

ECOSOC Coordination Segment, Panel I  
"Mobilizing partnerships for development, including in the field of  
education"  
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## **Strengthening the UN's Capacity for Partnership**

**Mr. Robert Orr, Assistant Secretary General for Strategic Planning,  
Executive Office of the Secretary General, United Nations**

### **Background**

Mr. President,  
H.E. Mootaz Khalil,  
Mr. Hendra and distinguished fellow panelists,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

- I welcome the focus on partnership and education today. In my remarks I will focus on the opportunities for partnerships writ large. It is important that the new Global Initiative on Education has partnership built in from the beginning.
- Over the six and a half decades since the founding of the United Nations, the world has witnessed a steady growth in the size, sophistication, and global reach of the private sector and civil society. In recent decades, this growth been most rapid in developing countries.
- All estimates of global wealth concentrated in private hands are now well above 50 percent, making this is a reality we cannot ignore.
- Simultaneously, demands upon the UN have multiplied in virtually all its areas of activity yet the financial crisis has reduced resources available to the UN. We need to reverse this trend both in terms of official development assistance and by leveraging the enormous potential of the private sector and civil society.

- The Secretary-General has seized on this opportunity by building the large-scale, issue oriented, multi-stakeholder partnerships, Every Woman Every Child and Sustainable Energy for All.
- To be able to fulfill Member States' mandates the Secretary-General's Five Year Action Agenda called for a new partnership capacity to harness the growing power of business, finance, philanthropy, as well as civil society and academic and research institutions, to meet global needs.
- The vision for the new partnership capacity was born out of the strong and growing support of partnerships by Member States as recognized in the following outcomes and declarations:
  - United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)
  - World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002)
  - 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (2003)
  - World Summit Outcome (2005)
  - GA MDG Summit Outcome (2010)
  - Rio+20 Outcome Document (2012)
- Each acknowledges the critical importance of partnership, increasingly calling for the UN to achieve greater scale, coherence, efficiency, integrity and a more supportive enabling environment for UN partnership activity.
- In Rio I was on a panel with Nitin Desai, the Secretary-General of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 that delivered such a clear call for partnership and to important agreements in this regard. He noted that 10 years on from Johannesburg, it was even more important now than ever.
- Member States also spelled this out in the GA resolution "Towards Global Partnerships" at the end of last year calling for the UN to "continue to develop... a common and systemic

approach which places greater emphasis on impact, transparency, coherence, accountability, and sustainability.”

## **Rationale**

- A new partnership mechanism could and should enhance the UN's ability to partner in 7 essential ways.
  - 1. Ensure greater scale**, to meet the size of the challenges in a wider number of areas.
  - 2. Broaden and deepen the coalition of actors** working toward agreed goals, maximizing synergies among constituent groups.
  - 3. Enhance coherence** of partnering efforts across the full range of UN actors and beyond, improving user-friendliness, especially for smaller countries and partners, becoming a central hub that can serve as “matchmaker”. This is especially important as the vast majority of partnering efforts is, and will continue to be, undertaken by UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes, and at the country level.
  - 4. Increase efficiency and effectiveness**, brought about by common platforms.
  - 5. Improve accountability**, to manage risks and enhance legitimacy.
  - 6. Lower transaction costs** for all partners by moving from single actor project-based partnerships toward strategic and transformational partnerships with bigger goals and many more actors.
  - 7. Allow a more systematized approach**, facilitating the transmission of lessons learned from different experiences.

## **Some Potential Functions of a New Mechanism**

- Conceptualize and incubate new multi-stakeholder transformative partnership initiatives focused on priority issues.
- Serve as “matchmaker” between UN and non-UN entities so that they can form their own partnerships, with or without the support of the new mechanism.
- Build capacity for public-private initiative design and delivery in UN departments, Agencies, Funds and Programmes, especially the smaller UN entities.
- Provide a backbone for scalable accountability and integrity platforms.
- Continue to build local networks and harness their ability to foster partnership within their areas of influence.
- Develop a robust common standard and marketplace for quality private sector commitments in support of UN goals.
- Develop means to better engage civil society, philanthropy, and research and academic institutions in partnership.

## **Conclusion**

- We have a great deal to accomplish. The sooner we can build our partnership capacity, the sooner we will be able to meet the mandates given the UN and serve the peoples of the world we are sworn to serve.