

**First Ministerial Meeting of the
Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries
New York, September 23, 2016**

Declaration

We, the Ministers and high-level representatives of the countries constituting the Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries, Armenia, Belarus, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama and the Philippines, conducted the first ministerial meeting of the Group at the margins of the 71st session of the United Nations General Assembly;

We welcomed the creation of the Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and agreed that the Group should become a significant instrument in strengthening coordination and promoting the interests of middle-income countries within the United Nations in New York, Geneva and Vienna;

We stressed that the middle-income countries classification, created by the World Bank, does not effectively reflect the complexity and multidimensionality of the reality of these countries, preventing the establishment of integral mechanisms that best respond to their sustainable development challenges. We therefore called for the need to advance towards the integration of comprehensive, integral and multidimensional development criteria to properly address the sustainable development challenges of these countries;

We highlighted that middle-income countries constitute the only significant group of countries that does not have a UN system-wide and long-term strategy for development cooperation;

We also noted that the challenges of these countries are reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and other relevant multilateral outcomes and in this regard, agreed that necessary organizational arrangements should be made to adopt a coordinated approach by the United Nations to this group of countries;

We discussed and agreed upon the major goal of the newly created Like-Minded Group to systematically and comprehensively promote the interests of middle-income countries in the United Nations;

Furthermore, we also agreed to pursue the following tasks in support of the strategic goal of the Group:

- Advancing in the establishment of a comprehensive UN system-wide and long-term strategy aimed at facilitating sustainable development cooperation and coordinated support towards middle-income countries;

- Conducting an outreach strategy that includes events and diverse activities to raise awareness on the challenges of middle-income countries within the UN community and with the general public;
- Advocating and promoting middle-income countries views and perspectives through statements, resolutions and active participation in sustainable development-related processes, within UN bodies, specialized agencies and Funds;
- Supporting and promoting the establishment of multidimensional measures of progress that go beyond income criteria and that incorporate the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental;

We agreed to meet regularly at the margins of the United Nations, including through high-level meetings, in order to ensure political coordination and guidance and enhance the implementation of the interests and goals of the Group. Different formats of such meetings could be envisaged;

We finally underlined our intention and determination to support the advancement of the ambitious middle-income countries agenda and requested the Like-Minded Group to actively engage in the process of promoting the interests of middle-income countries in the United Nations and other relevant fora.