gaps in sustainable infrastructure investment, complementing existing initiatives. We recognize the need for system wide support from the UN to developing countries to enable them to prepare and promote pipelines of investable projects. We acknowledge the availability of capital in the market seeking investment opportunities in sustainable infrastructure, but most developing countries are unable to access this capital. At the same time, investors have been unable to adequately access viable investment projects in most developing countries. We reaffirm our strong political commitment to create an enabling environment at all levels.

40. We reiterate the important contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; we reaffirm that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation and is an important element of international cooperation for development; acknowledge the need to enhance development effectiveness of South-South and triangular cooperation; and welcome the contributions of South-South and triangular cooperation to poverty eradication and sustainable development;
41. We encourage ambitious, and action-oriented and synergistic outcomes across planned high-level events in 2021 UN General Assembly Special Session on Anti-Corruption (UNGASS 2021), the including the Second Global Sustainable Transport Conference, the Secretary-General's Food Systems Summit, the High-Level Dialogue on Energy, the High-Level Meeting on Water, Biodiversity COP15, UNFCCC COP26, and the UNCCD COP15. These events are opportunities to deliver on existing commitments, restore and conserve our natural resources, bridge the technology divide, tackle increasing inequalities, powered by multi-stakeholder partnerships and the necessary financial, technological and knowledge resources. We look forward to a concise and joint reporting back from these opportunities to the HLPF in 2022. We call upon the entities of the United Nations development system to achieve and work towards building back better and ensuring a sustainable inclusive and resilient recovery as outlined in the present declaration. They should also support and work with programme countries in a coherent and collaborative manner in implementing, with urgency, sustainable solutions and catalysing partnerships, leveraging digital technologies where appropriate including with financial institutions and the private sector for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the post-COVID-19 era.