

**POSITION OF THE UNION OF THE COMOROS:
FOR A POSTPONEMENT OF GRADUATION TO THE NEXT TRIENNIAL
REVIEW**

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Moroni, Tuesday, January 29, 2024

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have read with great interest the Comoros' assessment report on graduation. I am pleased to share with you today the remarks and position of the Comorian government on graduation.

The graduation report shows that the Comoros met the reclassification eligibility criteria for the first time during the 2021 triennial review, exceeding the thresholds for gross national income (GNI) and the Human Capital Index (HAI). Based on the latest data, the country continues to meet these criteria in the 2024 triennial review, both economically and socially. However, the third criterion related to environmental and economic vulnerability indicates that the Comoros continues to face economic and environmental challenges.

Please note that the issue of vulnerability has become a major challenge for ensuring the sustainability of economic progress and the country's development. With a multidimensional vulnerability index of 43.7, the Union of the Comoros is the most vulnerable African Small Island Developing State (SIDS) and the 10th SIDS globally.

Indeed, natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, and ongoing global crises have hindered economic expansion, resulting in lower-than-expected growth. The rising cost of living, with inflation reaching a record level of 20% in 2022, is a major concern, primarily due to the increase in global prices of food and energy.

Simultaneously, the Union of the Comoros has continued to face challenges and constraints inherent in its status as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS): ecological fragility, high vulnerability to shocks and climate change, exacerbated by low capacities for disaster preparedness, response, and recovery, along with agricultural drought resulting from a rainfall deficit of 728mm.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

These vulnerabilities increase the country's financial dependence on its development partners. Despite these economic and environmental challenges, the Comoros has always aspired to progress beyond the status of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), demonstrating a commitment to the progress and well-being of the population.

However, unexpected economic and environmental shocks raise questions about the possibility of discussing this transition at present. Global crises have exacerbated our vulnerabilities, highlighting the need to prioritize national resilience. Therefore, while maintaining our goal of exiting the LDC status, we request the postponement of the reclassification review until at least 2027.

This delay will allow the country to consolidate achievements, put the economy back on the path to emergence, and mobilize additional resources to accelerate sustainable development. This delay will also allow progress in implementing the recommendations formulated by the graduation report, which align with those from the voluntary national reviews of the SDGs conducted in 2020 and 2023, in terms of priority policies to be implemented, namely:

- i) Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity
- ii) Strengthen institutions and governance
- iii) Develop productive capacities for a dynamic crisis exit
- iv) Explore possibilities for new types of development cooperation.

We are confident that this pragmatic approach will strengthen our collective partnership for a better future. Our commitment remains the realization of the 2030 Agenda and becoming an emerging country by 2030. It is in this context that, in 2022, the Union of the Comoros adopted a post-COVID recovery plan for 2022-2026 aimed at restoring the necessary trajectory to achieve this goal.

The particular circumstances of vulnerability that the country still faces require a postponement of graduation and benevolent support from the international community to better prepare us for the post-LDC era.

Thank you for your kind attention."