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ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

**Remarks  
2014 ECOSOC operational activities segment**

**New York, 24 February 2014**

Ambassador Carlos Enrique García González, Vice-President of ECOSOC,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am delighted to join you at the first Operational Activities for Development Segment of the newly reformed ECOSOC.

I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of UN operational activities for development.

The High-level Dialogue this morning has articulated clearly the ongoing changes taking place on both the supply and demand side of development cooperation. These changes will need corresponding transformation by global institutions in general and the UN development system in particular.

To this end, the 2012 QCPR resolution of the General Assembly has set out an ambitious system-wide strategy. Effective implementation of this strategy should contribute towards UN system's efforts to respond to this changing development landscape.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The report of the Secretary General provides an overview of how the system is responding to the mandates given by the QCPR resolution. It captures (a) the steps taken by the UN system to improve its efficiency and effectiveness and to overcome the remaining obstacles; (b) latest trends on funding of the operational activities and (c) how the system needs to position itself for the post-2015 development agenda. I would like to present some salient points from the report on these three aspects.

The report presents a single and coherent QCPR monitoring and reporting framework that has full ownership by the UN development system. The framework contains a set of 99 results-oriented indicators for all mandate areas that are measurable. The framework also clarifies the methodology and identifies sources for data collection, with a view to improving the comparability and analytical quality of future reports.

I would like to convey my appreciation to the whole UN development system, especially UNDG, for the support and cooperation extended to DESA in the development of this framework.

The UN system has internalized the QCPR, showing notable achievements in several areas.

Fourteen out of 22 UN entities have aligned their strategic plans for the period 2014-2017 in content and timing to the QCPR, which is a significant step towards a more coherent UN system.

Noting the intrinsic linkage between poverty eradication and sustainable development, several funds and programmes embraced sustainable development as a key area of work in their strategic plans.

UN entities also stepped up efforts to support South-South cooperation. However, rules, regulations, procedures and other transaction costs continue to pose challenges. These need to be addressed effectively, if the UN system is to become significant partner for South-South cooperation.

While there has been progress on gender equality and women's empowerment in certain areas, the UN development system as a whole needs continued efforts on this issue. Such efforts are specially needed if the majority of UN entities are to meet the performance standards by 2017, which were set by the UN System-wide Action Plan on gender equality and women's empowerment.

To improve the functioning of the UN development system, some important steps have been initiated. However, a number of far-reaching reform measures present significant challenges to individual UN entities and the UN development system as a whole. In particular, the requests for the timely unification of regulation, rules, policies and procedures, and the consequent consolidation of support services at the country level have direct implications for the organizational set up of individual entities.

There is still need for all UN entities to systematically implement all the provisions of the Management and Accountability System.

Simplification and harmonization of business practices is a complex undertaking. But work is in progress. So far, it has mainly focused on Delivering as One countries. The Standard Operating Procedures for Delivering as One countries were introduced in the UNDAF roll-out starting in autumn 2013, with a support package to be rolled out in early 2014.

Headquarter-level bottlenecks affecting the Delivering as One approach have also been identified and will be addressed through a concrete Headquarters Plan of Action.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to highlight some of the recent funding trends.

The UN development system remains the largest multilateral partner at a total of US\$23.9 billion, or 17 per cent of total global ODA. At the same time, much like ODA in general, there has been a downward trend in funding for both UN operational activities for development, especially in the aftermath of the financial crisis.

As the UN development system has expanded its efforts to work with new partners, the funding base has become increasingly diversified. However, earmarked contributions remain the dominant feature in the funding architecture of the UN development system.

The core ratio for Operational activities for development actually declined from 48 per cent in 1997 to 28 per cent in 2012, making the issues around cost-recovery and critical mass even more crucial.

These funding trends underscore the importance of UN entities achieving full cost recovery. Despite the new cost recovery frameworks, the forward-looking expenditure plans of some major funds and programmes reveal that the target of full cost recovery remains work-in-progress.

To expedite action on these aspects, the QCPR resolution has requested the Executive Boards of the funds and programmes and the governing bodies of specialized agencies to organize structured dialogues. The dialogues will also focus on how to finance the development results agreed in the new strategic planning cycle of their respective entities.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year's report of the Secretary-General echoes one of your observations this morning.

It highlights that effective follow-up to the QCPR needs to be situated in the evolving post-2015 development agenda.

It calls for reflection on making the UN development system fit for purpose, particularly in the context of the changes in the overall global environment and the new development cooperation landscape.

Your discussions at this ECOSOC segment will hopefully lay the foundations for such a reflection that will lead to transformative changes.

We strongly believe that strategic, institutional and operational transformations at the UN, the most universal global institution, should stay ahead of the curve. These transformations are not an end in themselves but should primarily be driven by the need to better serve our member states.

Thank you.

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