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Operational activities for development: triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

Qatar * : draft resolution

Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989, 47/199 of 22 December 1992, 50/120 of 20 December 1995, 52/203 of 18 December 1997, 52/12 B of 19 December 1997, 53/192 of 15 December 1998 and 56/201 of 21 December 2001, as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 2002/29 of 25 July 2002 and 2003/3 of 11 July 2003, and other relevant resolutions,

Reaffirming the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the United Nations system's development cooperation and its country-level modalities,

Recalling the role of the Economic and Social Council in providing coordination and guidance to the United Nations system to ensure that those policy orientations are implemented on a system-wide basis in accordance with Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993, 50/227 of 24 May 1996, and 57/270B of 20 December 2002,

Recalling also the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000¹ and other major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields, and their importance for the

* On behalf of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China.

¹ See resolution 55/2.

international development cooperation, in particular for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

Reiterating that developing countries are responsible for their own development processes, and in this context stressing the responsibility of the international community, in partnership, to assist developing countries in their national development efforts,

Recognizing also that new technologies present an opportunity to accelerate development, especially in developing countries, and the need to ensure that the access to such technologies is even, adequate, non discriminatory and not politically motivated,

Reaffirming the need to ensure – in a coherent and timely manner – the full implementation of all the elements of its resolutions 44/211, 47/199, 50/120, 53/192, 56/201 and the parts relevant to operational activities for development of its resolution 52/12 B, which should be considered as an integral part of this resolution,

Reiterating the importance of the development of national capacities as a central goal of the United Nations system's development cooperation,

I. Introduction

1. *Takes note* of the reports of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system²;

2. *Reaffirms also* that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of developing countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities of the United Nations system are carried out for the benefit of recipient countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development,

3. *Emphasizes* that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be valued and assessed on the basis of their impact on the recipient countries as contributions to enhance their capacity to pursue poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development, and translate, into national terms, the development agenda emerging from the Millennium Declaration and other major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;

4. *Recognizes* that the real purpose of the reform is to make the UN development system more efficient and effective in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, based on the priorities of the recipient countries, and that efforts should be strengthened in further shifting the focus of reforms from process to results;

² A/59/85-E/2004/68 and A/59/387.

5. *Requests* the organizations of the United Nations system to: (a) continue their efforts to respond to national development plans, policies and priorities, which constitute the only viable frame of reference for programming their operational activities at the country level, (b) align their operational strategic approaches, including through the CCA and the UNDAF, with the national development strategies and national poverty reduction strategies, where they exist, and (c) pursue full integration of the operational activities for development at the country-level with national planning and programming, under the ownership, leadership, and with the agreement of the national government, while ensuring the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders at the national level at all stages of this process, and further requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on this issue before the next TCPR;

II. Funding for operational activities for development of the United Nations system

6. *Expresses concern* that focus of funding patterns of operational activities continues to shift from long term development orientation towards temporary and short term humanitarian activities; and urges donor countries to enhance their contributions to core resources for development;

7. *Reiterates* its call on all developed countries to take concrete steps towards reaching the target of providing official development assistance at the level of 0.7 per cent of GNP as soon as possible, and requests all donor countries and countries in a position to do so to substantially increase their contributions to the organizations of the United Nations system on a multi-year basis, particularly to their non-earmarked resource budgets. In that context, *urges* developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as ODA to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries;

8. *Invites* the governing bodies of all organizations of the United Nations development system to address systematically the funding of their operational activities and calls upon all Member States of those organizations to explore, where appropriate, additional sources of financial support and alternative funding modalities so as to secure the critical mass of resources, in particular non-earmarked ones, required to ensure adequate functioning and pursuit of long-term objectives identified as internationally agreed development goals, including targets established at the Third UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries;

9. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council, at its operational activities segment, to undertake, on a regular basis, a comprehensive review of the trends and perspectives in funding for the United Nations system's development cooperation, comparing it with other forms of multilateral development cooperation;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to explore various funding options of increasing financing for operational activities and to examine ways to enhance predictability, long-term stability, reliability and adequacy of funding for United Nations system's operational activities for development including through the identification of new possible funding mechanisms, such as assessed contributions, negotiated pledges and voluntary contributions while preserving the advantages of the current funding modalities, and submit a report to the GA through the substantive session of ECOSOC in 2005;

III. Capacity-building

11. *Calls upon* UN organizations to provide further support to the efforts of developing countries to establish and/or maintain effective national planning institutions, and support the implementation and, as necessary, the devise of national strategies for capacity-building in their pursuit of internationally agreed development goals;

12. *Calls also upon* UN organizations to adopt measures which ensure sustainability in capacity-building activities, by enhancing including further development of programme execution modalities so as to maximize support to national capacity development;

13. *Stresses* that developing countries, in order to meet internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs, should have access to new and emerging technologies, which requires technology transfer, technical cooperation and the building and nurturing of a scientific and technological capacity to participate in the development and adaptation of these technologies to local conditions and in this regard urges Member States and the United Nations system including funds, programmes and agencies to ensure promotion and transfer of new and emerging technologies in developing countries through their planning instruments;

IV. Transaction costs and efficiency

14. *Invites* all the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system actively involved in development cooperation activities and their respective management to adopt harmonization and simplification measures such as streamlining procedures, avoiding duplications and wastes, alleviating the burden of reporting requirements and reducing transaction costs of operational activities for development, with a view to achieve a significant reduction in the administrative and procedural burden to the organizations and their national partners that derive from the preparation and implementation of operational activities;

15. *Calls upon* the organizations of the United Nations system to make significant progress in such areas as decentralization, delegation of authority, delivery and financial regulations, flexible use and allocation of personnel, sharing of services and premises, so as to make the country-level functioning of the United Nations development system more efficient and effective;

V. Coherence, effectiveness and relevance of operational activities for development

16. *Takes note of* the progress made by the United Nations system in the context of an improved functioning of the resident coordinator system, also through mechanisms such as the CCA and the UNDAF, to achieve greater country-level programmatic coherence within the system and through their impact on teamwork among the organizations of the system, particularly those represented at the country level;

17. *Highlights* that, in spite of this progress, participation of the funds, programmes, and agencies of the UN development system in country-level operational activities for development and field-level coordination mechanisms is still uneven and, for some organizations, inadequate, and in this context calls upon the UN system to improve coordination by mobilizing and using its expertise in support of the country-level operational activities for development at the request of national authorities;

18. *Calls upon* the United Nations development system to undertake a determined effort for a more inclusive approach in promoting inter-agency collaboration, both at the country and headquarters levels, and requests the United Nations system Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), in collaboration with the United Nations Development Group, to take the necessary steps to secure a more participatory involvement of the United Nations development system in the country-level operations and their coordination mechanisms, as well as by ensuring a more active inclusion of those organizations with no country offices;

19. *Urges* the United Nations system to enhance the effectiveness of its operational activities for development, including through further financial, organizational and technical support to the resident coordinator system, and strongly recommends to the United Nations system draw from the accumulated experience available within the system in all pertinent economic, social, environmental, and other technical domains, including such areas as employment, economic management, knowledge sharing and transfer of technology, rural development, human settlements and urbanization, and trade, especially in those cases where these domains are crucial to the development of the recipient country, facilitating the access of developing countries to the services available within the system on the basis of its comparative advantages and expertise;

20. *Stresses* that funding for the strengthening of the United Nations field presence should be additional to programmed resources for recipient countries;

21. *Requests*, in that regard, a more comprehensive system-wide involvement of all organizations of the United Nations system in the overall effort to support developing countries through a better use of the contribution of specialized agencies, regional commissions and other UN agencies, including those with no country representation or limited country-level presence, ensuring that the CCA and the UNDAF respond to the development plan and strategies of the country and facilitate the fuller use of capacities available within the system as a whole on the basis of its comparative advantages, while maintaining the strategic select orientations of those instruments, with no prejudice for those contributions that the country may need from highly specialized technical interventions and which may not find adequate definition in system-wide coordination mechanisms;

22. *Calls upon* all the funds, programmes and agencies of the United Nations development system to adhere to the National Execution Modality (NEX);

VI. Country-level capacity of the United Nations system

23. *Reiterates* the principle, as contained in resolution 44/211 and resolution 47/199, that the United Nations system's country-level presence should be tailored, to the specific development needs of recipient countries as required by their country programmes and that the range and quantity of skills and expertise assembled by the United Nations system at the country-level, under the team leadership of the resident coordinator, including through system-wide, knowledge networks and communities of practice, should correspond to the technical backstopping and capacity-building needs and requirements of the developing countries;

24. *Requests* the UN organizations of development system, while considering means to strengthen their country-level capacities, focusing to the specific development needs of recipient countries, to avoid taking over responsibilities of other Secretariat Departments, inter alia the DPI, that may weaken operational capacities;

25. *Invites* UN organizations of development system to consider means to strengthen their country-level capacities including through complementary measures at their headquarters;

VII. Evaluation of operational activities for development

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to assess the effectiveness of the United Nations system's operational activities for development, including in particular by assessing the effective use of all capacities available to provide a comprehensive and flexible response to developing countries' demand for development support, and further requests him to report on the results of this assessment in the context of the next triennial policy review at its 62nd session;

27. *Recognizes* the need to optimize the link of evaluation to performance on the achievement of developmental goals, and *encourages* the United Nations development system to strengthen its evaluation activities with particular focus on development results, including through the effective use of the UNDAF Results Matrix, and the systematic use of monitoring and evaluation approaches at the system-wide level and the promotion of joint and/or collaborative approaches to the evaluation; and further encourages the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), under the aegis of the CEB, to make further progress in system-wide collaboration on evaluation;

28. *Requests* the UN development system to conduct evaluations of its operations at the country-level in close consultation with the national governments, and for this purpose, to assist governments in the development of national evaluation capacities, through inter alia better use of lessons learned from past activities at the country level, *recognizing* that national governments have primary responsibility in coordinating and evaluating external assistance, including that from the United Nations system;

29. *Requests* the SG to submit a report to the 60th session of the GA evaluating the activities of the UN funds and programmes, and the implementation of their mandates with a view to, inter alia,

- avoid duplication of mandates and activities amongst them as well as with other UN institutions, in order to preserve the long term development orientation of the UN funds and programmes, in accordance with their original mandates in all operational activities, including in situations of transition from relief to development, and

- avoid the evolution of their functions beyond their original mandate without the prior approval of the GA.

VIII. Regional dimensions

30. *Calls upon* the organizations of the UN development system, the regional commissions and other regional entities, as appropriate, to intensify their cooperation and adopt more collaborative approaches to support country-level development initiatives at the request of recipient countries, also through a closer collaboration within the resident coordinator system, improving mechanisms for accessing the technical capacities of the United Nations system at the regional and sub-regional levels;

31. *Invites* the governing bodies of the organizations of the UN development system to give greater and more systematic consideration to the regional dimensions of development cooperation and promote measures for more intensive inter-agency collaboration at the regional and sub-regional level, facilitating inter-country exchanges of experience and promoting both intra-regional and interregional cooperation, as appropriate;

IX. South-south cooperation and development of national capacities

32. *Recommends* that South-South cooperation be considered as a driver of development effectiveness and be incorporated in the multi-year funding frameworks of all UN funds and programmes;

33. *Urges* Member States and the organizations of the UN development system to celebrate the UN day for South-South cooperation in a befitting and comprehensive manner every year.

34. *Emphasizes* the need to mobilize additional resources for enhancing South-South cooperation, including through triangular cooperation;

35. *Urges* organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to mainstream, in their programmes and through their country-level activities and country offices, modalities to support South-South cooperation that would promote identification and dissemination of best practices, promote indigenous knowledge, know-how and technology in the South, and facilitate networking among experts and institutions in developing countries;

36. *Encourages also*, in this regard, UN funds and programmes to contribute to the periodic updating of WIDE Electronic Databank operated by UNDP Special Unit on South-South Cooperation, in coordination with governments, allowing for the wide diffusion of and access to the information contained therein, including experiences, best practices and potential partners in South-South Cooperation;

37. *Highlights* that, in spite of progress achieved in this area, further efforts are required to better understand the approaches and potential of national capacity development through South-South cooperation as a core objective of the United Nations system's development cooperation, and calls upon all the organizations of the system to maximize their support to national capacity development in the context of South-South cooperation;

X. Gender

38. *Calls upon* all organizations of the United Nations system to articulate specific country-level goals and targets to be pursued in accordance with the national development strategies and within their organizational mandates to achieve gender equality and gender mainstreaming in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes;

39. *Urges* all organizations of the system to collaborate with the resident coordinator system to provide gender specialist resources, in support of gender mainstreaming in country-level activities in all sectors where they operate, working closely with relevant national counterparts, in generating quantitative and qualitative information required to produce better analysis of gender-related issues of development;

40. *Encourages* the continuing efforts to improve the gender balance on appointments within the United Nations system at the headquarters and the country level in positions that affect operational activities with due regard to representation of women from developing countries and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographic representation;

XI. Transition from relief to development

41. *Recognizes* that the United Nations development system has a vital role to play in situations of transition from relief to development, and given the complexity of challenges that countries in those circumstances face, requests the organizations of the system to take the necessary measures to strengthen inter-departmental and inter-agency coordination to promote an integrated approach, which takes account of the country-specific character of those challenges, within a coherent, coordinated and harmonized inter-agency assistance at the country level;

42. *Stresses* in this regard the need for such transitional activities to be undertaken under national ownership through the development of national capacities at all levels to manage the transition process;

43. *Recommends* the development of South/South cooperation modalities including triangular cooperation modalities to assist the transition from relief to development through, inter alia, the use of information technologies and knowledge management systems as well as exchange of expertise to enable countries in that situation to benefit from the experience of other developing countries;

44. *Urges* Member States to consider more coordinated and flexible approaches to funding operational activities for development in situations of transitions from relief to development, making use of multiple resource mobilization instruments and stressing the need for adequacy and timeliness of the resource availability in the recovery phase, stressing that contributions to humanitarian assistance and other short term funding requirements in transition situations should not be provided at the expense of development assistance but through additional funding efforts that meet the requirements of recovery and reconstruction;

XII. Follow-up

45. *Reaffirms* that the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system should take appropriate actions for the full implementation of the present resolution, as it was indicated in paragraphs 91 and 92 of resolution 56/201;

46. *Requests* the Secretary-General, after consultation with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council, at its substantive session of 2005, on an appropriate management process, containing clear

guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time frames for the full implementation of the present resolution;

47. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council, during the operational activities segment of its substantive session of 2006 to examine the operational activities of the United Nations system in order to evaluate the implementation of the present resolution with a view to ensuring its full implementation;

48. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the present resolution in the context of the triennial policy review, and to make appropriate recommendations.
