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Social development: implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2019

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/74/391)*]

74/122. Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming all previous resolutions on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, including resolution [73/141](#) of 17 December 2018,

Recalling the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world”, held in Geneva from 26 June to 1 July 2000,

Reaffirming that the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development¹ and the further initiatives for social development adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth special session,² as well as a continued global dialogue on social development issues, constitute the basic framework for the promotion of social development for all at the national and international levels,

Welcoming the progress made towards the full implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action through concerted action at the national, regional and global levels, and expressing its deep concern that, more

¹ *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

² Resolution [S-24/2](#), annex.



than 20 years after the convening of the World Summit for Social Development, progress has been slow and uneven, and major gaps remain,

Welcoming also the adoption, in its entirety, of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,³ in which it is recognized that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

Welcoming further the convening in New York on 24 and 25 September 2019 of the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the General Assembly, and its political declaration,⁴ aiming to follow up and comprehensively review progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals,

Welcoming the adoption of the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage, held in New York on 23 September 2019, entitled “Universal health coverage: moving together to build a healthier world”,⁵

Reaffirming the need to achieve sustainable development by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities within and among countries, raising basic standards of living and fostering equitable and inclusive social development and the sustainable management of natural resources,

Recognizing that the three core themes of social development, namely, poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all and social integration, are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, and that an enabling environment therefore needs to be created so that all three objectives can be pursued simultaneously,

Emphasizing the need to enhance the role of the Commission for Social Development in the follow-up to and review of the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, and welcoming the decision of the Economic and Social Council that the Commission, given its mandates and experience in promoting people-centred inclusive development, will report on social aspects related to the agreed main theme of the Council in order to contribute to its work,⁶ including by offering inputs regarding the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a holistic and inclusive manner,

Welcoming the decision of the Economic and Social Council that the Commission for Social Development will consider one priority theme at each session on the basis of the follow-up to and review of the World Summit for Social Development and its linkages to the social dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, proposing an action-oriented resolution with recommendations to the Council in order to contribute to its work, and that the priority theme for the 2020 session, which shall allow the Commission to contribute to the work of the Council, will be “Affordable housing and social protection systems for all to address homelessness”,⁷

Recalling the ministerial declaration adopted at the high-level segment of the 2018 session of the Economic and Social Council on the annual theme “From global to local: supporting sustainable and resilient societies in urban and rural

³ Resolution 70/1.

⁴ Resolution 74/4, annex.

⁵ Resolution 74/2.

⁶ Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/6, para. 3.

⁷ Economic and Social Council resolution 2019/4, paras. 4 and 7.

communities” and the ministerial declaration of the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development, convened under the auspices of the Council, on the theme “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”,⁸

Reaffirming that the Declaration on the Right to Development⁹ also informs the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, along with other relevant instruments, such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,¹⁰ Agenda 2063 adopted by the African Union and the International Labour Organization Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization,¹¹ and reaffirming also the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Affirming its strong support for fair globalization and the need to translate growth into the reduction of inequalities, eradication of poverty and commitment to strategies and policies that aim to promote full, freely chosen and productive employment and decent work for all and that these strategies and policies should constitute fundamental components of relevant national and international policies and national development strategies, including inequality and poverty reduction strategies, reaffirming that employment creation and decent work for all should be incorporated into macroeconomic policies, taking fully into account the impact and social dimension of globalization, the benefits and costs of which are often unevenly shared and distributed, and noting in this regard that the decent work agenda of the International Labour Organization, with its four strategic objectives, has an important role to play in achieving the objective of social protection and elimination of inequalities, as reaffirmed in the International Labour Organization Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization,

Recognizing that social inclusion is a means for achieving social integration and is crucial for fostering stable, safe, harmonious, peaceful and just societies and for improving social cohesion so as to create an environment for development and progress and to leave no one behind,

Recognizing also that the remaining effects of the world financial and economic crisis have the potential to undermine progress towards achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, and threaten debt sustainability in many countries, especially developing countries,

Deeply concerned that extreme poverty and the feminization of poverty persist in all countries of the world, regardless of their economic, social and cultural situation, and that the extent and manifestations thereof, such as hunger and malnutrition, vulnerability to trafficking in persons, forced and child labour, disease, lack of adequate shelter and illiteracy, are heightened in developing countries and particularly severe in least developed countries, while acknowledging the significant progress made in several parts of the world in combating extreme poverty,

Stressing the importance of removing obstacles to the realization of the right of peoples to self-determination, in particular of peoples living under colonial or other forms of alien domination or foreign occupation, which adversely affect their social and economic development, including their exclusion from labour markets,

Stressing also the importance of establishing a just and lasting peace all over the world in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United

⁸ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-third Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/73/3)*, chap. VI, sect. F.

⁹ Resolution 41/128, annex.

¹⁰ Resolution 69/313, annex.

¹¹ A/63/538-E/2009/4, annex.

Nations, supporting all efforts to uphold the sovereign equality of all States and respect their territorial integrity and political independence, and refraining in international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations,

Recognizing in this regard the recent efforts to establish the Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development, which was held on 11 and 12 December 2019, under the theme “An agenda for sustainable peace, security and development in Africa”,

Recognizing also that terrorism, trafficking in arms, organized crime, trafficking in persons, money-laundering, ethnic and religious conflict, civil war, politically motivated killing and genocide pose increasing challenges to States and societies in the attainment of conditions conducive to social development, including reduction of inequalities, and that they further present urgent and compelling reasons for action by Governments individually and, as appropriate, jointly to foster social cohesion while recognizing, protecting and valuing diversity,

Recognizing further that, since the convening of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, advances have been made in addressing and promoting social integration, including through the adoption of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002,¹² the World Programme of Action for Youth,¹³ the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,¹⁴ the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples¹⁵ and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,¹⁶

Welcoming the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024), which urges Member States to promote the social development of people of African descent, particularly women and girls, by eradicating any form of discrimination, ensuring access to quality education and eliminating challenges and specific risks with regard to health,

Reaffirming the commitment to promoting the rights of indigenous peoples in the areas of education, employment, housing, sanitation, health and social protection and social security, and noting the attention paid to those areas in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

Reaffirming also the efforts of Governments to achieve all health-related Sustainable Development Goal targets, in particular Goal 3 of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all throughout the life course, by integrating those aims into their national plans and policies, as well as the significant progress made in increasing life expectancy, reducing maternal, newborn and child mortality and combating communicable diseases,

Recognizing that action to achieve universal health coverage by 2030 is inadequate and that the level of progress and investment to date is insufficient to meet target 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that the world has yet to fulfil its promise of implementing, at all levels, measures to address the health needs of all,

Recalling the outcome of the World Health Assembly held in May 2019, the agreement to accelerate and scale up action to prevent and treat non-communicable

¹² *Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 8–12 April 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.IV.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

¹³ Resolution 50/81, annex, and resolution 62/126, annex.

¹⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.

¹⁵ Resolution 61/295, annex.

¹⁶ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

diseases, the agreement on a common approach to antimicrobial resistance, the adoption of a new global strategy on health, the environment and climate change, and the adoption by the Assembly of the eleventh revision of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, which will go into effect on 1 January 2022,

Reaffirming the commitments made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all,

Noting with concern that, despite the progress achieved, at least half of the world's population lacks access to essential health services, more than 800 million people bear the burden of catastrophic spending of at least 10 per cent of their household income on health care and out-of-pocket expenses drive almost 100 million people into poverty each year,

Reaffirming education for sustainable development as a vital means of implementation for sustainable development, as outlined in the Aichi-Nagoya Declaration on Education for Sustainable Development,¹⁷ and as an integral element of the Sustainable Development Goal on quality education and a key enabler of all the other Goals, and welcoming the increased international recognition of education for sustainable development in quality education and lifelong learning,

Acknowledging the importance for achieving sustainable development of delivering quality education to all girls and boys, which will require reaching children living in extreme poverty, children with disabilities, migrant and refugee children and those in conflict and post-conflict situations and providing safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all, and recognizing the importance of scaling up investments and international cooperation to allow all children to complete free, equitable, inclusive and quality early childhood, primary and secondary education, including through scaling up and strengthening initiatives, such as the Global Partnership for Education, and by upgrading education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-sensitive and increasing the percentage of qualified teachers in developing countries, including through international cooperation, especially in the least developed countries and small island developing States,

Reiterating the contribution of education to eradicating poverty in all forms and dimensions by providing people with knowledge and skills, which increases productivity and income and helps in reducing inequality within countries,

Acknowledging the importance of adopting science, technology and innovation strategies as integral elements of national sustainable development strategies to help to strengthen knowledge-sharing and collaboration and the importance of scaling up investment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education and enhancing technical, vocational and tertiary education, distance education and training and of ensuring equal access for all women and girls and encouraging their participation therein,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹⁸

2. *Welcomes* the reaffirmation by Governments of their will and commitment to continue implementing the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,¹ in particular to promote equality and social justice, eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment and decent work for all and foster social integration to achieve stable,

¹⁷ A/70/228, annex.

¹⁸ A/74/205.

safe and just societies for all, and recognizes that the implementation of the Copenhagen commitments and the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals are mutually reinforcing;

3. *Reaffirms* its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,³ and its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced, holistic and integrated manner;

4. *Recognizes* that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, and encourages Member States to develop comprehensive, integrated and coherent poverty eradication strategies that effectively address the structural causes of poverty and inequality with an emphasis on job-rich growth; address and meet the basic human needs of people living in poverty; ensure their access to quality education, nutrition, health, water, sanitation, housing and other public social services, access to employment and decent work for all, as well as access to productive resources, including credit, land, training, technology and knowledge; and ensure their participation in decision-making on social and economic development policies and programmes in this regard;

5. *Emphasizes* that the major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, in its Monterrey Consensus,¹⁹ the 2005 World Summit, the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, in its Doha Declaration on Financing for Development,²⁰ the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, the 2013 special event to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the third International Conference on Financing for Development, in its Addis Ababa Action Agenda,¹⁰ and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, have reinforced the priority and urgency of the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions within the United Nations development agenda;

6. *Recognizes* the complex character of the ongoing food insecurity situation, including food price volatility, as a combination of several major factors, both structural and conjunctural, which is also negatively affected by, inter alia, environmental degradation, drought and desertification, global climate change, natural disasters, the lack of the necessary technology and armed conflicts, and also recognizes that a strong commitment from national Governments and the international community as a whole is required to confront the major threats to food security and to ensure that policies in the area of agriculture do not distort trade and worsen food insecurity;

7. *Reaffirms* the importance of supporting the African Union's development framework, Agenda 2063, as well as its 10-year plan of action, as a strategic framework for ensuring a positive socioeconomic transformation in Africa within the next 50 years, which is the African Union long-term strategy emphasizing industrialization, youth employment, improved natural resource governance and the reduction of inequalities, and its continental programme embedded in the resolutions

¹⁹ *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18–22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

²⁰ Resolution [63/239](#), annex.

of the General Assembly on the New Partnership for Africa's Development²¹ and regional initiatives, such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme;

8. *Stresses* that the benefits of economic growth should be inclusive and distributed more equitably and that, in order to close the gap of inequality and avoid any further deepening of inequality, comprehensive social policies and programmes, including appropriate social transfer and job creation programmes and social protection systems, are needed;

9. *Reaffirms* that social integration policies should seek to reduce inequalities, promote access to basic social services, quality education for all and health care, eliminate discrimination, increase the participation and integration of social groups, particularly young people, older persons and persons with disabilities, noting the role of sports in this regard, and address the challenges posed to social development by globalization and market-driven reforms in order for all people in all countries to benefit from globalization;

10. *Stresses* that an enabling environment is a critical precondition for achieving equity and social development and that, while economic growth is essential, entrenched inequality and marginalization are an obstacle to the broad-based and sustained growth required for sustainable, inclusive and people-centred development, and recognizes the need to balance and ensure complementarity between measures to achieve growth and measures to achieve economic and social equity and inclusion in order for there to be an impact on overall poverty levels;

11. *Acknowledges* that investment in human capital and social protection has been proven to be effective in reducing poverty and inequality, and invites Member States to mobilize innovative sources of financing, including through public-private partnerships, to secure adequate levels of social expenditure necessary for expanding coverage towards universal access to health education, innovation, new technologies and basic social protection and to address the issues of illicit financial flows and corruption;

12. *Stresses* that international trade and stable financial systems can be effective tools to create favourable conditions for the development of all countries and that trade barriers and some trading practices continue to have negative effects on employment growth, particularly in developing countries, that good governance and the rule of law at the national and international levels and the need to promote respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential for sustained economic growth, sustainable development, the reduction of inequalities, the eradication of poverty, hunger and malnutrition and for addressing the most pressing social needs of people living in poverty, and in this regard also stresses the importance of economic, social and cultural rights and the importance of the principles of non-discrimination, inclusivity and meaningful participation for the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development;

13. *Acknowledges* that inequalities persist within and among countries, posing significant challenges to social cohesion, reaffirms that the eradication of poverty, the promotion of prosperity, gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the reduction of inequality within and among countries are fundamental to achieving sustainable development for all, and that this requires collective and transformative efforts to leave no one behind and put the furthest behind first, and adapt institutions and policies to take into account the multidimensional nature of

²¹ [A/57/304](#), annex.

inequality and poverty and the inherent interlinkages between different Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

14. *Urges* Member States to strengthen social policies, as appropriate, paying particular attention to the specific needs of disadvantaged and marginalized social groups, inter alia, women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and other persons in vulnerable situations, as well as to address all forms of violence in its many manifestations, including domestic violence, and discrimination, including xenophobia, against them, to ensure that these groups are not left behind, and recognizes that violence increases the challenges faced by States and societies in the achievement of poverty eradication, full and productive employment and decent work for all, and social integration;

15. *Reaffirms* the commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, as well as to the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all development efforts, recognizing that they are critical for achieving sustainable development and for efforts to combat hunger and malnutrition, poverty and disease, to strengthening policies and programmes that improve, ensure and broaden the full participation of women in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life as equal partners and to improving the access of women to all resources needed for the full exercise of all their human rights and fundamental freedoms by removing persistent barriers and allocating adequate resources for the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against women, including in the workplace, inter alia, by addressing wage inequality, ensuring equal access to full and productive employment and decent work for all, reconciliation of work and private life for both men and women, as well as strengthening their economic independence;

16. *Recognizes* that youth participation is important for development, and urges Member States and United Nations entities, in consultation with youth and youth-led and youth-focused organizations, to explore and promote new avenues for the full, effective, structured and sustainable participation of young people and youth-led organizations in relevant decision-making processes and monitoring, in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life, including in designing and implementing policies, programmes and initiatives, in particular while implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

17. *Reaffirms* the right to food and acknowledges the importance of promoting sustainable farming and agriculture, and, recognizing the important contribution that family farming and smallholder farming can play in providing food security, reducing inequality in access to food and nutrition, calls upon Governments to ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round;

18. *Urges* Governments, with the cooperation of relevant entities, to establish nationally appropriate social protection that supports labour market participation and addresses and reduces inequality and social exclusion, and social protection systems and floors, including through streamlining fragmented social protection systems/programmes, ensuring that such programmes are gender-responsive and disability-sensitive, and progressively extend their coverage to all people throughout their life cycle, including for workers in the informal economy, invites the International Labour Organization, upon request, to support government efforts to strengthen social protection strategies and policies on extending social protection and social security coverage, urges Governments, while taking account of national circumstances, to focus on the needs of those living in, or vulnerable to, poverty and to give particular consideration to universal access to basic social security systems, including the implementation of social protection floors, which can provide a systemic base upon

which to address poverty and vulnerability, and in this regard takes note of the International Labour Organization recommendation on social protection floors;

19. *Stresses* the need to address challenges faced by those working in informal or vulnerable jobs, by investing in the creation of more decent work opportunities, including providing access to decent jobs in the formal sector in accordance with International Labour Organization recommendation No. 204 concerning the transition from the informal to the formal economy, and enhancing the productive capacities of people, and strengthen labour institutions and employment and labour-market policies, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of each country and by promoting close partnerships with relevant stakeholders;

20. *Urges* Member States to strengthen, as appropriate, the authority and capacity of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, at all levels, which should be placed at the highest possible level of government, with sufficient funding, and to mainstream a gender perspective across all relevant national and local institutions, including labour, economic and financial government agencies, in order to ensure that national planning, decision-making, policy formulation and implementation, budgeting processes and institutional structures contribute to women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work;

21. *Also urges* Member States to address the high rates of youth unemployment, underemployment, vulnerable employment, informal employment and young people not in employment, education or training by developing and implementing targeted and integrated local and national youth employment policies for inclusive, sustainable and innovative job creation, improved employability, skills development and vocational training to facilitate the transition from school to work and to increase the prospects for integrating youth into the sustainable labour market, and through increased entrepreneurship, including the development of networks of young entrepreneurs at the local, national, regional and global levels that foster knowledge among young people about their rights and responsibilities in society, and encourages Member States to invest in education, support lifelong learning and provide social protection for all youth and to request donors, specialized United Nations entities and the private sector to continue to provide assistance to Member States, including technical and funding support, as appropriate;

22. *Recognizes* that promoting full employment and decent work for all also requires investing in education, training and skills development for women and men, and girls and boys, strengthening social protection and health systems and applying international labour standards, and urges States and, as appropriate, the relevant entities of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, as well as civil society, the private sector, employer organizations, trade unions, the media and other relevant actors, to continue to develop and strengthen policies, strategies and programmes to enhance, in particular, the employability of women and youth and to ensure their access to full and productive employment and decent work for all, including by improving access to formal and non-formal education, skills development and vocational training, lifelong learning and retraining and long-distance education, inter alia, in information and communications technology and entrepreneurial skills, particularly in developing countries, including with a view to supporting the economic empowerment of women in the different stages of their lives;

23. *Reaffirms* the New Urban Agenda,²² which envisages cities and human settlements that fulfil their social function, including the social and ecological

²² Resolution 71/256, annex.

function of land, with a view to progressively achieving the full realization of the right to adequate housing, as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, without discrimination, universal access to safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation, as well as equal access for all to public goods and quality services in areas such as food security and nutrition, health, education, infrastructure, mobility and transportation, energy, air energy, air quality and livelihoods;

24. *Recognizes* that the negative effects of climate change and environmental disasters have differential impacts, with people in vulnerable situations, poor and rural communities and low-income countries being disproportionately exposed to floods, droughts and other natural disasters, and that they have a lower capacity and assets to recover from such external shocks, and expresses concern that climate change may cause high and volatile food and commodity prices and hit them hardest;

25. *Acknowledges* the important nexus between international migration and social development, and stresses the importance of effectively enforcing labour laws with regard to labour relations and working conditions of migrant workers, inter alia, those related to their remuneration and conditions of health, safety at work and the right to freedom of association;

26. *Reaffirms* that social development requires the active involvement of all actors in the development process, including civil society organizations, corporations, the public sector and small businesses, and that partnerships among all relevant actors within countries are increasingly becoming part of national and international cooperation for social development, also reaffirms that, within countries, partnerships among the Government, civil society and the private sector can contribute effectively to the achievement of social development goals, and acknowledges the role of the public and private sectors as employers and enablers for the effective generation of new investments, full and productive employment and decent work for all, including through partnerships with the United Nations system, civil society and academia;

27. *Stresses* the importance of the policy space and leadership of national Governments for implementing policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development, while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments, in particular in the areas of human rights, social expenditure and social protection programmes, and calls upon international financial institutions and donors to support developing countries in achieving their social development, in line with their national priorities and strategies, by, among other things, providing debt relief within the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

28. *Underlines* the responsibility of the private sector, at both the national and the international levels, including small and large companies and transnational corporations, regarding not only the economic and financial implications but also the development, social, gender and environmental implications of their activities, their obligations towards their workers and their contributions to achieving sustainable development, including social development, emphasizes that transnational corporations and other business enterprises have a responsibility to respect human rights, applicable laws and international principles and standards, to operate transparently, in a socially and environmentally responsible manner, and to refrain from affecting the well-being of peoples, and also emphasizes the need to take further concrete actions on corporate responsibility and accountability, including through the participation of all relevant stakeholders, inter alia, for the prevention or prosecution of corruption, and to prevent human rights abuses;

Universal access to health care

29. *Reaffirms* the necessity of improving availability, affordability and efficiency of health products by increasing transparency of prices of medicines, vaccines, medical devices, diagnostics, assistive products, cell- and gene-based therapies and other health technologies across the value chain, including through improved regulations and building constructive engagement and a stronger partnership with relevant stakeholders, including industries, the private sector and civil society, in accordance with national and regional legal frameworks and contexts, to address the global concern about the high prices of some health products, and in this regard encourages the World Health Organization to continue its efforts to biennially convene the Fair Pricing Forum with Member States and all relevant stakeholders to discuss the affordability and transparency of prices and costs relating to health products;

30. *Recognizes* that health is an investment in human capital and social and economic development, towards the full realization of human potential, and significantly contributes to the promotion and protection of human rights and dignity as well as the empowerment of all people;

31. *Welcomes* the renewed commitment in the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage⁵ to achieve universal health coverage, which implies that all people have access, without discrimination, to nationally determined sets of the needed promotive, preventive, curative, rehabilitative and palliative essential health services, and essential, safe, affordable, effective and quality medicines and vaccines, while ensuring that the use of these services does not expose the users to financial hardship, with a special emphasis on those who are marginalized;

32. *Reaffirms* that achieving universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all, is essential to eradicate poverty, and reduce inequality and achieve sustainable development for all;

33. *Acknowledges* that expanding health care is a challenge, as well as the rising cost of medications and health products is threatening the sustainability of health systems in many countries, and stresses the responsibility of States to ensure access to all, without discrimination of any kind, of medicines, in particular essential medicines, that are affordable, safe, effective and of quality;

34. *Expresses concern* at the global shortfall of 18 million health workers, primarily in low- and middle income countries, recognizes the need to train, build and retain a skilled health workforce, including nurses, midwives and community health workers, who are an important element of strong and resilient health systems, and also recognizes that increased investment in a more effective and socially accountable health workforce can unleash significant socioeconomic gains and contribute to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, the empowerment of all women and girls and the reduction of inequality;

35. *Calls upon* States, at the international level, to take steps, individually and/or through international cooperation, in accordance with applicable international law, including international agreements, to ensure that their actions as members of international organizations take into due account the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and that the application of international agreements is supportive of public health policies that promote broad access to safe, effective and affordable medicines;

36. *Encourages* all States to apply measures and procedures for enforcing intellectual property rights in such a manner as to avoid creating barriers to the legitimate trade in medicines, and to provide for safeguards against the abuse of such measures and procedures;

37. *Calls upon* Member States to make greater investments and promote decent work in the health and social sectors, enable safe working environments and conditions, effective retention and equitable and broad distribution of the health workforce, and strengthen capacities to optimize the existing health workforce, including through expanding rural and community-based health education and training to contribute to the achievement of universal health coverage;

38. *Encourages* Governments to end all forms of malnutrition, including the internationally agreed targets on stunting and wasting in children under 5 years of age, and address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons;

Universal and equitable access to education

39. *Welcomes* the rapid expansion in school enrolment worldwide, with literacy rates rising steadily over the past 50 years to reach 68 per cent in 2016, and the improvement in the access to early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary and distance education and throughout the life course, and calls upon the international community to provide inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels so that all people may have access to lifelong learning opportunities that help them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities to participate fully in society;

40. *Recognizes* the limited access to and high rates of dropout from school and secondary education, the increased rates of exclusion from education with age and the existence of large disparities in school attendance and learning acquisition by region, wealth, sex, urban or rural residence and other factors such as indigenous identity or disability, underscoring the challenges ahead, and also recognizes that poverty may affect access to quality education at the secondary and tertiary levels;

41. *Also recognizes* that factors such as poverty, residing in a rural area or having a disability all too often prevent children and adolescents from accessing quality education, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels;

42. *Encourages* all States to measure progress in the realization of the right to education, such as by developing national indicators as an important tool for the realization of the right to education and for policy formulation, impact assessment and transparency;

43. *Encourages* States to increase investments and international cooperation to allow all girls and boys to complete free, equitable, inclusive and quality early childhood, primary and secondary education, including by scaling up and strengthening initiatives, such as the Global Partnership for Education, and to explore additional innovative mechanisms based on models combining public and private resources, while ensuring that all education providers give due respect to the right to education;

44. *Urges* States to support the efforts of developing countries, in particular least developed countries, to realize progressively the right to education, including the progressive realization of the equal enjoyment of the right to education by every girl through appropriate resources, including financial and technical resources, in support of country-led national education plans;

45. *Reaffirms* the right to education, and calls upon the international community to provide universal access to inclusive, equal and non-discriminatory quality education at all levels – early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary and distance education, including technical and vocational training – as well as to promote the completion of primary and secondary education so that all people may have access to lifelong learning opportunities that help them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities to participate fully in society and contribute to sustainable development;

46. *Recognizes* that substantial and efficiently spent investments are needed to improve the quality of education and vocational training and in order to enable millions of people to acquire skills for decent work, and takes note with appreciation of the report of the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity and the recommendations contained therein, as appropriate;

47. *Urges* Member States to promote and respect women's right to education throughout the life course at all levels, especially for those who have been left furthest behind, and eliminate gender disparities in access to all areas of secondary and tertiary education, promote financial literacy and inclusion, digital literacy and entrepreneurship, ensure that women and girls have equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships and adopt positive action to build women's and girls' leadership skills and influence, and adopt measures that promote, respect and guarantee the safety of women and girls in the school environment and that support women and girls with disabilities at all levels of education and training;

International cooperation

48. *Reaffirms* that international cooperation has an essential role in assisting developing countries, including the least developed and middle-income countries, in strengthening their human, institutional and technological capacity;

49. *Underlines* that South-South cooperation is an important element of international cooperation for development as a complement to, not a substitute for, North-South cooperation, recognizes its increased importance, different history and particularities, and stresses that it should be seen as an expression of solidarity among peoples and countries of the South, based on their shared experiences and objectives, and that it should continue to be guided by the principles of respect for national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit;

50. *Emphasizes* that international public finance plays an important role in complementing the efforts of countries to mobilize public resources domestically, especially in the poorest and the most vulnerable countries with limited domestic resources, and that an important use of international public finance, including official development assistance, is to catalyse the mobilization of additional resources from other public and private sources, and notes that official development assistance providers have reaffirmed their respective commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries;

51. *Welcomes* the increase in the volume of official development assistance since the adoption of the Monterrey Consensus, expresses its concern that many countries still fall short of their official development assistance commitments, reiterates that the fulfilment of all official development assistance commitments remains crucial, commends those few countries that have met or surpassed their commitment to 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development

assistance and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries, urges all other countries to step up efforts to increase their official development assistance and to make additional concrete efforts towards the official development assistance targets, welcomes the decision by the European Union reaffirming its collective commitment to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance within the time frame of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and undertaking to meet collectively the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries in the short term and to reach 0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries within the time frame of the 2030 Agenda, and encourages official development assistance providers to consider setting a target to provide at least 0.20 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance to the least developed countries;

52. *Stresses* the essential role that official development assistance plays in complementing, leveraging and sustaining financing for development efforts in developing countries and in facilitating the achievement of development objectives, including the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Sustainable Development Goals, and welcomes steps to improve the effectiveness and quality of aid based on the fundamental principles of national ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability;

53. *Welcomes* the contribution to the mobilization of resources for social development by the initiatives taken on a voluntary basis by groups of Member States based on innovative financing mechanisms, including those that aim to provide further access to drugs at affordable prices to developing countries on a sustainable and predictable basis, such as the International Drug Purchase Facility, UNITAID, as well as other initiatives such as the International Finance Facility for Immunization and the Advance Market Commitment for Vaccines;

54. *Encourages* Governments to support the research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health, which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights regarding flexibilities to protect public health, and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all;

55. *Stresses* that the international community shall enhance its efforts to create an enabling environment for social development and poverty eradication through increasing market access for developing countries, technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, financial aid and a comprehensive solution to the external debt problem;

56. *Reaffirms* that each country has the primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized, and underlines the importance of adopting effective measures, including new financial mechanisms, as appropriate, to support the efforts of developing countries to achieve sustained economic growth, sustainable development, poverty eradication and the strengthening of their democratic systems;

57. *Stresses* that the international community should support national commitments to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions with the goal to ensure that no one is left behind, and recognizes the need for greater international cooperation to further reduce inequality between and within countries and increase

capacity-building support to countries with the most constrained resources to ensure that social expenditures meet certain targets;

58. *Reconfirms* the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and recognizes the need to take steps to significantly increase investment to close resource gaps, including through the mobilization of financial resources from all sources, including public, private, domestic and international resource mobilization and allocation;

59. *Reaffirms* that the Commission for Social Development, as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council, in promoting the integrated treatment of social development issues in the United Nations system, shall review, on a periodic basis, issues related to the follow-up to and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action, in a manner consistent with the functions and contributions of the relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, and shall advise the Council thereon;

60. *Also reaffirms* that the Commission for Social Development continues to have the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and review of the World Summit for Social Development and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly,² and that it serves as the main United Nations forum for an intensified global dialogue on social development issues, and calls upon Member States, the relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and civil society to enhance their support for its work;

61. *Further reaffirms* the mandate of the Commission for Social Development and that social development is a cross-cutting element in discussions surrounding the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and calls upon Member States, the relevant specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, civil society and relevant stakeholders to enhance their support for the high-level political forum on sustainable development as it builds upon the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, including the Commission, while reflecting the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the interlinkages between them;

62. *Requests* the United Nations funds, programmes and agencies to continue to support national efforts of Member States to achieve inclusive social development in a coherent and coordinated manner, to mainstream the goal of full and productive employment and decent work for all into their policies, programmes and activities, as well as to support efforts of Member States aimed at achieving this objective, and invites financial institutions to support efforts in this regard;

63. *Stresses* the importance of the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, and invites all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations development system and the specialized agencies, regional commissions and other international organizations, as well as civil society and private sector organizations, to actively promote and undertake activities during 2020 to support an appropriate celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the World Summit within existing resources;

64. *Decides* to devote one high-level meeting of the General Assembly, within existing resources, at its seventy-fifth session, in 2020, to the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, in order to celebrate the progress made so far and to further strengthen the role of social development beyond 2020, and requests the President of the General Assembly to conduct consultations with Member States in order to determine the modalities for that meeting;

65. *Invites* the Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Council, the regional commissions, the relevant specialized agencies, the funds and programmes

of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental forums, within their respective mandates, to continue to integrate into their work programmes and give priority attention to the Copenhagen commitments and the Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development,²³ to continue to be actively involved in their follow-up and to monitor the achievement of those commitments and undertakings;

66. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development to give appropriate consideration to the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development by organizing a meeting during the regular programme of work of the substantive session of the Council and a half-day meeting during the fifty-eighth session of the Commission, within existing resources;

67. *Calls upon* the Commission for Social Development to continue to address inequality in all its dimensions, in the context of the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action, as well as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and invites the Commission to emphasize the increased exchange of national, regional and international experiences, the focused and interactive dialogues among experts and practitioners and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned;

68. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue engaging with Member States to sustain and further strengthen the political momentum on health-related issues, including the realization of universal health coverage and, in close collaboration with relevant United Nations agencies and other stakeholders, including regional organizations, to strengthen existing initiatives that are led and coordinated by the World Health Organization to provide assistance to Member States, upon their request, towards the achievement of universal health coverage and all health-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals;

69. *Calls upon* the international community to provide inclusive and equitable quality education at all levels throughout the life course – early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary and distance education, including technical and vocational training – so that all people, particularly those in vulnerable situations, may have access to lifelong learning opportunities that help them to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to exploit opportunities to participate fully in society and contribute to sustainable development;

70. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-fifth session, under the item entitled “Social development”, the sub-item entitled “Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly”, with a particular focus on significant increase and/or more efficient utilization of the resources allocated to social development in order to achieve the goals of the World Summit through national action and regional and international cooperation, and requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on the question to the Assembly at that session.

*50th plenary meeting
18 December 2019*

²³ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 6 (E/2005/26)*, chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council decision 2005/234.