

ECOSOC operational activities segment H.E. Ambassador Krzysztof Szczerski, Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, responsible for the operational activities for development segment

Opening remarks

20 May 2025, 10.00 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the 2025 operational activities for development segment of the Economic and Social Council. I extend a warm welcome to all delegations, UN agencies, and resident coordinators, who have gathered here—both in person and online—to engage in this critical dialogue.

This Segment is one of the most important platforms for reviewing the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and results of the United Nations development system. It is also where we shape its future.

The Pact for the Future, adopted at last year's Summit, has set out pathways for strengthened multilateralism that support the 2030 Agenda. However, the Secretary-General's 2025 report is clear: while reforms have strengthened the coherence, responsiveness and effectiveness of the UN development system, urgent action is still needed to scale up support, address persistent funding gaps, and ensure impact at country level.

The theme guiding this year's Segment—"Keeping the promise on sustainable development in times of uncertainty – The United Nations development system delivering for results", could not be more relevant.

This Segment will focus on assessing the progress made by the United Nations development system in implementing the mandates of the

quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR). It will provide a critical opportunity to shape the new QCPR cycle and offer clear direction for the development system as we enter the final stretch before 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our discussions will draw on the evidence-based report of the Secretary-General on QCPR implementation, as well as the annual report of the Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group on the Development Coordination Office and the Resident Coordinator System, including their annexes.

Through a focused dialogue with Executive Heads of the United Nations development system entities, we will explore how they are aligning their strategic plans with the 2024 QCPR priorities and adapting their operations to better support countries in a time of global crises and financial constraints.

We will hear directly from UN country teams and partners about how the UN system is helping to unlock financing and investment for the SDGs at the country level. This includes efforts to strengthen integrated national financing frameworks, mobilize public and private finance, and foster catalytic partnerships, tailored to diverse national contexts.

The Segment will also include critical dialogue on effective accountability. We will engage with the System-wide Evaluation Office and other oversight bodies on recent evaluations, review progress toward a system-wide evaluation policy that can improve coherence, transparency, and learning across the system. The discussion on accountability will include an important aspect on the approach that the System is taking to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment.

Furthermore, we will delve into how the development system can better support countries implementing the SDGs in complex settings—especially where development and peacebuilding efforts must be interlinked for

lasting results. A final session will focus on discussing how to embed durable solutions for internally displaced persons into development planning and ensure sustained engagement across the United Nations system and beyond – a discussion which is directly linked with 2024 QCPR.

Most importantly, however, we will hear from United Nations Member States. How the System functions at the country level, how it cooperates with partners, and what are the main lessons learned. We will hear experiences from very different realities – including these of least developed countries, small island developing states and landlocked developing countries. Constant exploration of those realities is an imperative of the UN Development System if it is to effectively deliver on the ground.

Let me underscore that the Segment will not stop at looking at what has been achieved so far or where challenges have persisted. This year's Segment also looks to the future—marking the beginning of the new QCPR cycle. The Segment will continue to provide UN Member States' guidance on QCPR implementation and ensure an oversight role over the reformed Resident Coordinator system. The discussions we have here will directly contribute to these key milestones, and it is essential that our shared ambition leads to tangible, accelerated progress on the ground.

Excellencies,

In closing let me briefly refer to a concept very dear to my own country – resilience. We must strengthen resilience of societies and institutions. Whether confronting poverty and hunger, climate change, conflicts, pandemic aftershocks, or the cost-of-living crisis, our development approach must be preventive, inclusive, as well as rooted in local leadership and partnerships. The UN development system is uniquely positioned to help countries build this resilience—if we ensure it has the tools, resources, and flexibility to deliver.

We meet at a pivotal moment. As the United Nations celebrates its 80th anniversary, we are also entering the final stretch toward 2030. The global community has made progress, yet too many of our ambitions remain unrealized. Development gaps persist, and new challenges—geopolitical, economic, and environmental—continue to strain the capacities of our institutions. The task before us is not simply to do more, but to do better, faster, and in ways that are transformative and accountable.

Let this week be one of clarity, ambition, and resolve to guide a UN development system that is fit for purpose—responsive, empowered, and accountable—and able to support all countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

I look forward to our deliberations,

Thank you.