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Statement by H.E. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nepal as Chair of the LDCs to the United Nations, at the Operational Activities Segment of the ECOSOC Substantive Session, New York, 17 July 2012

Mr. President,

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Least Developed Countries. I associate with the statement made by the representative of Algeria on behalf of G-77 and China. My delegation expresses sincere thanks to the Secretariat for the presentation of the reports on this agenda item.

Mr. President,

We greatly value the United Nations operational activities within the framework of international development cooperation. It is essential that UN operational activities must respond to development needs of the program countries as articulated in their development policies, plans and programs, and must also respect the principle of national ownership and leadership. We underline the universal, voluntary, neutral and multilateral character of UN operational activities with special focus on the LDCs, which are at the bottom rung of the development ladder and have higher proportion of poverty and deprivation. But they have limited financial, technological, human and institutional capacities to address these challenges than any other group of countries. They depend more on UN System for both normative and operational activities. This should be borne in mind while evaluating the activities and setting the strategic direction through QCPR.

The Istanbul Program of Action (IPOA) outlines the basic framework for a renewed and strengthened global partnership to address structural constraints and particular vulnerabilities of the LDCs, thereby reaching the overarching goal of enabling half of them to meet the criteria of graduation by 2020. The United Nations and its various agencies are an integral part of this global compact. They have a special responsibility to ensure full, effective and expeditious implementation of the IPOA as well as to provide further priority support to this group of countries in their strategic programming and operational framework.

Furthermore, LDCs are most off-track in meeting, and will not be able to attain, the MDGs by 2015. This dialogue is therefore important as it is also taking place on the heels of the Rio+20 conference and prior to the discussions on setting the post 2015 development agenda.

As a successor to the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCPR), the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) has been undertaken as a mechanism to assess the coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the UN operational activities for development. We fully concur with the conclusion of the SG report on the first QCPR that with the changing dynamics of development actors, institutions and partnerships, the UN entities must strategically

reposition their operational activities to respond to the current ground reality and emerging challenges at all levels. They should align and adapt their functions, funding practices, capacities, partnership approaches, organizational arrangements and governance structures.

We express serious concern that despite the broadened and diversified resource base of the UN development system, the core contribution has been declining and the imbalance between core and non-core resources is widening. These trends must be reversed. Predictability, adequacy and the development effectiveness are critical to us. The core and non-core resources should be fully aligned with strategic priorities of the program countries through national leadership. We should also ensure horizontal accountability as well as utilization of national systems and institutions to make program affective and sustainable while building national capacity. They are critical to the achievement and sustainability of the internationally agreed development goals including the MDGs.

We note with appreciation the progress made so far on system-wide coordination and coherence. We emphasize that the lessons learnt and the experiences gained from a total of thirty “delivery-as-one” pilot countries should be utilized. In this context, we welcome the announcement by the Secretary-General of his intention to launch a second generation of “Delivering as One”. Efforts should also be made to provide the program countries with increased access to the knowledge base, expertise and skills of all non-resident agencies, including the smallest one with no country or regional/sub-regional presence, in support of development initiatives of the program countries. Strengthening the capacity of UN to provide coherent and forward looking policy options to the program countries on the new and challenging issues should be given due priority. In all our efforts we should see to it that we have positive and measurable results and impacts on the ground.

On the burden sharing of coordination costs, we welcome the existence of a mechanism to spread the cost across relevant UN agencies. In this regard, we should look at how financial burden on small agencies with limited capacities could be reduced. In this context, we underline that the UN system should make continued efforts to realize cost savings by streamlining the processes for preparation, monitoring and reporting on United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and country programs.

Mr. President,

South-South cooperation has great potential to transform the global development landscape. Its potential for trade, investment, economic and technological cooperation need to be fully harnessed as a complement to, but not a substitute for, North-South cooperation. Enhanced South-South cooperation will play an important role in building LDCs’ productive capacity across the board, which will be critical to enable them to graduate from LDC status. The global South has effective knowledge-sharing systems, proven institutional capacity-building solutions and affordable and appropriate technologies, and can also foster meaningful regional integration. These should be more broadly scaled up all across the South. The UN system must improve the coherence and coordination of its support for South-South cooperation through the use of innovative joint programs, multi-country initiatives, stronger multilateral funding and coordination mechanisms and entities. Financial support for South-South cooperation remains crucial for scaling up its successful programs and its status in the days ahead.

Thank you.