



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. MOHAMED GAD, MINISTER PLENIPOTENTIARY, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT TO THE UNITED NATIONS: QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS ON THE SYSTEM-WIDE STRATEGIC DOCUMENT, AT THE BRIEFING ON THE REPOSITIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM, IN PREPARATION FOR THE OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT SEGMENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (New York, 5 February 2018)

At the outset the Group of G77 and China would like to note that the comments expressed today reflect the preliminary thoughts of the Group on the strategic document.

First, we would like to reiterate some of the Group's fundamental underlying principles that should guide the UNDS reform process to better adapt it to support countries, particularly developing countries, in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and their national plans and strategies. The QCPR's mandate should be the basis of any proposed reform of the UNDS. The Group is of a firm view that the QCPR is a development resolution and thus this should be the focus of the process.

Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is our highest priority and the overarching objective of the UNDS. In this regard, it is very important that the operational activities for development of the UNDS take into account the need to build, promote, and strengthen the capacity of developing countries in their efforts to address long-term sustainable development at the national level that still face difficulty in addressing poverty and hunger.

The process should also fully respect States' sovereignty, independence, and ownership over its own development pathways and recognize the importance of national ownership and leadership, bearing in mind the different development levels and realities on the ground in these countries. In this regard, they should take into account the different realities, capacities, and levels of national development, respecting national policies and priorities.

Second, the Group of 77 and China would like to make a number of general comments on the system-wide strategic document:

1) With regard to the cross-pillar approaches that integrate normative and operational mandates referred to in paragraphs 16, 17e and 36 of the document, the Group would like to note that it is not clear what that concept means. The group does not recall a mandate emanating from the QCPR on the issue of cross-pillar approaches. The group further affirms that the UNDS should retain development as its nature and identity.

2) On the nexus between the development system with humanitarian assistance on the one hand and peace-building efforts on the other, the group emphasizes that this interrelation at the national level must be framed in the context of countries facing humanitarian emergencies, conflict, and post-conflict situations, in accordance with OP24 of the QCPR. In a similar vein, the Joint Steering Committee needs to be consistent with the mandate delineated in para 24 of the QCPR resolution.

3) The group would like to note that there is substantial overlap and duplication between the strategic document and the report. Many of the sections of the report are repeated once again in the strategic document, including UNDAF (paras 8, 9 and 10, 17(c), 17(d), 23 and 27) the UNCTs

(paras 12 and 18), the RC system (17d, 18b and 24a) accountability and oversight (paras 17g, 29c and 30) and the Funding Compact (paras 31 to 35). Therefore it is the preference of the group not to duplicate the work for member states and not to deal with them in the strategic document altogether.

4) Para 25 of the SG report refers to the system-wide strategic document as a living document that will be updated and implemented by the UNDG based on the full set of proposals put forward in the present report. Moreover, para 17(e) of the report states that the Executive Heads will conduct an annual strategic review of the UNDS support for the 2030 agenda. We believe that the proposed annual review creates a parallel track to the QCPR, which is not what QCPR mandate states.

5) Finally, the group expresses its concern that several paras of the strategic document deviate significantly from the mandates delineated in the QCPR. In other words, many paras go beyond the boundaries of the membership driven nature of the QCPR mandates.

Third, with regard to the section entitled System-Wide Strategic Document: Realigning Collective Support for the 2030 Agenda contained in the report (paras 15 to 31), the Group of 77 and China would like to make a number of specific comments:

1) In para 19, we commend the focus of national capacity development as the most critical function of the UNDS and the recognition that it should be given priority across all functions.

2) In para 24, we seek further clarification on what is meant by funding needs flowing into joint programming and other funding mechanisms that are outcome-based rather than project-based.

3) With regard to the reference to system-wide flagship initiatives in para 27 of the report, we are not clear what this is about nor about its utility in delivering on the mandate. The group also does not recall a mandate for such initiatives in the QCPR.

4) With regard to paras 29 - 31 of the report, we believe that the issues tackled in these paras do not relate directly to the strategic document. As such, they warrant a separate discussion. Since the Para 31 mentioned the role of UNDESA, we would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the central role of UNDESA to support inter-governmental processes and enhancing the capacity of developing countries to implement the 17 SDGs with adequate resources allocated to support national needs and priorities.

Finally, on the Annex, the Group of 77 and China believes it is premature at this stage to pronounce on the nature of the strategic document. Nevertheless, the group would like to share some concerns on some of the elements contained in the strategic document as follows:

1) We would like to seek clarification on the four guiding principles outlined in para 6 and how will they address the gaps in the system?

2) We seek further clarification on what is meant by shared common analysis from a variety of sources and partners that will inform the UNDAF when conducting Common Country Assessments in para 8.

3) The group believes that the narrative of para 10 is selective and cherry picks among the different sustainable development goals.

4) What is exactly meant by the 'convening role' of the UN system in para 13?

5) Regarding the issue of partnerships as delineated in paras 12 and 14, the group believes that forging effective partnerships with civil society, the private sector and other actors without coordinating with the government undermines efficiency and national ownership. We would also like to seek clarification on how UN development system coherence of partnership efforts will be achieved without the integration of these into one operational framework at the country or regional levels. The Group is interested in knowing how duplication of efforts will be avoided if there is no such integration. In addition, the Group would like to seek clarification on what is meant by "flexibility to operate".

6) Para 16 mentions that the UNDS needs to move towards a more joint-risk analysis, a more joined up planning, integrated policy advice and joint monitoring and reporting, we seek clarification on who would do this exercise.

7) With regard to the strategic recommendations and their implementation (paras 17 and 18), we seek further clarification regarding to whom these recommendations are directed.

8) The QCPR did not contain any reference to any core system functions as outlined in para 20. Moreover, the QCPR did not treat capacity development as a separate function, but rather as an overarching objective that underpinned all other functions. Direct support and delivery (para 20 (e)) is also not mentioned in the QCPR. Moreover, we would like to inquire on the rationale and mandate behind the listing regarding the 'countries in special situations?' While must refrain from inconsistency in the listing which may cause any confusion."

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77

G-77