

2021

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*

Summary

On the theme of the Economic and Social Council for 2021, the Committee stressed that the COVID-

Public health response

Rapid universal vaccinations and equitable distribution to ensure the most vulnerable countries are not once again left behind, as well as to ensure the rapid end of the COVID-19 pandemic. The protection enabled by universal vaccination, a global public good, requires not only financial support for the procurement of vaccines but new multilateral arrangements to mobilize global production and ensure equitable access to critical global goods (vaccines, treatment and diagnostics), removing obstacles created by intellectual property rights, adopting measures to promote the sharing of technology, and mobilizing and expanding production capacities. In that respect, the Committee endorses the proposals submitted to the World Trade Organization (WTO)

Council for Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights by India and South Africa for a waiver from certain provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) in relation to prevention, containment and treatment of COVID-19;² such arrangements are urgently needed both in the context of the current pandemic and to allow the necessary policy space for countries to prepare for the threat of predicted future outbreaks of novel zoonotic diseases;

Dissemination of the lessons learned by developing countries, including least developed countries, that have successfully contained the spread of the virus through effective policy actions using public health measures;

Finance and debt relief

Effective debt relief for developing countries, particularly least developed countries and those in debt distress, extending beyond the suspension of debt service payments and including compulsory participation by all relevant bilateral and private creditors, as well as financial support from multilateral institutions to facilitate debt restructuring. Debt relief and restructuring should not come at the expense of credit ratings;

Support for initiatives to create dedicated funds to address the econo

Social protection, including labour rights and education

The strengthening of labour rights and social protection for all, with special consideration of informal sector workers, unpaid workers in the care economy, workers in the gig economy, the lowest paid and most vulnerable in global value chains and those unable to work, including through the promotion of a global fund to ensure universal social protection floors. Multinational corporations have a responsibility towards workers at all

levels of their global production chains and must respect labour rights and follow the UN Guidelines on Business and Human Rights.

Urgent action to reverse the dramatic effects of the pandemic on education, address digital inequalities, and take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the experiences with expanded and enhanced digital education during the pandemic.

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In its deliberations on the ECOSOC annual theme for 2021, the Committee found that the COVID-19 pandemic has jeopardized the possibility of countries achieving the SDGs. It found governments and the multilateral system unprepared to deliver on the fundamental objectives of

environments. They need to actively promote the development of productive capacities in a way that will ensure flexibility and resilience in a rapidly changing global industrial and technological context. Accordingly, the CDP advocates that productive capacity should be the framework for the next programme of action for LDCs.

safety, and thereby exacerbated already severe inequalities and vulnerabilities. Recovery from this unprecedented and multidimensional crisis should not aim to return to pre-crisis development patterns but to reframe the development paradigm towards equality, resilience and environmental sustainability. In Chapter I of this report, the Committee calls for priority action in four critical areas: the public health response; finance and debt relief; climate change; and social protection, including labour rights and education. Chapter III, which discusses the particular challenges of LDCs in this context, and Chapter VIII, which reflects on the lessons learned from the voluntary national reviews presented in 2020, annual theme.

In their efforts to recover from the crisis, governments can steer the direction of economic growth. In a context in which many companies require public support, governments are especially well positioned to reshape public-private relations to produce a dynamic economic system where innovation and investment are geared at

The Committee underscores the need to strengthen, in the narrative and policy advice on meeting the SDGs, the link between production structure and human

strongest determinant of its level of income, its income distribution, the quality of employment, the quality of the environment, the development of its institutions, and its prospects for future growth and development. Although aspects of productive capacity are reflected in a small number of SDG targets, the importance of structural transformation as a path to sustainable development also needs to be reinforced. It is not enough for countries to ensure friendly business