



TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

PERMANENT MISSION OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Rodney Charles

Permanent Representative

to the United Nations New York

at the

General Debate on Agenda Item 25

“Operational Activities for development”

in the Second Committee

15 October, 2012



**United Nations Headquarters
New York**

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Mr. Chairman,

As this is the first time that Trinidad and Tobago is taking the floor let me congratulate you and the members of your bureau on your appointments. We look forward to working with you during this session and guarantee you our full support.

Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the statements made by Algeria on behalf of the G77 and China, Chile on behalf of CELAC and Antigua and Barbuda on behalf of CARICOM.

We would also join with others in expressing appreciation to the Secretary General for his reports under this thematic cluster.

Mr. Chairman,

As a middle-income developing country and a net contributor to our United Nations country programme, the assessment of United Nations operational activities for development in the context of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) is an issue of keen interest for Trinidad and Tobago.

We share the concerns expressed by many others over the decline in core resources, the imbalance between core and non-core resources; continued unfulfilled commitments for Official Development Assistance, and the need for an overall enhancement in funding for operational activities for development within the UN system.

We also join our voice with those who have highlighted the need for the operational activities for development to maintain its neutrality, multilateralism and ability to respond to the development needs of programme countries in a flexible, coherent and effective manner in line with national development plans and priorities.

Mr. Chairman,

Trinidad and Tobago is committed to maintaining a strong in-country United Nations presence, and, as host to the UNDP and eight other agencies within the United Nations family, we are constantly seeking ways to improve our engagement and achieve greater synergy between the national development agenda and the UN system deliverables.

With the assistance of the office of the Resident Coordinator we are currently engaged in the process of reviewing the effectiveness of UN operations with a view to addressing the need for enhanced communication, collaboration and coordination at country-level.

We are also actively involved in seeking to secure common premises for UN agencies in Trinidad and Tobago, with a view to achieving greater efficiency in the allocation of resources through harmonization of UN business operations.

Mr. Chairman,

The country programme system requires increased resources and continued strengthening in order to ensure that it delivers targeted and effective assistance to developing countries in the midst of the constraints caused by the ongoing global financial, economic and food crises. This assistance must be on the basis of national leadership with due regard for the need to increase national capacity and the need to fully integrate operational activities for development with national development planning and programming.

Poverty eradication, the achievement of sustainable development and addressing issues such as health and climate change, remain key challenges for all developing countries, including middle-income countries, like Trinidad and Tobago. Statistics show that today almost three-quarters of the world's poor reside in middle-income countries, and so the importance of leveraging the United Nations development system to address the wide range of capacities and needs among these states cannot, therefore, be over-emphasised.

In our view, it is vitally important for the United Nations development system to take greater account of the structural challenges in middle-income countries and, in the same vein, to also take on board the unique and particular vulnerabilities associated with Small Island developing states, countries which the international community has acknowledged as a special case for both environment and development. Consequently, we must underscore that a one-size fits all approach cannot be applied to development activities.

In this regard, the regional commissions and, in particular, their sub-regional offices are critical for ensuring that countries receive the type and quality of assistance that they require. At the operational level, inter-agency coordination is therefore essential, while at the same time ensuring that the individual mandate of each entity is respected. Additionally, staff expertise at the country-level should be tailored, to the greatest extent possible, to the specific development needs of the particular country.

Mr. Chairman,

The global development agenda continues to evolve in the face of ongoing crises and rapidly changing geo-political and global economic realities. The United Nations operational activities for development must remain flexible and responsive to these shifts while ensuring that no country is left behind.

As a result, even as we move forward with planning for the Post 2015 development agenda and the design of sustainable development goals, lessons-learned from our collective performance in striving to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, must be taken into account.

This year's QCPR process must strike an appropriate balance between looking forward to take into account emerging realities while assessing the adequacy of actions taken up to the present time with a view to improving UN operational activities for development. This will certainly be a challenging task.

Trinidad and Tobago stands ready to contribute to all efforts toward ensuring that this process is as an effective one.

I thank you.