

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**REMARKS
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SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE 2012 UN CONFERENCE
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**Dialogue on UN operational activities for development:
emerging issues and challenges**

New York, 13 February 2012

Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly,
Ambassador Desra Percaya, Vice President of ECOSOC,
Ambassador Miguel Berger,
UNDP Administrator Helen Clark,

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join you this morning.

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs is delighted to partner with both the Office of the President of the General Assembly, and the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation, in organizing this seminar.

Thank you also to our gracious hosts, the Permanent Mission of Germany.

Today, we begin preparations for the General Assembly's 2012 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR).

As you know, the QCPR reviews the UN System's operational activities for development. Its goal is a simple one: a more relevant, efficient, effective United Nations, one that is better prepared to meet the needs of developing countries.

I believe we all share this goal.

But how exactly do we achieve it? This is a question Member States will undoubtedly ask throughout the QCPR process. A few other relevant questions follow.

First, there is growing demand for UN support at the country level. How can we meet this demand and further enhance the impact of the United Nations at the country level?

Second, how can we address the increased emphasis on implementation of sustainable development? I will come back to this in a moment.

Third, how can the current UN development activities be strengthened within the overall global development configurations, including IFIs?

For example, is the heavy reliance on non-core funding really the most effective, efficient, and sustainable way of mobilizing resources?

It is our hope that the QCPR process will help answer these and other questions that are sure to emerge as the review process moves ahead.

Over the coming years, we can expect sustainable development to become firmly entrenched as a core part of the UN's mission.

This is an urgent, practical priority for us, today. But it is also a moral obligation to future generations: to leave a cleaner, more equitable and inclusive, and more prosperous world to our children, and to their children.

This is why we are engaged in critical negotiations: (i) for the upcoming Rio+20 conference, and (ii) at the inter-agency level, for the post-2015 UN development agenda, with DESA and UNDP acting as coordinators.

So, with these in mind, let us ask ourselves this question: How will the UN development system position itself to best assist in the realization of sustainable development commitments?

The answer will depend, in large measure, on the decisions Member States take at the upcoming QCPR. I believe the QCPR discussions will help ensure a more responsive and more energetic United Nations in development cooperation.

In this regard, allow me to share with colleagues here a few personal thoughts on the need for “vertical integration” – that is integration of our normative work and operational activities.

During my four and half years of service at the UN, I have become more and more aware of the lack of interactions between the normative work we do and our operational activities, between UN work at the country level and intergovernmental discussions at the global level.

I feel that for the United Nations to “Deliver-As-One”, we also need to bridge the gap between normative work and technical operations. Our normative work could benefit more from country experience. This will further enhance the evidence-based aspects of our policy analysis and its relevance at the country level.

Likewise, our normative work, including both our policy analysis and intergovernmental deliberations, could better guide UN operational activities at the country level.

The UN has the talent base to do both normative and operational work better. We can and should better integrate our normative and operational activities. At the system level, I want to commend the work of UNDG, which has helped bring the operational entities together. In DESA, I have set up a Strategic Planning Unit and Capacity Development Office to help identify opportunities for collaboration and synergies between our normative and capacity-building work.

In seeking to achieve the objective of “Deliver-As-One” at the country level, I strongly believe that the United Nations family has the potential to “Deliver-As-One” through better integration of its normative and operational activities. I hope the upcoming QCPR offers an opportunity for achieving tangible progress on that front.

Dear Colleagues,

DESA, for its part, is carrying out extensive analytical work to facilitate the fast-approaching QCPR deliberations.

My department is strongly committed to providing Member States with objective, empirical analysis, to facilitate decision-making.

Among various activities, DESA is administering online surveys to learn more about the views of key country-level stakeholders.

Moreover, DESA serves as the secretariat for an independent evaluation of the “Delivering-As-One” initiative.

My department is also committed to a transparent, effective QCPR consultative process.

We will work in close collaboration with UNDP and other funds and programmes.

We expect to organize regular briefings and consultations with Member States and UN system colleagues. And as the findings of the aforementioned studies and surveys emerge in coming months, you can expect more gatherings like today’s meeting, too.

Thank for your time and on behalf of DESA, I wish you a most productive seminar.
