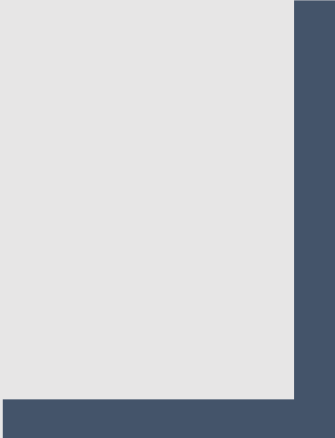




**High-level Ministerial Conference on
Middle-Income Countries (MICs)**

5-6 February 2024 – Rabat
Kingdom of Morocco



FINAL DRAFT

RABAT DECLARATION ON MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES

We, Ministers and High-level representatives of Middle- Income countries (MICs), gathered in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, from 5 to 6 February 2024, at the High-level Ministerial Conference on MICs organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates of the Kingdom of Morocco, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in collaboration with other UN agencies and financial institutions, under the theme: “Solutions to address development challenges of Middle-Income Countries in a changing world”;

- 1. Welcome** the initiative of the Kingdom of Morocco, in its capacity of chair of the Like-Minded Group for Middle-Income Countries (LMG-MICs) composed of Armenia, Belarus, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Uruguay, to host a High-level Ministerial Conference on Middle-Income Countries, in cooperation with UN-ECA and UNDP, aiming at building a strong political momentum for revitalizing international development cooperation with and among Middle-Income Countries;
- 2. Recall** the outcomes of the international conferences on development cooperation with middle-income countries held in Madrid, on 1 and 2 March 2007, in San Salvador on 3 and 4 October 2007, in Windhoek from 4 to 6 August 2008 and in San Jose from 12 to 14 June 2013;
- 3. Recall** and reaffirm previous Ministerial Declarations adopted by the Like-Minded Group for Middle-Income Countries (LMG-MICs), adopted in New York, signed on 23 September 2016, 21 September 2017, 26 September 2018, 24 September 2019, 2 October 2020, 2 December 2021, 21 September 2022 and 21 September 2023, respectively;
- 4. Welcome** the adoption of UN General Assembly resolutions 68/222, 70/215, 72/230, 74/231, 76/215 and 78/162 on “Development Cooperation with Middle Income Countries”;
- 5. Reaffirm** our determination for the promotion of our collective interests and to advance practical, innovative and effective solutions to address and overcome the specific challenges faced by Middle-Income Countries in their path towards the achievement of Sustainable Development;
- 6. Recall** that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes, inter alia, that middle-income countries still face significant challenges to accomplish sustainable development and that, in order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, efforts to address ongoing challenges should be strengthened through the exchange of experiences, improved

coordination and better and focused support of the United Nations development system, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and other stakeholders;

7. **Reaffirm** our full commitment to implement the Political Declaration adopted by the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly- SDG Summit- on 18 and 19 September 2023, at the mid-term review of the 2030 agenda implementation, and we urge timely action from IFIs, development partners, United Nations Development System and all relevant stakeholders to ensure its full implementation;
8. **Look** forward to the 2024 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of operational activities for development of the United Nations System (QCPR);
9. **Recall** the United Nations Industrial Development Organization Strategic Framework for Partnering with Middle-Income Countries, adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization at its eighteenth session, held in Abu Dhabi from 3 to 7 November 2019;
10. **Stress** that the classification as MICs should not remain an obstacle or a punishment for benefiting from an inclusive international development cooperation and from flexibilities in financing development, and access to concessional and non-concessional finance and technical cooperation;
11. **Emphasize** that a paradigm shift is needed to build an equitable and fair International Financial Architecture that is fit for purpose to achieve sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions and inclusive of the different needs and challenges faced by all developing countries, particularly MICs and underscore that the Summit of the Future is a unique opportunity to advance in this direction, recognizing the role of the United Nations in the global economic governance;
12. **Call** on the international financial institutions, Multilateral Development Banks and development partners and all relevant stakeholders to strengthen means and concrete ways to increase the fiscal space of all developing countries in need, including middle-income countries, allowing them to access to concessional and non-concessional finance in a more effective, fair and equitable manner and encourage MDBs to develop graduation policies that are sequenced, phased and gradual;
13. **Emphasis** the need to scale-up and to boost the lending capacity of the multilateral development banks which will be critical to advance their reform and expand their support in terms of access to finance and technical support for developing countries, particularly middle-income countries;

- 14. Stress** that the Reform of the financial architecture should significantly improve the coherence, timeliness and impact of the contributions of the international financial institutions to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution, including by aligning the mandates of the IFIs and Multilateral Development Banks with the Sustainable Development Goals;
- 15. Call** for a new allocation of Special Drawing Rights aimed at addressing the vulnerabilities of developing countries under debt burden and in need of liquidity, to enable substantial public investments to achieve sustainable development and overcome the climate crisis;
- 16. Call** upon Multilateral Development Banks to provide support to developing countries in designing and financing innovative financing instruments and mechanisms, such as debt swaps for climate, and nature, in order to enhance their capacity to invest in just transition pathways and deliver on global environmental commitments;
- 17. Recognize** the importance of the role of the private sector, as well as of the role of public-private partnerships, in meeting the challenges of sustainable development for middle-income countries and other developing countries;
- 18. Call** for improving the assessment and management of SDGs-related financial risks in a manner that supports developing countries, enhancing access to finance in all geographical regions and sectors, and accelerating the ongoing development of new and innovative sources of finance to address high costs of capital in middle-income countries;
- 19. Stress** the importance of the role of South-South Cooperation and Triangular cooperation in addressing the development needs of middle-income countries, including through capacity-building and fostering peer-learning and sharing of best practices among Middle-Income Countries across regions;
- 20. Call** for the urgent establishment of measures of progress that complement or go beyond GDP to better measure sustainable development and to have a more inclusive approach to international cooperation, which should inform access to concessional and non-concessional finance, technical cooperation and financing in a fair and inclusive manner;
- 21. Look** forward to the United Nations Secretary-General Report on Cooperation with Middle-Income Countries to be submitted to the General Assembly at its eightieth session which will include a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the support available to middle-income countries in pursuing suitable approaches to enable inclusive and just transition pathways for sustainable development, including the impact of new and inclusive development approaches.

- 22. We underline** that a new paradigm shift in international development cooperation is needed to allow MICs to overcome the Middle-income trap and to pursue approaches to enable equitable, inclusive, and just transition pathways for sustainable development. In this regard we:
- i. Call** on all United Nations entities, funds and programmes to further develop specific strategies to engage and provide tailored support to middle-income countries, while mindful of their diversity, including for leveraging and mobilizing finance for sustainable development;
 - ii. Support** the establishment of a High-Level Group of Experts to advance the selection of multidimensional indicators that complement or go beyond GDP, considering the relevant work all relevant stakeholders, including the United Nations Statistical Commission, regional commissions, United Nations agencies and international financial institutions, with the purpose of informing Member States in the upcoming UN Intergovernmental process on this matter;
 - iii. Call** upon the United Nations Development System to elaborate a specific inter-agency, comprehensive, system-wide response plan aimed at better addressing the multidimensional nature of sustainable development and facilitating sustainable development cooperation and coordinated and inclusive support to middle-income countries based on their specific challenges and diverse needs;
 - iv. Decide** to work towards the elaboration of a Strategic Plan of action for MICs for the period 2025-2030 and call for the initiation of consultations, in cooperation with the United Nations Development System, Development Partners and relevant stakeholders to advance in this process. In this regard, we welcome the proposed hosting by the Philippines of an international conference in Manila within the year to support this process;
 - v. Reaffirm** that despite sharing the same categorization, the homogenous designation “Middle-Income Country” based solely on per capita income, does not reflect the myriad of their realities and vulnerabilities, oversimplifies the complexities of the countries it encompasses and, therefore, we stress the urgency of a more inclusive development cooperation system, taking into account the Development in Transition approach, which recognizes development as a multidimensional, gradual and continuous process that does not end when countries reach a certain level of income;
- 23. Look** forward to the convening of the fourth International Conference for Financing for Development as part of the paradigm shift on development cooperation that needs to be materialized;
- 24. Commit** to strengthen dialogue, coordination and cooperation to promote and voice the interests of Middle Income Countries and support them in their efforts to overcome the specific challenges they face in the pursuit and the achievement of sustainable development in its

economic, social and environmental dimensions. We decide to further strengthen « The like-minded Group for Middle Income Countries » as a formal intergouvernemental platform for dialogue, advocacy and coordination on development priority issues related to international cooperation for development and global governance as well as on strengthening solidarity and cooperation among and with Middle Income Countries;

25. Express our deep appreciation and recognition to the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Morocco for their hospitality in organizing and hosting the Ministerial Conference.

26. Decide to follow up on the implementation of this declaration in the 80th session of the UN General Assembly.