

Statement of the Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries

ECOSOC Coordination Segment – Panel on People-centered and inclusive recovery of from the pandemic, including through strengthening social protection

3rd February 2022, 10:15 am to 11:30 am, General Assembly Hall

Your Excellency,

I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries, composed of Armenia, Belarus, Chile, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Panama, Peru, The Philippines, and my own country, Colombia.

The Group commends your efforts in organizing the first ECOSOC Coordination Segment. We trust that the Segment will provide political guidance to the subsidiary bodies and specialized agencies to strengthen coherence in implementing the 2030 Agenda and expect that key messages and recommendations duly inform the preparation of the High-Level Political Forum and the Ministerial Declaration.

Excellencies and colleagues,

A people-centered response to the COVID-19 pandemic requires the full immunization of the global population at the earliest, especially people in vulnerable situation and at higher risk. We recall “the Political Declaration on Equitable Global Access to COVID-19 Vaccines”, reiterating that COVID-19 vaccines must be treated as a global public good for health by ensuring affordable, equitable and fair access to vaccines for all, without any kind of discrimination.

Middle-income countries vaccination ratio remains well below higher-income countries. Therefore, it is critical to attend the Secretary General’s call for vaccine equity and ensure coordination between UN system agencies and relevant stakeholders to enhance the distribution of vaccines in middle-income countries, particularly through COVAX facility

and the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT), which needs to be strengthened in order to fulfill its potential.

Innovative solutions must be carried out to scale-up production of vaccines in developing countries, including through the dissemination of technology and know-how in accordance with World Trade Organization rules, using flexibilities to the TRIPS Agreement.

Your Excellency,

As a Group, we will continue to advocate for solutions with context-tailored approaches that will allow middle-income countries to overcome the middle-income trap to achieve an inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery.

We call on ECOSOC to upscale its support to Middle-income countries to overcome their multidimensional challenges such as weak or severely impacted health and education systems, high levels of indebtedness and limited fiscal space, dependence on imports of food and essential medicines, large influx of refugees, inclusion of migrant workers in the COVID19 response efforts, access to concessional finance, humanitarian assistance, funds and recovery programs from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We look forward to the discussions on the “Our Common Agenda” report and the convening of the High-Level Thematic Debate on Galvanizing Momentum for Universal Vaccination, which will be critical to achieve our purpose: “no one is safe, until everybody is safe”.

I thank you.