

**Opening remarks**  
**H.E. Ambassador Alexandru Cujba, Vice-President of ECOSOC**  
**ECOSOC substantive session, 2010**  
**Operational activities segment**  
**Friday, 9 July 2010**  
**ECOSOC Chamber, New York**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to open the 2010 operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council.

We are meeting against in uncertain times. The world has begun to recover from a devastating financial and economic crisis. But the recovery remains uneven and fragile. Some hard won development gains have been overturned. We have still to regain the ground we lost.

From 20 to 22 September, Heads of State and Government will gather at the United Nations MDGs plus ten Summit. They will decide on ways to accelerate progress towards the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

It is our great hope that governments and other development actors will rally around the decisions of the Summit to change the fate of the poorest and most vulnerable.

The organizations of the United Nations system have to show the way. Their raison d'être is to help countries and people rise out of poverty and move ahead on the path to development.

The Economic and Social Council has the responsibility to help the system to remain focused on the development agenda – and to ensure that it delivers its assistance in the most coherent, coordinated, and effective way.

For several months, you have reflected on how best to increase consistency and reduce overlap in the work of the United Nations system. Significant progress has been made in the General Assembly intergovernmental negotiations on system-wide coherence. Novel steps will be taken to improve the governance of operational activities. As Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, I am determined to ensure that the Council discharges on its tasks in this regard. There is also now greater clarity on the strengths and weaknesses of the funding modalities of the United Nations. Processes are engaged to clarify further this understanding and improve the funding situation of United Nations organizations.

We are now gathered to take stock of how well the organizations of the United Nations have done in improving their development cooperation. Three years ago, the General Assembly gave detailed guidance on how this should be done in its comprehensive review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

The 2007 review – which we call the TCPR- gave detailed direction for the United Nations development system to respond efficiently and effectively to the widely varying national development needs and priorities of programme countries.

The reports before us show that the United Nations system has exerted much effort to follow-up on these recommendations. They also reveal areas where progress is not sufficient and where we should promote further advances.

This year our discussions will be enriched by the participation of a larger than usual number of minister and high-level officials in charge of United Nations cooperation in their country. I would like to welcome them to the Council. We are looking forward to hearing their views on the work of the United Nations.

Yesterday, our distinguished guests had an in-depth informal debate on their experiences on national ownership and capacity development in various country contexts. Today, they will share the outcome of this discussion so that we can have a more informed debate about these important topics.

This afternoon will aim to assess whether country level capacity of the UN system is aligned with the needs of programme countries. The last session of today will be devoted to a discussion on the outcome of the Hanoi meeting on country-led evaluation of the “Delivering as One” pilot countries, which was held at the middle of June. This will be the opportunity to debate recent developments in the pilot countries and notably their self evaluations.

On 12 July, we will have our annual dialogue with the Executive Heads of the UN funds and programmes. The dialogue offers an important venue for the Council to guide the work of these organizations.

The afternoon of Monday will focus on funding of operational activities, an issue you have discussed thoroughly in the system-wide coherence process. Our debate will draw from recent analysis for instance on the pros and cons of the various UN funding modalities at country-level as well as on programme countries’ role in the programming and allocation of funding. These all deserve the Council’s consideration.

The general debate will start in the afternoon of 12 July and continue on 13 July. This will be the time to share your vision on the range of issues before the Council.

At the end of the session, hopefully a resolution will be adopted as an outcome of the segment. The draft resolution that was presented for our consideration is in line with the role of the Council to provide action oriented recommendations to implement the General Assembly’s guidance. It should also give direction to the QCPR preparations which should start very soon.

In the afternoon of Tuesday, we will have the joint event of the operational activities and humanitarian segment and focus on the situation in Haiti.

I look forward to a lively and substantive operational activities segment. Before closing, I would like to urge all of you to keep our debate informal, frank and open throughout the segment.

I thank you.