

UNITED NATIONS



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**His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
President of the General Assembly**

Opening remarks

ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment

New York, 13 July 2012

Your Excellency, Ambassador Desra Percaya, Vice President of ECOSOC and Chair of the Operational Activities Segment,

Mr. Sha Zukang, Under Secretary-General of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to be with you this morning and to address this opening of the Operational Activities Segment of the Economic and Social Council.

As we all know, this year's Operational Activities Segment is of particular significance. It is a time to take stock of progress and challenges in implementing the mandates established in General Assembly resolution 62/289 on the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review of UN operational activities for development. It is also a time to be forward looking.

We are beginning a new cycle with the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) – one that will set the mandate and framework for the UN development system for the period 2013 to 2016 and beyond.

One of the findings of the stakeholder surveys conducted by UNDESA in preparation for the 2012 QCPR is that the UN development system is more relevant and coherent today than five years ago. This progress, in my view, provides a good platform for more ambitious efforts to strengthen the UN development system in the new QCPR cycle.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our deliberations during this Operational Activities Segment will set the stage for the upcoming QCPR negotiations which, I am confident, will reinvigorate the capacity of the UN development system to meet both current and emerging global challenges.

“Global prosperity and sustainable development” is one of the four pillars of my vision for the work of the General Assembly during my Presidency. My commitment has been to help forge a united global partnership, with a particular focus on the needs of the most vulnerable.

The United Nations operational activities for development play a central role in these efforts. They are both a symbol and a concrete manifestation of a partnership for a better future.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to highlight a few of the issues that took centre-stage in a three-part seminar series on the QCPR, sponsored by my office in cooperation with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and UNDESA, in the course of this year.

First, new centres of economic dynamism in the global economy, coupled with advances in technology, are transforming the global development landscape. We must reassess the effectiveness of our approach to development cooperation and consider how the work of the UN development system needs to change in order to remain effective and relevant to variable country needs and contexts.

Second, the intensification of global challenges means that solutions will require collective action and new forms of partnerships, where civil society and the private sector work seamlessly with multilateral and bilateral forms of development cooperation.

Third, the issue of “critical mass” of core funding for UN operational activities for development requires urgent attention and resolution. The current imbalance in core/non-core funding risks undermining the capacity, independence, partnerships and delivery of UN operational activities for development.

Fourth, we must applaud the important progress made in achieving greater coherence and integration of UN operational activities for development through the Resident Coordinator system, the UNDAF process, the delivering-as-one pilot initiative and the integrated mission concept, among many other initiatives. We

must build on progress to date to step-up UN development coordination and coherence in the next QCPR cycle. The provision of high quality and cost efficient administrative services is another area where major progress should be expected from the UN development system in the next four years.

Fifth, the process of developing Sustainable Development Goals, building on the experience with the MDG framework, will mean a redoubling of the efforts in how we integrate the core UN pillars of *Development, Security, and Humanitarian Assistance*. Critical to this effort will be instituting effective horizontal accountability mechanisms for common performance and results assessment by UN entities. To some extent, the success of the upcoming QCPR may depend on progress in strengthening horizontal accountability in the work of the UN development system, particularly at the country level.

Sixth, the QCPR is a timely exercise to launch a forward-looking reflection on the longer-term strategic repositioning of the UN development system in the changing development landscape.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The QCPR resolution you will adopt this fall will directly impact the day-to-day work of the UN system and shape the strategic plans of the 30 plus entities that comprise the UN development system. Together these entities currently account for nearly two-thirds of all system-wide activities of the United Nations.

I am confident that the Operational Activities Segment will result in forward-looking recommendations for the upcoming QCPR negotiations. In the coming months, we have the opportunity to shape the future of the UN development system and build a lasting legacy for the organization. We must seize this moment.

Thank you for your attention.