

Draft - Ministerial Declaration of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable
Development and the ECOSOC High Level Segment

"Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world"

*"Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable
development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges"*

We, the Ministers and high representatives, having met at the United Nations Headquarters in
New York,

[Introduction and framing]

1. Reaffirm our commitment to effectively realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for all people everywhere, ensuring that no one is left behind. We stress that the 2030 Agenda is people-centered, planet sensitive, universal and transformative and that its Sustainable Development Goals are integrated, indivisible and balances the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economic, social and environmental. We reaffirm all the principles recognized in the 2030 Agenda, and emphasize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. We welcome efforts at all levels to implement the 2030 Agenda and recognize that after almost two years of implementation our individual and collective efforts have yielded encouraging results in many areas. We acknowledge, at the same time, that the pace of implementation must be accelerated as the tasks facing us are urgent, and that action is imperative for securing our objectives for people, planet, peace, prosperity and partnership;

2. Recognize that eradicating poverty requires transformative efforts, putting the furthest behind first and adapting institutions and policies to take into account the multidimensional nature of poverty and the inherent interlinkages between different goals and targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. People who are vulnerable must be empowered, including all children, adolescents, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees and internally displaced persons, migrants and peoples living in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies and in areas affected by terrorism and conflict. We stress that collective action can promote policy integration, facilitate inclusive partnerships and provide support for poverty eradication;

3. Highlight in this regard the need to end poverty, hunger and ill health everywhere; establish the conditions to maintain this outcome across generations; combat inequalities within and among countries; and heal and secure our planet. We emphasize our commitment to a world in which every country enjoys inclusive and sustainable economic growth, leading to decent work for all. We will protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing natural resources, and taking urgent action on climate change. We will also foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights, including the right to development, on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions. Factors which give rise to violence,

insecurity and injustice, such as inequality, discrimination, corruption, poor governance and illicit financial and arms flows, are addressed in the 2030 Agenda. We must redouble our efforts to resolve or prevent conflict and to support post-conflict countries, including by ensuring that women have a role in peacebuilding and State-building. We call for further effective measures and actions to be taken, in conformity with international law, to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the right of self-determination of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation, which continue to adversely affect their economic and social development as well as their environment;

4. Commit to a world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. The feminization of poverty persists, and the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is an indispensable requirement for women's economic empowerment and sustainable development. We stress the mutually reinforcing links between the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and the eradication of poverty. We also stress the need to ensure an adequate standard of living for women and girls throughout the life cycle, including through social protection systems;

5. Recognizing the valued existing and potential contributions made by persons with disabilities to human, social and economic advances within society and the eradication of poverty, while also underlining the necessity of investing in their full inclusion in society. We urge Member States to introduce measures and policies to ensure that persons with disabilities are protected from poverty and benefit equally from mainstream poverty alleviation, development and wealth-creation programmes, further to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to education, employment, health services, information and technology, inclusive infrastructure as well as disaster risk reduction programmes and early warning systems.

6. Recognize children, adolescents and youth, including youth with disabilities, as important agents of change and underline the necessity of investing in them and protecting them from violence and coercion with a view to addressing multidimensional deprivations, ending intergenerational poverty, and empowering them to build a more prosperous future. We call on all Member States to ensure that youth education, skill development and employment are at the center of our priorities to enable them to fulfil their potential as active members of society. We also commit to include youth and children's perspectives in the development and assessment of strategies and programmes designed to address their specific needs and underscore the importance of supporting young people's full participation in the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda;

7. Commit to embrace diversity, to strengthen social cohesion, intercultural dialogue and understanding, tolerance, mutual respect, gender equality, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, inclusion, identity, safety, and the dignity of all people, and to take steps to ensure that institutions at all levels promote pluralism and peaceful co-existence within increasingly heterogeneous and multi-cultural societies in our effort to leave no one behind;

8. Recognize that delivering on the 2030 Agenda means addressing complex policy interlinkages and building synergies across all dimensions of sustainable development. We

underline that policy integration and coherence requires engagement by all stakeholders and that it is key to unlocking opportunities for poverty eradication at all levels;

[SDGs under review, as well as SDG 17]

9. Note with appreciation the Report of the Secretary General on the progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which provides an evidence base for our review. We acknowledge that while global progress is evident in many cases, it is uneven across countries and regions and also insufficient across many targets and indicators;

10. Reiterate that the integrated and unified nature of the Sustainable Development Goals makes it essential that we pay particular attention towards leveraging synergies and co-benefits, while avoiding or minimising trade-offs. The indivisible and interlinked nature of the goals and targets guides and informs the in-depth review by the High Level Political Forum;

11. [SDG1] Acknowledge that while extreme poverty has fallen globally, progress has been uneven, and 1.6 billion people still live in multidimensional poverty. We are still far from implementing social protection measures for all – only one in five receive any kind of benefit in low income countries and two in three in upper-middle-income countries. There are poor people in every part of the world, but disproportionately concentrated in rural areas; and in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, in both LDCs and MICs. With many overlapping deprivations, children and young persons, as well as persons with disabilities, are especially at risk of being trapped in intergenerational cycles of poverty. We urge that countries, in the context of their own national plans and programmes, include measures that will amplify the poverty eradicating impact of actions taken to achieve other Sustainable Development Goals, identify populations most at risk of remaining in or falling back into poverty and place special focus on reaching them; and develop appropriate mechanisms to strengthen institutions serving those affected by conflict, fragility and forced displacement. We stress the importance of taking targeted measures to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, and of implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including social protection floors, based on national priorities, paying particular attention to women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

12. [SDG2] Note with concern that an estimated 793 million people are still undernourished globally, and 155 million children are stunted, and other forms of malnutrition are rising. Climate change and unsustainable agricultural practices are increasing the vulnerability of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, to extreme weather events. Resilient, sustainable and inclusive food systems that protect natural resources, sustain rural and urban livelihoods, and provide access to nutritious foods from smallholder producers, must be at the heart of efforts to simultaneously eradicate poverty and hunger, ensure adequate nutrition and promote prosperity. Climate adaptation measures involving responsible investments in sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries can have positive impacts. Coherent policies and accountable institutions that respect tenure rights and prioritize women's empowerment and gender equality are imperative. We need to urgently and effectively respond to rising crises and emergency levels of food insecurity now affecting millions of people, especially for those people that are facing famine or the immediate risk of famine;

13. [SDG3] Emphasize that investment in accessible health systems contributes to reducing inequality, sustainable and inclusive economic growth, social development, environmental protection, and to the eradication of poverty and hunger. We recognize that while impressive advancements have been made on many fronts, progress must be accelerated to achieve the health related goals and targets. We are concerned that major challenges remain on many fronts, including universal and inclusive access to quality health care, universal and inclusive access to sexual and reproductive health-care services and promoting mental health. We must step up our efforts to combat communicable diseases where achievements are gravely challenged, inter alia, by antimicrobial resistance. We must also act to address the global burden and threat of non-communicable diseases, which constitute a major challenge for sustainable development in all countries. We must strengthen our preparedness to respond to epidemic outbreaks. We highlight the importance of strengthening inclusive and accessible health systems and promoting investment in scientific research and innovation to meet the health challenges of today and tomorrow;

14. [SDG5] Recognize and are concerned that gender inequality persists worldwide, depriving women and girls of their basic rights and opportunities. Violence against all women and girls in private and public spaces is a persistent challenge that no country has managed to eliminate. There are mutually reinforcing links between the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the eradication of poverty. Stepped up efforts are required to ensure women's full, equal and effective participation and leadership at all levels, in all areas, and in all efforts aimed at the eradication of poverty and promoting prosperity. We reiterate the urgency of addressing structural barriers to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, such as discriminatory laws and policies, gender stereotypes, harmful practices and negative social norms and attitudes. In this regard, we also recognize the special challenges of women and girls with disabilities who often face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Action is needed to address gender pay gaps, which remain pervasive across regions and sectors. We also underscore that all other Sustainable Development Goals need to be implemented in a manner that delivers results for women and girls. We urge that countries fully integrate gender equality strategies into national sustainable development frameworks so as to promote greater policy coherence;

15. [SDG9] Emphasize that infrastructure, industry, and innovation are strongly connected and share the common goal of achieving socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic development and contribute to poverty eradication. We underline that poor access to infrastructure, notably for transportation, electricity and energy more generally, ICTs and marketing, remains a major impediment and barrier to inclusive development, diversification, and value addition in many parts of the world. Effective solutions to achieve resilient and accessible infrastructure development include stronger coordinated partnerships at all levels, as well as development of risk mitigation measures and expertise. We recognize that inclusive, accessible and sustainable industrialization is integral for the structural transformation of economies in order to create decent jobs, promote productivity growth, enhance incomes and achieve sustainable development for all. We highlight the importance of innovation-driven development and the growth of micro, small and medium enterprises so as to increase employment in all sectors;

16. [SDG14] Possess a strong conviction that our ocean is critical to our shared future and common humanity in all its diversity. It contributes to sustainable development and sustainable ocean-based economies, as well as to poverty eradication, food security and nutrition, maritime trade and transportation, decent work and livelihoods. We are alarmed by

the adverse impacts of climate change on the ocean, including the rise in ocean temperatures, ocean acidification and sea-level rise as well as by the threats caused by marine- and land-based activities. We are committed to halting and reversing the decline in the health and productivity of our ocean and its ecosystems and to protecting and restoring its resilience and ecological integrity. We welcome the outcome of the United Nations Conference to Support Implementation of SDG14. We call on all stakeholders to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development by urgently undertaking, inter alia, the actions highlighted in the "Call for Action" adopted during that Conference and by implementing voluntary commitments pledged during the Conference;

17. [SDG17] Recognize that despite some positive developments, a stronger commitment to partnership and cooperation is needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. That effort will require coherent policies and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors. We emphasize that the scale and level of ambition of the 2030 Agenda require strengthening and promoting effective and transparent multi-stakeholder partnerships, including public-private partnerships, by enhancing engagement of governments with global, regional and sub-regional bodies and programmes, the scientific community, the private sector, donor community, non-governmental organizations, community groups, academic institutions, and other relevant actors. We stress that strengthened multi-stakeholder partnerships that are cross-sectoral and effectively integrated, while being aligned with United Nations values and complementary to national efforts, are instrumental for contributing to achieving poverty eradication in all its forms and the related Sustainable Development Goals. To this end, we encourage the UN system to enhance its collaboration with partners, and to share knowledge and best practices in partnership approaches with a view to improving transparency, coherence, due diligence, accountability and impact;

[Means of implementation, including financing for development, science, technology, and innovation]

18. Reiterate that the required revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development should facilitate an intensive global engagement in support of the implementation of all Sustainable Development Goals. We are fully committed to realizing this aim, working together with all stakeholders. International public finance plays an important role in complementing the efforts of countries to mobilize public resources domestically, especially in the poorest and most vulnerable countries with limited domestic resources. We note, in this regard, the increase in blended finance strategies through partnerships with the private sector, aimed at scaling up the amount of capital that can be mobilized to support public investment projects. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda, and, in this regard, we welcome the holding of the second ECOSOC forum on financing for development, and take into account its inter-governmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations;

19. Emphasize that harnessing the potential of science, technology and innovation, closing technology gaps and scaling up capacity-building at all levels is essential to achieving sustainable development and poverty eradication. We also emphasize that the spread of information and communications technology and global interconnectedness has great potential to accelerate human progress, to bridge the digital divide and to develop knowledge societies, as does scientific and technological innovation across areas as diverse as medicine and energy. In this regard, we welcome the progress made in operationalizing the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and also welcome the progress made in operationalizing the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and encourage continued support. We

urge strengthened dialogue between stakeholders and Governments and the promotion of an environment conducive to sharing and exchanging ideas and success stories and catalysing new initiatives and partnerships to ensure the advancement of quality, affordable and accessible technology and innovation including for persons with disabilities. We recognize that the creation, development and diffusion of innovations and new technologies and associated know-how are powerful drivers of economic growth and sustainable development. We acknowledge both the transformative and disruptive potential of new technologies, particularly advances in automation, on our labour markets and on the jobs of the future and, in this regard, seek to prepare our societies and economies for these effects;

[Countries in special situations]

20. Reiterate that each country faces specific challenges in its pursuit of sustainable development. The most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States deserve special attention, as do countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. Common challenges across LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS include structural rigidities, levels of indebtedness, low share of global trade, remoteness, poor infrastructure development, low productivity, jobless growth, and limited resilience to the impact of internal and external shocks including the impact of climate change, desertification and land degradation. There are also serious developmental challenges faced by many middle-income countries;

[Follow-up and review]

21. Welcome the appointment of the 15 eminent scientists who will draft the quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report which will inform the 2019 High-Level Political Forum and strengthen the science-policy interface at all levels;

22. Commend the 44 countries that conducted Voluntary National Reviews at the 2017 High-Level Political Forum. They have shared valuable lessons learned, as well as challenges encountered. We are encouraged that the reviews provide examples of effective involvement of a wide variety of stakeholders in their Voluntary National Review processes, both in the preparations and in their presentations. We acknowledge that countries have established a range of mechanisms to facilitate coordination, including as cross-sectoral government working groups, multi-stakeholder committees, and high-level coordinators. We note that the Voluntary National Reviews highlight the importance of support and leadership at the highest level, localization of the Sustainable Development Goals in national development plans and strategies, and the importance of the involvement of local authorities. We stress the importance of building national capacities for follow-up and review, and the usefulness of making assistance available for preparing for the Voluntary National Reviews. We encourage all Member States to make best use of the lessons learnt from the review process to enhance their national implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to consider presenting Voluntary National Reviews at the High-Level Political Forum;

23. Welcome the various inputs to the High-Level Political Forum from the ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums, as well as the major groups and other stakeholders, which provide important expert knowledge on this year's theme as well as the goals under review;

24. Also welcome the inputs from the 2017 regional forums for sustainable development which provide useful opportunities for regional cooperation and peer learning, reviews, sharing of best practices and discussion among a variety of stakeholders. We acknowledge the importance of the regional dimension of sustainable development and invite the United Nations regional commissions to continue to contribute to the work of the High-Level Political Forum including with the involvement of relevant stakeholders and other regional and sub-regional forums, as appropriate;

25. Stress that climate change presents the single biggest threat to development, and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable. We welcome the Paris Agreement, and its early entry into force, encourage all its parties to fully implement the Agreement, and parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that have not yet done so to deposit their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, where appropriate, as soon as possible. We recognize the need for an effective and progressive response to the urgent threat of climate change on the basis of the best available science. We acknowledge the importance of continued support for and international cooperation on adaptation and mitigation efforts and on strengthening resilience. We stress the importance of adequate and predictable financial resources from a variety of sources, including public and private ones. We highlight the specific needs and special circumstances of developing countries, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Effective and inclusive disaster risk management contributes to sustainable development. We underline the importance of strengthening accessible disaster risk reduction and early warning systems, in order to minimize the consequences of disasters;

26. Stress the need for improved and coordinated collection, analysis, dissemination and use of statistics and high-quality, accessible, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts. We acknowledge that the Voluntary National Reviews reflect this as a persistent challenge and we invite countries to further strengthen collaboration at bilateral, regional and global levels for capacity building and sharing of best practices in this regard. Additionally, we note the importance of data-driven decision making, innovation, and the need to build capacity for producing, analysing and using various forms of data, both quantitative and qualitative, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In this regard, we welcome the adoption of the Global Indicator Framework that has been agreed by the Statistical Commission and look forward to its implementation and continual improvement in an inclusive manner;

27. Highlight the importance of localizing and communicating the Sustainable Development Goals at all levels, from the national discussions to the community and grassroots level. In this vein, there can be no effective implementation where no awareness exists, and efforts should be made to reach out to all stakeholders, including local authorities, indigenous peoples, civil society, business, the private sector, the media, parliamentarians, and the scientific and academic community;

28. Recognize the role of the United Nations system in supporting countries in their efforts to implement and achieve the 2030 Agenda while implementing international and legally binding human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention to Eliminate all Discrimination Against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. In this regard, we note the importance of repositioning

the United Nations so that it is fit for purpose, and encourage the UN development system to improve its collective and inclusive support for the realization of the 2030 Agenda. We take note of the Secretary-General's recommendations to address gaps and overlaps, as well as to improve the accountability, transparency, coordination and oversight of the system. We look forward to the Secretary-General's further options and proposals by the end of the year;

29. Pledge to continued inclusive and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to take bold and transformative steps to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions everywhere, reaching the furthest behind first and ensuring that no one is left behind.