



Draft Statement by the Republic of South Africa during the discussion on “Our Common Agenda” – Thematic Cluster-2: “Accelerating the SDGs through sustainable financing and building trust”

New York, 14 February 2022

Mr. President

South Africa aligns itself with the statements delivered by Pakistan and Mali on behalf of the G77 and China and Africa Group, respectively.

Let me thank you for convening these discussions to share our views in charting a way forward to collectively and effectively address the challenges before us.

We welcome the efforts by the Secretary-General to develop “an agenda of action”. These actions must be based on the Rio Principles of Equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR), including the implementation of Addis Ababa Action Plan for Sustainable Development.

South Africa underscores the central importance of enabling means of implementation for developing countries, in the form of finance, technology transfer and capacity building, to achieve the SDGs.

Finance needs to be massively stepped-up to match the scale of the global sustainable development challenge. Such finance needs to be predictable and appropriate to allow developing countries to implement their development plans and to avoid exacerbating the debt crisis.

At COP26, all Parties recognised the multiple forms and stages of Just Transitions in the Glasgow Climate Pact. Significantly, Parties stressed that Just Transitions would entail the realisation of pathways to promote sustainable development, poverty eradication, and provision of climate finance, especially in a post-COVID-19 scenario.

Mr. President

In the limited time that we have today, I will reflect on some of the specific proposals in the report of the Secretary General.

Mr. President

Strengthening the domestic resource mobilization of countries remain crucial for attaining the SDGs and the long-term trajectory of the developing countries. South Africa supports the proposal for Governments to consider using taxation to reduce extreme inequalities in wealth. As a member of the G77, we also believe that there should be an international tax treaty based at the UN as it would cover all countries. We furthermore reiterate our support for the work of the FACTI Panel and remain in agreement with most of its recommendations.

Mr. President

On GDP and financial integrity, we support the call by the Secretary-General and others to consider existing complements or alternative measures to GDP, such as the human development index, the inclusive wealth index, the Genuine Progress Indicator, the multidimensional poverty index, and the inequality-adjusted human development index.

Mr President

South Africa views trade as an important aspect of future recovery from the pandemic. A review of the international trading system has to be part of a comprehensive solution that promotes a production-led response to COVID-19.

African countries are still falling behind in ensuring that their populations are vaccinated and safe. Thus, we stress, amongst others, the importance of a covid-19 specific waiver from the TRIPS Agreement of the WTO. This would lead to the ramping of the production of vaccines in many more countries. We urge all member states to support this proposal.

Mr President

The proposal to hold a Biennial Summit thus requires further consideration. We believe that the UN must remain the centre of global economic policy making. In this regard, it is crucial that the UN and ECOSOC maintain a leadership role and direct the work of the G20 towards supporting UN processes and agreements such as the Financing for Development (FFD) process and support for the implementation of the SDGs.

Mr President,

We agree that measures to strengthen the rule of law and access to justice are essential for the building trust and constitute key elements of the social contract. As signatories to international mechanisms such as those of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the UN Convention Against Corruption. (UNCAC), South Africa has extensive measures to fight corruption. We are therefore encouraged by the SG's new vision for the rule of law and the fight against corruption.

In conclusion, Mr President,

South Africa looks forward to further discussion by the General Assembly on the specific proposals in the Secretary-General's report on accelerating the implementation of the SDGs.

I thank you