



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. MOHAMED EDREES, AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAIR OF THE GROUP OF 77, AT THE ECOSOC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT SEGMENT: GENERAL DEBATE (New York, 28 February 2018)

I have the honor to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset, the Group would like to thank the Secretary-General and his team for the Report entitled "Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda," which elaborates on the vision and the initial proposals outlined in the June 2017 report. We also thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her continuous engagement throughout this process.

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is our highest priority and the overarching objective of the UNDS. The repositioning of the UNDS should fully respect States' sovereignty, independence, national ownership and leadership, bearing in mind the different development levels and realities on the ground in these countries. Development itself must be the focus of this process.

Allow me to share with you some brief comments on the seven proposed areas of transformation, while we will submit to you, Mr. Chair full versions of our statements under the various sessions of this segment, as input to your summary.

First, on the **new generation of country teams**, the Group asserts that the UNCT configuration at the country level should be determined in full consultation and agreement with national governments. The most vulnerable countries need continued strong presence of the UNCTs. The mechanism for the support and engagement of the non-resident UN entities to program countries needs to be developed and shared with member states. There should also be active and full participation of national governments in the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the UNDAF. Furthermore, gaps in SDGs coverage need to be urgently addressed by UNCTs, as the UNDS currently lacks capacity and resources to support member states in achieving a number of SDGs.

Second, on the **resident coordinator system**, the Group believes that a reinvigorated UNRC System must maintain its development focus. The RCs should serve the purpose of the implementation of the UNDAF, under national leadership and ownership, with a developmental and non-politicized perspective. There is a need to improve and strengthen the hiring process in order to ensure RCs are strong sustainable development professionals, and that there is balanced geographical representation and gender parity. We would also like to assert that RC functions should in no way entail any political role. We would like to highlight that OP 24 of the QCPR provides the guiding framework regarding UNRCs competencies on better coordination between development cooperation, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts. There cannot be a 'one size fits all' approach to this issue. As to the funding of the reinvigorated RC system, it should not put any financial burden on developing countries. As to the new oversight and management functions of UNDOCO over the RCs, the Group is of the view that these proposals deserve further consideration.

Third, on the **regional approach**, while we share the view expressed by the SG in his Report on the need to review regional functions and capacities, we highlight however, that unlike the

proposals on the global and national levels, the regional approach lacks sufficient detail. We reiterate the need to avoid a "one-size-fits-all" model for the regional approach. The proposals should be flexible, building upon the specificities of each region. Similarly, the role of DESA, as a leading UN entity in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, needs to be strengthened and its role of policy guidance should be enhanced at the regional level.

Fourth, on strengthening global-level accountability, transparency and oversight of the UNDS, the Group agrees that the system has taken important steps in recent years to improve its transparency, accountability and reporting on results, and we reiterate our strong support for such steps. Any proposed changes in ECOSOC, however, should be discussed in the context of the review of the implementation of GA Resolution 68/1. We are of the view that the initiation of parallel processes would not prove efficient. We are similarly considering the proposed integration of the New York-based Executive Boards into a joint executive board.

Fifth, on the **funding compact**, the Group expresses its concern at the continuing decline of core contributions to the UNDS. Likewise, we emphasize the need to move from the present funding pattern by improving flexibility and quality of non-core contributions as well as funding practices, with a view to align them with the needs and priorities of developing countries. We also support pooled funding mechanisms within the UNDS as an alternative to strict earmarking, in complement to core contributions, which remain the bedrock of the system. The Group stresses that strengthening funding mechanisms should not put any financial burden on developing countries. Finally, the Group welcomes the "funding dialogue" proposed by the SG, and looks forward to further clarity on the modalities and timeframe of the proposed dialogue.

Sixth, on **partnerships**, the Group emphasizes the need to ensure that they are aligned with national priorities of program countries. National governments have a crucial role to play in forging partnerships at country-level. The proposal of making RC offices as country-level hubs for partnerships goes beyond the QCPR mandates on this matter. Ultimately, the UNDS is part of the intergovernmental machinery of the United Nations, and any standards should be the outcome of intergovernmental processes, adopted by the universal membership of the UN.

Finally, on the **system-wide strategic document**, we believe that the document overlaps with the Secretary General's report itself and prefers to engage on the repositioning process on the basis of the latter. The proposed approach to the system-wide strategic document as a 'living document' creates a parallel track to the QCPR, and goes beyond its mandate. Furthermore, the Group recalls that the UNDS should maintain its development focus. Concerning the linkage between development, humanitarian assistance and peace-building efforts, the Group views that this should be limited to enhancing coordination among the three areas at the national level within the specific context of countries facing humanitarian emergencies, and those in conflict or post-conflict situations in accordance with OP24 of the QCPR. The proposed "cross-pillar approaches" extrapolate the QCPR mandate in this regard.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, the Group welcomes the appointment of H.E. Mr. Sabri Boukadoum of Algeria, and H.E. Mr. Ib Petersen of Denmark, as co-facilitators to lead the intergovernmental process on UNDS reform following the conclusion of this operational activities segment.

The United Nations Development System is at a critical moment. We must ensure that it is better able to support countries and deliver on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As we stated in our statement on 22 January 2018 at the introduction by the SG of his December Report, we look

forward to constructively engaging with our partners in the upcoming period so that we can all achieve this goal. We will reach out to all our partners in order to ensure that we can achieve a UNDS that is worthy of the 2030 Agenda.

A final note of appreciation is owed to you, Mr. Vice-President, for your efforts throughout the past weeks in conducting important informal briefings on this important issue.

Thank you.