Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 2 July 2020

[on a proposal considered under silence procedure (E/2020/L.17)]


The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 59/209 of 20 December 2004 and 67/221 of 21 December 2012, both on a smooth transition strategy for countries graduating from the category of least developed countries,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, by which the Assembly endorsed the Istanbul Declaration\(^1\) and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020,\(^2\)

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 69/15 of 14 November 2014, by which the Assembly endorsed the outcome document of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, entitled “SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway”, as well as Assembly resolution 74/3 of 10 October 2019, by which the Assembly adopted the political declaration of the high-level meeting to review progress made in addressing the priorities of small island developing States through the implementation of the Samoa Pathway,


Reiterating its conviction that no country graduating from the least developed country category should have its development progress disrupted or reversed,

Bearing in mind the importance of maintaining stability in the criteria and in the application of the established procedures for inclusion in and graduation from the

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\(^2\) Ibid., chap. II.
least developed country category so as to ensure the credibility of the process and, consequently, of the category of least developed countries, while giving due consideration to the specific challenges and vulnerabilities and the development needs of countries potentially graduating or being considered for graduation from the least developed country category,

1. Takes note of the report of the Committee for Development Policy on its twenty-second session;

2. Notes the work carried out by the Committee on (a) accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development; (b) the voluntary national reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (c) the comprehensive review of the least developed country criteria; (d) monitoring of countries that are graduating or have graduated from the list of least developed countries; (e) improved assistance for graduating and graduated least developed countries; and (f) a proposal towards the framework for the programme of action for the least developed countries;

3. Requests the Committee, at its twenty-third session, to examine and make recommendations on the annual theme of the 2021 session of the Economic and Social Council;

4. Also requests the Committee to monitor the development progress of countries graduating and graduated from the category of least developed countries, in accordance with paragraph 21 of General Assembly resolution 67/221;

5. Recognizes that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) severely affects the least developed countries, including those graduating from this category, and is likely to impact their sustainable development trajectories; requests the Committee to undertake a comprehensive study, within existing resources, on the impact of COVID-19 on the least developed country category; and also requests the Committee to closely monitor and incorporate fully into its triennial reviews the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on least developed countries and countries graduating from the category of least developed countries;

6. Requests the United Nations development system to provide assistance to graduating countries in the formulation and implementation of their national transition strategies and to consider country-specific support for graduated countries for a fixed period of time and in a predictable manner;

7. Acknowledges with satisfaction the contributions made by the Committee to the various aspects of the programme of work of the Council, reiterates its invitation for increased interactions between the Council and the Committee, encourages the Chair and, as necessary, other members of the Committee to continue that practice, as specified in Council resolution 2011/20 of 27 July 2011, within existing resources and as appropriate, and calls upon the Committee to ensure a substantive exchange with Member States through a dedicated session during its twenty-third session in 2021, within existing resources.

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4 General Assembly resolution 70/1.