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## Economic and Social Council

Substantive session of 2015

### **Dialogue with the Executive Heads of funds and programmes:**

*Fit-for-purpose in the post-2015 era – which QCPR-mandated actions require accelerated and/or scaled-up implementation if UN development system is to be ready for challenges of post-2015 development agenda?*

New York, February 24, 2015

Speaking Points Switzerland

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### **Speaking Points Switzerland**

Distinguished President and Panelists

While we wish to commend the heads of agencies for their commitment regarding the implementation of the QCPR mandates and the commendable progress achieved in this regard, we also identified certain elements that require accelerated efforts. I will limit myself today to three areas of certain concern:

- (1) More Progress regarding the UNDG Plan of Action for Headquarters
- (2) Further strengthen the role of and support to the Resident Coordinators
- (3) Advance mandates related to the Simplification and Harmonization of Business Practices

#### **(1) More progress regarding the UNDG Plan of Action for Headquarters**

A first point where we would wish to hear the views of the distinguished panellists is this: Switzerland supports very much the **UNDG Plan of Action for Headquarters** that shall address HQ bottlenecks for system-wide mandates contained in the QCPR. In order to allow UN country teams to fully realize the efficiency gains under the

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Delivering as One approach, **the remaining 31 out of 55 uncompleted actions need to be addressed** (as by latest update in October 2014). Implementation is particularly lagging in the fields of **“Operating as One” and “Communicating as One”**.

*Why is this so? And what is foreseen to accelerate progress in this regard? Are there any plans to formulate a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of an UNDG Plan of Action for Headquarters?*

## **(2) Further strengthen the role of and support to the Resident Coordinators**

For Switzerland the Resident Coordinators are the backbone for enhancing coherence amongst the system and for delivering results on a common agenda in partner countries. We therefore commend the UNDG for the steps taken to clarify the leadership role of the Resident Coordinators and to strengthen the effectiveness of the functional firewall.

However, can you explain why in the countries where UNDP has established a Country Director position, **only about 85 but not 100% of Country Directors have received formal delegation of authority?**

We were also surprised to learn that only **77%** of UNCT members were aware that they **have a reporting obligation to the Resident Coordinator on resource mobilization and programme implementation performance** of any UNDAF/one UN programme elements led by their respective agency! Having such information is a prerequisite for steering and ensuring effectiveness of the UN.

In order to strengthen the role of the Resident Coordinator, Switzerland wishes to flag the idea that in the future all UN organizations' country directors' **annual performance review would be done directly by the Resident Coordinator**. This would strengthen the RC's position and help achieving stronger commitment of all UN organizations towards delivering results together.

Additionally, we note with concern that Resident Coordinators have called for more coherence at the level of **agency headquarters and mentioned continued lack of support and even resistance to Delivering as One within some agencies**.

Switzerland strongly urges the system to take these points serious and address them correspondingly.

### **(3) Advance mandates related to the Simplification and Harmonization of Business Practices**

Furthermore, the **Harmonization of Business Practices** mandates is an area where Switzerland sees not sufficient emphasis from the UNDG. Also RCs clearly stated that better harmonization of agency policies and procedures would enhance implementation of QCPR resolutions.

Let me point out two concrete elements out of the various Harmonization of Business Practices mandates:

First, while the QCPR mandates the UN development system to look into **joint global, regional and country level service centers**, some organizations have decided to develop their own regional service centers without a clear focus on joint action. In our view this goes against the spirit of the QCPR and an OneUN.

In this regard, Switzerland agrees with the report that the implementation of a joint operations facility in Brazil is a step in the right direction but that a pilot in only one location does not suffice to effectively implement harmonized business solutions in all Programme Countries. And in our views, organizations like **UNICEF and WFP** should absolutely also participate in such a pilot.

Secondly, UNDG and High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) have in the past identified bottlenecks to collaboration in operations such as the fact, that guidance developed at HQ is not used in the field. Yet, to Switzerland it is not clear whether and how this finding was addressed since. **The best guidance from HQ is only as useful as it is implemented in the field. In this regard, we were surprised to read in the RC survey that RCs ask the HQ to provide guidelines to implement QCPR recommendations on harmonization of operational aspects and business processes.**

For us it seems clear is not sufficient that at HQ level an action plan is worked out, but this action plan with clear timeframe for harmonization of policies, regulations,

systems and procedures needs to be proactively communicated to UN country teams so as to facilitate implementing QCPR recommendations at country level. Updates on the progress, also to Member States, should be part of this communication.

Hence all organizations can make a real difference if they communicate to their offices the need to collaborate with others. In our assessment this can hardly be done effectively by the HLCM or the UNDG alone but has to come through internal channels.