

Furthermore, in discussions on its possible contributions to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the Committee reiterated its proposal that the Conference adopt the theme “Expanding productive capacity for sustainable development” as the organizing framework for the new programme of action for the least developed countries. It also highlighted the relevance of its findings and recommendations regarding the impact of COVID 19 on least developed countries for the deliberations at the Conference. In addition, the Committee discussed the

importance of developing concrete international support measures for graduating and graduated countries. The Committee commended the work of its secretariat, undertaken in collaboration with partners and in the context of the graduation support facility. That facility is a useful framework for delivering coordinated and dedicated graduation-related capacity development support. The Committee appreciated the timely piloting of such support in the recently graduated country Vanuatu.

The Committee reviewed its possible contributions to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in January 2022. The Committee briefed the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council on its proposed contributions to the Conference and also considered those contributions as relevant to the twelfth Ministerial Conference of WTO and the fifteenth session of UNCTAD.

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The Committee underscored the importance of establishing appropriate international support measures for graduating and graduated countries to ensure that they are able to maintain their development progress, prepare for and manage graduation and build their resilience in order to transition smoothly beyond graduation, which will be even more challenging in the context of COVID-19.

The Committee reiterated the increased urgency of the proposals it had submitted to the Council in 2020, including in relation to:

- (a) Greater access to concessional development finance, including climate finance;
- (b) Fulfilment of ODA commitments;
- (c) Support for leveraging ODA flows to access additional public and private finance;
- (d) Increased coordination with international financial institutions;
- (e) Facilitation of South-South and triangular development cooperation.

The importance of the proposal submitted to the WTO General Council by Chad, the coordinator of the Group of Least Developed Countries in Geneva, on an effective smooth transition mechanism for graduating countries was also highlighted.² The proposal concerned the time-

bound extension of least developed country-specific special and differential treatment and preferential market ac

Development Centre in partnering with the Committee and its secretariat to conduct a Production Transformation Policy Review in Bangladesh with peer-to-peer learning as a key element.

Furthermore, the Committee welcomed the support of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States for the graduation

support facility. The Committee proposed that, in collaboration with the Office, the facility be introduced as an input to the preparatory process of the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at the Asia-Pacific Regional Review scheduled for 2021. The Committee also proposed to host a side event at the Conference in 2022, at which the facility could be formally launched.