

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, having met virtually during this challenging time of crisis, resilience, recovery and hope,

1. Reaffirm our commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety and to achieve the SDGs as we have entered the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. Accelerated progress towards implementing the 2030 Agenda, as a plan of action for planet, people, prosperity, peace and partnership is the global blueprint for us to respond to the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and build back better, help prevent future pandemics, and build a better future for all.
2. 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.
3. *Recognize* that the COVID-19 crisis has laid bare and exacerbated our world’s vulnerabilities and inequalities within and among countries, accentuated systemic weaknesses, challenges and risks and, threatens to halt or obliterate progress made in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals. While acknowledging the multidimensional nature of the pandemic and its severe impact on all countries, especially developing countries, including countries in special situations), we emphasize the urgent need for a global renewed commitment to sustainable development through solidarity, international cooperation and multilateralism.
4. Also reaffirm the principles recognized in the 2030 Agenda, which is people-centered, transformative and universal in nature, leaving no one behind, and its set of Goals and targets that are integrated and indivisible, balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. 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. We recognize the primary responsibility of Governments to implement the 2030 Agenda. We reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism and reiterate the central role of the United Nations

system in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as effectively catalysing and coordinating the global response to achieve sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery from COVID-19.

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

5. Acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic has already had a very significant impact on a number of SDG areas, undermining years of development efforts. It reinforces pre-existing obstacles to realizing the Goals, structural inequalities, gaps and systemic challenges and risks. The effects of the pandemic have overwhelmed health systems globally, caused businesses and factories to shut down, pushed down commodity prices, investment and remittances, affected international human mobility, the tourism industry and related services, undermined the ability of local authorities to provide basic services, severely impacted the livelihoods of half of the global workforce, exacerbated unemployment, pre-existing high debt levels and vulnerabilities in many countries, kept hundreds of millions of students out of schools, challenged the provision of humanitarian assistance and protection, disrupted global value and supply chains, affecting the supply of products.. The COVID-19 pandemic is a compelling reminder that human, animal, plant and ecosystem health are interdependent, and we emphasize in that regard the value of the “One Health” approach, an integrated approach that fosters cooperation between environmental conservation and the human health, animal health and plant health sectors.
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. We fully support the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator (ACT-A) and its COVAX facility and call on the public and private sector to fill the funding gap of these facilities. We also encourage that countries, with the capacities to do so, take actions to actively support COVAX and the WHO, including by sharing excess doses with the COVAX facility to promote the equitable distribution of vaccines to developing countries. We welcome further support and access to concessional financing and other financial measures by multilateral financial institutions to help developing countries meet national immunization requirements, improve national health systems, preparedness, and health infrastructure and progress towards universal health coverage.
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 urgently enhance efforts to realize the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation , including hand-washing and hygiene, as well as enhance integrated water resource management, including through

transboundary cooperation, in order to ensure a sustainable supply of water for life, agriculture and food production and other ecosystem services and other benefits.

8. 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, indigenous peoples 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.

III. Assessment of Sustainable Development Goals under review

9. 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.
10. We commend the 44 countries¹ that presented voluntary national reviews at the 2021 high-level political forum on sustainable development. We also commend the 47 countries² 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 for supporting the VNR preparation process. 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 development approaches and pathways to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
11. We reaffirm the importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development in addressing regional 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.

¹ 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.

² Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burundi, Comoros, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, Gambia (Republic of The), Georgia, Honduras, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Micronesia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Republic of Moldova, Republic of North Macedonia, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Seychelles, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Zambia.

12. 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 reflect on its interlinkages and leveraging synergies and co-benefits across all dimensions of sustainable development, while avoiding or minimizing trade-offs.
13. SDG1: We remain deeply concerned that the global goal of eradicating poverty by 2030 is beyond reach and recognize that the multidimensional impacts of COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated it. 3 billion people are still living in multidimensional poverty, a number which continues to be 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, social protection and basic health-care 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, especially in low and MICs, and inter alia, 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. We stress the importance of taking targeted measures to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions everywhere, including extreme poverty, with enhanced international support and strengthen global partnerships and note the need for countries, the United Nations development system and all relevant stakeholders to ensure and promote a multidimensional approach in their work and efforts to eradicate poverty.
14. SDG2: We note with deep concern that hunger and all forms of malnutrition, including stunting, undernourishment, overweight and obesity rates are rising everywhere. We reaffirm the right of everyone to have access to safe and nutritious food, consistent with the right to adequate food and the fundamental right of everyone to be free from hunger. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the world was off-track to achieve zero hunger by 2030 and healthy diets were inaccessible for a significant part of the population. The pandemic might have pushed 83 million to 132 million more people into chronic hunger in 2020, adding to the 690 million in 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need for concrete actions to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition, and ensure inclusive, resilient and sustainable food systems We recognize that poverty in all its forms and dimensions, financial and economic crises, inequalities, including gender inequality, conflicts, humanitarian emergencies, biodiversity loss, water scarcity and the adverse effects of climate change undermine the prospect of ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition by 2030, and recognize the need 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 and food systems. National efforts in those areas need to be better coordinated while recognizing that one size solutions do not fit all and that agricultural and food systems should respond to local needs and conditions. Interventions to build sustainable, inclusive and efficient and resilient food systems must take a holistic approach and be inclusive of all relevant actors, and address not only food production and consumption but also improve food access and utilization and the stability of food systems, including the importance of agricultural trade. We also stress the crucial role of healthy marine ecosystems, sustainable fisheries and sustainable aquaculture for food security and nutrition and in providing for the livelihoods of millions of people. We stress the need to reduce food losses and prevent and reuse food waste. We also call for countries

to take action to ensure access by all people, to safe, sufficient, affordable, nutritious and diverse food all year round and promote healthy and sustainable diets, We will ensure the unimpeded flow of food and agricultural products and inputs, and other goods and services across borders and keep food supply chains functioning to support the well-being of all people.

15. 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 enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health, without distinction of any kind. We call for increased action to strengthen health systems achieve universal health coverage and universal, access to affordable, quality essential health-care services, including financial risk protection and access to safe, effective, quality, affordable and essential medicines, diagnostics, vaccines and other health technologies for all. This includes strengthening measures to respond to the manufacturing of and trafficking in falsified medical products, which further proliferated within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. 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 reduce premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and 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 and meet unmet family planning needs.—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, take action to address the continuing threat of antimicrobial resistance, 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 and drowning. We will strengthen our efforts for the prevention and treatment of drug abuse and increase the resilience of related health and social services, while addressing barriers preventing access to internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

16. SDG8: The COVID-19 crisis has had significant negative effects on per capita economic growth and incomes, as well as livelihoods, and safe and secure working environments, including for women, young people, and migrant workers. .It has therefore highlighted the imperative of achieving higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high-value added and labor intensive sectors. We note the disproportionate number of young workers and women in informal jobs and informal market systems, and the persistence of the gender pay gap. We stress that entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation could promote economic growth and create jobs. We will protect labour rights and promote occupational health and safety for all workers, take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour and end modern slavery and human trafficking. We will promote a sustainable and inclusive recovery of our economies, 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 and inclusion, support and facilitate access to finance for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and build their capacity, to continue their operations

and to help restore jobs and incomes. We will enhance efforts to improve progressively global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation. Investment in the care economy is needed to spur sustainable economies, restore and create jobs, recognize, reduce and redistribute women's disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work and close the gender gap in labor force participation. 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. We will secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms recalling that 2021 is the UN Year to Eliminate Child Labour.

17. SDG10: We reaffirm the need to ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard. We commit to stepping up our efforts to fight against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, stigmatization, hate speech and related intolerance, as well as negative stereotyping based on religion and belief and on nationality, through cooperation, partnership and inclusion. We will ensure that people everywhere have access to basic services. We express our concern that COVID-19 has exacerbated inequalities and widened the gap within and among countries, leaving many behind, and call upon all governments and international financial institutions to strengthen cooperation to address such impacts. We recognize with appreciation the contribution of global international economic and financial institutions to the multilateral response to the ongoing economic crisis, while acknowledging the need to ensure enhanced representation and voice for developing countries in decision-making in global international economic and financial institutions. 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 that the digital divide and great discrepancies in access to affordable information and communications technologies 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. Furthermore, we recommit to promote faster, safer and cheaper remittances while ensuring increased transparency, proportionate anti-money laundering and antiterrorist regulations, and to maximize their development impact. To this end, we will further develop existing conducive policy and regulatory environments that enable competition, regulation and innovation on the remittance market and provide instruments that enhance the financial inclusion of migrants and their families.
18. SDG12: We remain committed to ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns, including for a 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, the sound management of chemicals and waste, reduction of food loss and waste, prevention of-plastic pollution, thereby creating decent job opportunities, promoting sustainable business practices, supporting the necessary skills for sustainable production, promoting more inclusive and equitable development models, and fostering more sustainable and stable global supply chains. We will support developing countries to strengthen their scientific and technological capacities, and ensure that people everywhere have

relevant information and awareness for sustainable consumption and production patterns. We call on all countries, with developed countries taking the lead, to intensify efforts by 2022 and beyond to scale-up the implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production. We request the UN system to take action and support countries in the design and implementation of sustainable consumption and production policies, tools and solutions.

19. SDG13: We recognize that in order to significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change, we must achieve the long-term temperature goal of the Paris Agreement. 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 enhanced and coordinated efforts are needed. We therefore urge all parties to reflect their highest possible ambition and communicate or update enhanced NDCs with an increase in clarity, transparency and understanding, well ahead of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021, as appropriate, and strive to formulate and communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies, taking fully into account the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. We encourage countries to institute sustainable and climate responsive 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 transitions while in line with countries' national circumstances needs and priorities. We stress the urgent need to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change and extreme weather events. This includes continuing to engage in adaptation planning, implementation and monitoring processes and enhancing cooperation, especially in adaptation and disaster risk reduction. We further stress that enhanced access to 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, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement objectives, and in this regard, encourage progress towards globally consistent and comparable international standards for sustainability-related disclosure by leveraging existing principles, frameworks and guidance and recognize the need to develop a common framework of definitions and criteria for sustainable economic activities We recognize the importance of meeting the commitment by developed countries to jointly mobilize US\$ 100 billion by 2020 of climate finance per year—from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation and adaptation actions and transparency on implementation. We reaffirm our strong and steadfast commitment to strengthening the implementation of the Paris Agreement, finalizing the outstanding issues of the Paris Agreement rulebook.
20. 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 from achieving 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 and poverty, undermine good governance, and breed destabilization of societies. Some risks, such as corruption, have been exacerbated by the response to the COVID-19 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, respect for human rights, and fostering 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 especially as trends of institutional digitization continue. The pandemic has also increased the need for responsible business practices, commitment to the advancement of decent working conditions, and inclusion of worker voices. Achieving sustainable development and strengthening resilience require a long-term engagement together with building effective, accountable, and transparent institutions 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. Inclusive and equitable delivery and access to public services, including health, education and social services, including through digital cooperation, is key to building greater public confidence and trust in government. It also addresses discrimination towards vulnerable groups in society, including women and girls, older people, youth, people with disabilities. We stress the importance of enhancing collaboration with the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to identify opportunities for coordinated and coherent action in support of nationally led responses to development and peacebuilding needs in conflict-affected countries. We further reaffirm that adequate, predictable and sustained financing for peacebuilding and development is essential. We reaffirm the need to strengthen relevant national institutions and build capacities at all levels in particular in developing countries, including through international cooperation. This also contributes to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.

21. SDG17: We commit to promoting 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 stress in this regard that further support is needed from developed countries especially regarding the transfer of technology, capacity building and financing to developing countries. 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 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.
22. 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

23. LNOB: 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. We are deeply concerned that many developing countries are unable to meet the essential health and humanitarian needs to recover from the recession.

24. 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.
25. 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. Taking into account the different levels of development and the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on countries in special situations and countries facing specific challenges, 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 look forward to successfully holding the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Doha, Qatar from 23-27 January 2022 at the highest possible level, including HoS and HoG and look forward to an ambitious, forward looking and comprehensive outcome. 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.
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, the access to cooperation and financing, 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 and stress the need to take measures to eradicate poverty in these countries with continued international support.

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. We reaffirm, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States.
29. Refugees: We invite the international community and all relevant stakeholders, without prejudice to ongoing support, to cooperate and mobilize resources and expertise, including through financial and in-kind assistance, as well as direct aid to host countries, refugee populations, and countries of origin of refugees, with a view to enhancing the capacity of and reducing the heavy burden borne by countries and communities hosting refugees and displaced persons in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, while fully respecting the humanitarian principles of humanity, independence, neutrality and impartiality for humanitarian action. We also invite the international community to support countries of origin, upon their request, including through funding for rehabilitation, reconstruction and development, to promote durable solutions, with a focus on voluntary repatriation in safety and dignity.
30. 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 and to 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.
31. 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, 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.

32. Trade: We are concerned that the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the normal functioning of open markets, global supply chain connectivity and the flow of essential goods, and that these disruptions hinder the fight against poverty, hunger and inequality, ultimately undermining efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 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 or unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains, and are consistent with the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules. We reaffirm the critical importance of connected global supply chains in ensuring the unimpeded flow of vital medical and food supplies and other essential goods and services across borders, by air, by land and by sea. We encourage cooperation to facilitate cross-border travel of persons for essential purposes without undermining efforts to prevent the spread of the virus. 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 as well as support for capacity building (Aid for Trade). We will continue to oppose protectionism and promote a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, sustainable, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the WTO.
33. Biodiversity: We note with concern that none of the biodiversity related targets with a 2020 timeline have been met. We commit to achieving the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. We call for an increased sense of ambition and urgency of action to protect 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, ending the illegal and unsustainable trade and consumption of wildlife. We reiterate the crucial importance of conserving and sustainably using oceans, seas and marine resources, including addressing the discharge of plastic litter and other waste in oceans and ensuring sustainable consumption and production patterns. In that regard, we recognize the importance of investing in nature-based solutions or ecosystem-based approaches. These actions need to be an integral part of COVID 19

recovery strategies. We emphasize that biodiversity and health linkages should be addressed holistically to prevent and mitigate pandemics in the future. We will promote a coherent approach for addressing biodiversity loss, climate change and ecosystem degradation at land and at sea and at all levels. In this regard, we recall the initiative adopted at the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. We look forward to the adoption of a Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework that places the global community on a path towards realizing the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity of living in harmony with nature, at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Kunming, China. We reiterate the need for action, and 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, as well as a strong mechanism for monitoring and reviewing biodiversity goals and targets and other means of implementation.

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 Ministerial 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 and enhance synergies between the outcomes of all relevant major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and environmental fields.
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, community and local organizations and to best translate national development priorities into local realities and in this regard, note voluntary local reviews as a useful tool to show progress and foster exchange in local implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.
36. We are determined to accelerate action to achieve the targets of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. We encourage comprehensive strategies to enhance financial resources from all sources for disaster risk reduction, including anticipatory action and forecast based financing. We will prioritize short term recovery actions which prevent the creation of new risks and reduce existing risks, build resilience to future shocks, crises and pandemics. We will invest in reducing hazard exposure and vulnerability to disasters, information and communication

networks, resilient infrastructure, early warning systems, and evidence-based policymaking. We recognize that the Sendai Framework, including its core provision to “build back better”, provides guidance relevant to a sustainable recovery from COVID-19 and also to identify and address underlying drivers of disaster risk in a systemic manner. We also recognize the health aspects of the Sendai Framework and stress the need for resilient health systems.

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, promoting technology transfer, leveraging technologies to promote inclusive digital economy and connectivity and build resilience across sectors. We commit to enhance and promote digital 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 recognize that artificial intelligence, big data, blockchain and other emerging technologies will undoubtedly transform production and business, and stress the need to take actions to bridge the digital gap to ensure this transformation will reduce inequalities among countries. 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 of the Secretary General’s initiative for launching the Roadmap for Digital Cooperation.—We encourage international cooperation, supporting statistical capacity-building and data access in developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable countries, which face the greatest challenges in producing, collecting, analyzing and using high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data and statistics. 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 note that the availability of numerous proprietary and non-proprietary technologies that can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), through various open access sources. We also note that the 2030 Connect launched by the United Nations in 2020 under paragraph 123 of the Addis Agenda on the development and operationalization of an online platform under the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Team to establish a comprehensive mapping of, and serve as a gateway for, information on existing science, technology and innovation initiatives, mechanisms and programmes, within and beyond the United Nations.
39. 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 Sustainable Development Goals. We recognize the role of the private sector as a critical development partner and as a leading enabler for achieving the Goals and the catalytic role that domestic resource mobilization and international development finance can play in mobilization and alignment of finance and capital at scale. 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.

40. We express our deep concern that LDCs and other developing countries need scaled up means of implementation to support SDG implementation and COVID-19 recovery, while remittance flows to low and middle-income countries fell by 7% and the merchandise exports fell by 10.7% in LDCs in 2020. Also concerned that numerous fiscal impacts of the pandemic are leading to debt distress in many countries with around half of the LDCs either in debt distress or at high risk of debt distress. We emphasize that the long-established ODA target of 0.7% of GNI and 0.15 to 0.20% of ODA/GNI to LDCs must be met. Concessional financing through multilateral and bilateral avenues, including through IDA need to be enhanced significantly.
41. We welcome the progress achieved by the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) in facilitating higher pandemic-related spending. We are concerned about the lack of participation of private creditors in DSSI. Without their participation, public resources are likely to be used to bail out private creditors rather than for recovery and development. We encourage the international community to consider measures to incentivize greater private sector participation on comparable terms, when requested by eligible countries.
42. We recognize that infrastructure impacts the attainment of the SDGs. Investment in sustainable and resilient infrastructure is critical for the COVID-19 recovery and the achievement of sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions. 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 note that 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.
43. We welcome and reiterate the important contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the achievement of the overarching goal of eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, as well as to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic; 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. We acknowledge the need to enhance development effectiveness of

South-South and triangular cooperation. We welcome the outcome of the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation. We also commit to strengthening triangular cooperation as a means of bringing relevant experience and expertise to bear in development cooperation.

44. We recognize the importance of meetings already held in 2021, including the High-Level Meeting on Water, the High-level Dialogue on Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought, the High-level Event on Culture and Sustainable Development, the High-Level Meeting on Middle-Income Countries, ECOSOC special high-level event on Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), ECOSOC High Level meeting "A Vaccine for All" and the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice where the Kyoto declaration was adopted. We commit to continue working towards the success of and encourage ambitious, action-oriented and synergistic processes and discussions across meetings to be held in 2021 and 2022, including the UN General Assembly Special Session Against Corruption (UNGASS 2021), the Second Global Sustainable Transport Conference, the Secretary-General's Food Systems Summit, the High-Level Dialogue on Energy, the CBD COP15, UNFCCC COP26, as well as the UNCCD COP15 and the International Meeting entitled "Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all - our responsibility, our opportunity. We call upon the entities of the United Nations development system to achieve and work towards building back better. They should also support and work with programme countries in a coherent and collaborative manner in implementing, with urgency, sustainable solutions and catalyzing 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.