

Session IV

ECOSOC dialogue on longer-term positioning of UNDS

June 9th, 15:00 – 18:00 at ECOSOC Chamber

Firstly, I would like to thank Ambassador María Emma Mejía Vélez, vice-president of ECOSOC for convening a series of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system. I am pleased that the first phase will successfully be concluded with this session today. I would also like to thank all the panellists for their rich inputs.

Indeed, this series of dialogue has been very fruitful and timely. Let me quickly look back on the past sessions and touch upon some of the main issues we discussed.

(Functions)

First, we discussed about “functions” of the UNDS. There was an emerging consensus that we must first think about the functions we expect for UNDS before we consider funding, governance, structural arrangement or other issues.

Deliberation of the Post 2015 development Agenda is a critical opportunity for the international community to consider how all the stakeholders should effectively and efficiently cooperate for the sustainable development of the world. UN cannot achieve all the SDGs alone, and the function of the UNDS should be thought out with this assumption. As we discussed, we must think about the system’s comparative advantages, including legitimacy, neutrality, global reach and convening power, to name a few.

Also, we must not forget that the national ownership is of the utmost importance in development. The functions of UNDS in each country should therefore be tailored in accordance with the national priorities and needs. We also think that bridging the gap between humanitarian and development assistance is crucial in the post 2015 development era, and it is something that UNDS is expected to play a major role.

(funding)

Secondly, there was a discussion on funding of the system. There was a strong call for predictable, flexible and sufficient funding in order for UNDS to function as it is expected in the new era. While recognizing the importance of core resources, a large share of non-core resources will continue to be a reality. UNDS as well as Member States should continue their endeavour to utilize such non-core resources in a more flexible manner. Trust Funds and vertical funds will also contribute to funding the system, but we must be careful not to keep on creating new funds in order to respond to each new issue and end up with more fragmented funds.

On the other hand, in order to increase core resources, UNDS should also continue its effort to broaden donor base, as well as to leverage private funds into development.

(governance)

Thirdly, on the issue of governance of the system, we discussed on the three levels of governance structures, namely system-wide level, agency level and country level. There were many comments around the necessity to strengthen system-wide governance in order to improve system-wide coherence. It should not mean that we need to create a whole new governance system. Instead, we should continue working on improving the existing system such as ECOSOC and HLPF, as well as to think about the interlinkages and demarcation of the functions of the three levels, to avoid duplication.

Governance is closely related to funding issue, as governance structure may provide an incentive or a disincentive for Member States to increase their contributions. We should be careful not to decrease the amount of total contribution by rushing a reform. Instead, it would be wise to incentivize Member States to increase contributions by providing appropriate status to those countries that provide substantial contributions.

(Organizational arrangements, capacity and impact, partnership)

With regard to the organizational arrangements of the system, we

think it is not easy, nor needed, to drastically change the organizational chart of the system at once. On the other hand, further promotion of delivering as one approach and the Standard Operating Procedures and strengthening of Resident Coordinator system are practical steps and can make a difference in the field, in terms of system-wide coherence, effectiveness and efficiency. UNDS coming together as one in the field will also contribute to expansion of partnership with other stakeholders.

The second phase will begin after the adoption of the post 2015 development agenda in September, and I very much look forward to the next phase as well.