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Groups of countries in special situations: follow-up to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 22 (see A/66/443, para. 2). Action on sub-item (a) was taken at the 21st and 37th meetings, on 24 October and 1 December 2011. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/66/SR.21 and 37).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/66/L.8 and A/C.2/66/L.61

2. At the 21st meeting, on 24 October, the representative of Argentina, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries" (A/C.2/66/L.8), which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling the Istanbul Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and endorsed by the General Assembly through its resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Programme of Action,

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in three parts, under the symbol A/66/443 and Add.1 and 2.



“*Reaffirming* the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

“*Recalling* Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/9 of 22 July 2011 on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,

“*Welcoming* the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of the Least Developed Countries, held in New York on 26 September 2011,

“*Taking note* of the report on the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul from 9 to 13 May 2011,

“*Recognizing* the important contribution of civil society, the private sector and parliamentarians to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and its preparatory process,

“1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the outcome of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries;

“2. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, with the support of their development partners, to fulfil their commitments and to promote implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, including by integrating its provisions into their national policies and development framework and conducting regular reviews with the full involvement of all key stakeholders, and in this regard invites the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, including United Nations regional and functional commissions, the United Nations resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams, to actively support the integration and the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action by the least developed countries;

“3. *Also calls upon* the least developed countries, in cooperation with their development partners, to broaden their existing country review mechanisms, including those for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the implementation of poverty reduction strategy papers, common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, and the existing consultative mechanisms to cover the review of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

“4. *Further calls upon* the development partners to integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action into their respective national cooperation frameworks and to implement it with enhanced, predictable and targeted support to the least developed countries, as set out therein to deliver their commitments in a timely manner, and to consider appropriate measures to overcome shortfalls or shortcomings, if any;

“5. *Invites* all organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions and international and regional financial institutions, to contribute on a priority basis to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and to

integrate it into their programmes of work, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates, and to participate fully in its review at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

“6. *Calls upon* the developing countries, guided by the spirit of solidarity and consistent with their capabilities, to provide support for the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in mutually agreed areas of cooperation within the framework of South-South cooperation, which is a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation;

“7. *Also calls upon* the private sector, civil society and foundations to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in their respective areas of competence in line with the national priorities of the least developed countries;

“8. *Welcomes with appreciation* the decisions taken by the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children’s Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women at their annual sessions in 2011 to integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action within their respective programmes of work, and also welcomes with appreciation the adoption of a resolution by the Assemblies of the member States of the World Intellectual Property Organization to mainstream the relevant parts of the Istanbul Programme of Action into various programmes of the organization, and in this regard calls upon all other organizations to do the same on an urgent basis;

“9. *Calls upon* the development partners and all other actors to fully implement the commitments that have been made in the Istanbul Programme of Action in its eight priority areas, including providing enhanced financial and technical support to develop productive capacities, meeting and reviewing quantitative official development assistance targets for the least developed countries, improving the quality of aid, implementing duty-free quota-free market access, enhancing the share of assistance for Aid for Trade, continuing with the provision of debt relief and the consideration of debt cancellation for the least developed countries in view of the impediment that debt constitutes for their development, implementing investment promotion regimes, enhancing transfer of technology, providing enhanced concessional start-up financing for innovative enterprises in the least developed countries and improving governance at all levels;

“10. *Expresses deep concern* over the adverse impact of the ongoing world financial and economic crisis on developing countries, which highlighted long-standing systemic fragilities and inequalities, stressing that the recovery has been threatened by new circumstances, including turbulence in the global financial markets and widespread fiscal strains, and that the systemic problems facing the global economy have to be resolved, including through the full accomplishment of the reform of the global financial system and architecture;

“11. *Stresses* the need to vigorously pursue the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in a coordinated and coherent manner with a view to ensuring its full, effective and timely implementation at the national,

regional and global levels, and in this regard notes with appreciation the efforts made by the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, including the work of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group and the development of a road map for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

“12. *Underlines* the need for giving due priority to the issues and concerns of the least developed countries in all major United Nations conferences and processes, including the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012;

“13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to undertake a joint gap and capacity analysis on a priority basis by 2013 with the aim of establishing a technology bank and science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to the least developed countries;

“14. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to establish, in consultation with Member States and the Secretary-General, an Ad Hoc Working Group to further study and strengthen the smooth transition process for countries graduating from the least developed country category as agreed upon in the Istanbul Programme of Action and requests the Ad Hoc Working Group to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session with specific recommendations, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to provide the necessary backstopping support to the Ad Hoc Working Group;

“15. *Urges* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, major groups and other donors to contribute to the Trust Fund in a timely manner to support the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action as well as the participation of representatives of the least developed countries in the annual review meeting on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council as well as in other relevant forums, and, in this regard, expresses its appreciation to those countries that have made voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund;

“16. *Stresses* that the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should continue to fulfil its functions to assist the Secretary-General in the effective follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system with a view to facilitating the coordinated implementation of and coherence in the follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action at the country, regional and global levels, and to assist in mobilizing international support and resources for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, and to this end, the Office of the High Representative should continue its awareness-raising and advocacy works in favour of the least developed countries in partnership with Member States, in particular the least developed countries, relevant departments and offices of the United Nations, including the Department of Public Information, as well as with parliaments, civil society, the media, academia and foundations, and to provide appropriate support to group consultations of the least developed countries, and in this regard adequate resources should be provided to the

Office of the High Representative and its capacity enhanced and strengthened to enable it to carry out successfully its important mandate given by the Istanbul Programme of Action and endorsed by the General Assembly by its resolution 65/171 of 17 June 2011;

“17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session a progress report on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020.”

3. At its 37th meeting, on 1 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled “Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries” (A/C.2/66/L.61), submitted by the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Philippe Donckel (Luxembourg), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.8.

4. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.61.

5. Also at the same meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Committee, Philippe Donckel (Luxembourg), on behalf of the facilitator (Turkey) of draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.61, orally corrected the draft resolution, as follows:

(a) In operative paragraph 2, the words “European Union”, in parentheses, were deleted after the words “development partners”;

(b) In operative paragraph 8, the words “in an expeditious manner, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates” were added at the end of the paragraph.

6. Also at its 37th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.61, as orally corrected (see para. 10).

7. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Nepal (on behalf of the least developed countries) and the European Union (see A/C.2/66/SR.37).

8. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.61, draft resolution A/C.2/66/L.8 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft decision proposed by the Chair

9. At its 37th meeting, on 1 December, on the proposal of the Chair, the Committee decided to recommend that the General Assembly take note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Ten-year appraisal and review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010” (A/66/66-E/2011/78) (see para. 11).

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

10. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling the Istanbul Declaration¹ and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,² adopted by the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and endorsed by the General Assembly through its resolution 65/280 of 17 June 2011, in which the Assembly called upon all the relevant stakeholders to commit to implementing the Programme of Action,

Reaffirming the overarching goal of the Istanbul Programme of Action of overcoming the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, achieve internationally agreed development goals and enable graduation from the least developed country category,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2011/9 of 22 July 2011 on the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,

Recalling also General Assembly resolutions 59/209 of 20 December 2004 and 65/286 of 29 June 2011 on the importance of a smooth transition for countries graduating from the list of least developed countries, and reaffirming the aim of enabling half the least developed countries to meet the criteria for graduation by 2020,

Taking note of the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Meeting of the Least Developed Countries, held in New York on 26 September 2011,

Taking note also of the report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Istanbul from 9 to 13 May 2011,³

Recognizing the important contribution of civil society, the private sector and parliamentarians to the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and its preparatory process,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the outcome of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries;⁴

2. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, with the support of their development partners, to fulfil their commitments and to promote implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, including by integrating its provisions into their

¹ *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 11.II.A.I), chap. I.

² *Ibid.*, chap. II.

³ *Report of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Istanbul, Turkey, 9-13 May 2011* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 11.II.A.I).

⁴ A/66/134.

national policies and development framework and conducting regular reviews with the full involvement of all key stakeholders, and in this regard, invites the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, including United Nations regional and functional commissions, the United Nations resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams to actively support the integration and the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action;²

3. *Also calls upon* the least developed countries, in cooperation with their development partners, to broaden their existing country review mechanisms, including those for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, the implementation of poverty reduction strategy papers, common country assessments and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, and the existing consultative mechanisms to cover the review of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

4. *Further calls upon* the development partners to integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action into their respective national cooperation policy frameworks, programmes and activities, as appropriate, to ensure enhanced, predictable and targeted support to the least developed countries, as set out in the Istanbul Programme of Action, and the delivery of their commitments, and to consider appropriate measures to overcome shortfalls or shortcomings, if any;

5. *Invites* all organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions and international and regional financial institutions, to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and to integrate it into their programmes of work, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates, and to participate fully in its review at the national, subregional, regional and global levels;

6. *Calls upon* the developing countries, guided by the spirit of solidarity and consistent with their capabilities, to provide support for the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in mutually agreed areas of cooperation within the framework of South-South cooperation, which is a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation;

7. *Invites* the private sector, civil society and foundations to contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in their respective areas of competence in line with least developed countries' national priorities;

8. *Welcomes with appreciation* the decisions taken by the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Food Programme at their 2011 annual sessions to integrate the Istanbul Programme of Action within their respective programmes of work, welcomes with appreciation the adoption of a resolution by the Assemblies of States members of the World Intellectual Property Organization to mainstream the relevant parts of the Istanbul Programme of Action into various programmes of the organization, also welcomes the decision of the Trade and Development Board of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to mainstream the relevant provisions of the Istanbul Programme of Action into the work of the secretariat and its intergovernmental machinery, and in this regard invites the

governing bodies of all other United Nations funds and programmes and multilateral organizations to do the same in an expeditious manner, as appropriate and in accordance with their respective mandates;

9. *Calls upon* the least developed countries, their development partners, the United Nations system and all other actors to fully and effectively implement the commitments that have been made in the Istanbul Programme of Action in its eight priority areas, namely, productive capacity, agriculture, food security and rural development, trade, commodities, human and social development, multiple crises and other emerging challenges, mobilizing financial resources for development and capacity-building, and good governance at all levels, in a coordinated, coherent and expeditious manner;

10. *Expresses concern* that the ongoing impact of the economic and financial crisis demonstrates the need for appropriate regional and international support to be deployed in a timely and targeted manner to complement the efforts of the least developed countries aimed at building resilience in the face of economic shocks and mitigating their effects;

11. *Notes with appreciation* the efforts made by the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, including the work of the Inter-Agency Consultative Group and the development of a road map to coordinate the activities of the relevant United Nations system organizations for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action;

12. *Underlines* the need for giving particular attention to the issues and concerns of the least developed countries in all major United Nations conferences and processes;

13. *Notes* the ongoing preparatory process of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to undertake a joint gap and capacity analysis on a priority basis by 2013 with the aim of establishing a technology bank and science, technology and innovation supporting mechanism dedicated to least developed countries, building on the existing international initiatives;

15. *Recalls* that a smooth transition of countries graduating from least developed country status is vital to ensure that those countries are eased onto a path towards sustainable development without any abrupt disruption to their development plans, programmes and projects;

16. *Requests* the President of the General Assembly to establish, in consultation with Member States and the Secretary-General, an ad hoc working group to further study and strengthen the smooth transition process for the countries graduating from the least developed country category and to submit a report to the General Assembly during its sixty-seventh session with specific recommendations, consistent with the Istanbul Programme of Action;

17. *Encourages* Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, major groups and other donors to contribute to the Trust Fund in a timely manner to support the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action as well as the participation of the representatives

from the least developed countries in the annual review meeting on the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action by the Economic and Social Council as well as in other relevant forums, and in this regard, expresses its appreciation to those countries that have made voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund;

18. *Stresses* that the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should continue to fulfil its functions to assist the Secretary-General for the effective follow-up and monitoring of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action and the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the United Nations system with a view to facilitating the coordinated implementation of and coherence in the follow-up and monitoring of the Istanbul Programme of Action at the country, regional and global levels, and to assist in mobilizing international support and resources for the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, and to this end, it should continue its awareness-raising and advocacy work in favour of least developed countries in partnership with the relevant part of the United Nations, as well as with parliaments, civil society, the media, academia and foundations, and to provide appropriate support to group consultations of least developed countries;

19. *Underlines* that the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States should be provided with the necessary support to fulfil its mandate for the timely and effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, and recognizes that the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session, as requested in paragraph 155 of the Istanbul Programme of Action, will facilitate, inter alia, consideration by the Assembly of the ongoing resource requirements of the Office of the High Representative;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session a progress report on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020.

11. The Second Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the Secretary-General on the ten-year appraisal and review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

The General Assembly decides to take note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Ten-year appraisal and review of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010”.¹

¹ A/66/66-E/2011/78.