

**CLOSING STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ALBERT R. CHIMBINDI,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC  
AND SOCIAL COUNCIL, RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OPERATIONAL  
ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT SEGMENT: THURSDAY, 25 MAY  
2023, 5:30 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.**

Excellencies,  
Madame Deputy Secretary-General,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

We have now arrived at the conclusion of the 2023 ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment.

The Segment sessions and interactive dialogues have provided an excellent opportunity for Member States to exchange views and experiences with key actors involved in operational activities for development at the national, regional and global levels. I am particularly glad that this year's Segment included high-level participation from both Member States and the United Nations development system.

Over these past three days, we have taken stock of the progress made by the UN development system on the implementation of the QCPR. We have reviewed progress in the UN development system's reforms, to provide more effective support to countries in their efforts to meet the ambition of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the context of the multiple crises the world is currently facing.

On the first day of the Segment, we heard of the experience of Zimbabwe, from my own Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Honourable Frederick M Shava, how even against the fierce headwinds, the UN development system was working to respond to the 2020 QCPR call to

enhance support to countries to achieve their national development plans and sustainable development objectives.

We heard from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General on the successes of the UN development system repositioning. We noted stronger country leadership and coordination, clearer focus of UN assets and a system that seeks faster and more efficient means to deliver more on the ground.

We also heard Member States' views on how the UN development system can strengthen its joint work and integrated policy advice, enhance cooperation with International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and continue to achieve efficiencies and savings in the development system's work.

Member States have clearly recognized the value of the Resident Coordinator system as the anchor of UN development system efforts in achieving the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, there was a clear message that the RC system cannot fulfil its important role unless its funding gap is urgently addressed. I therefore invite Member States to take a constructive and open approach in the consultation process to be launched by Secretary-General Guterres in the coming months, on the Resident Coordinator system funding, and work together to find a sustainable solution that will guarantee adequate predictable and, even, flexible funding of the RC system.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have heard how country level guidance and policy embedded in Common Country Analyses and Cooperation Frameworks from the system has facilitated a more consistent approach by UN entities. We, also, heard further calls for support and investment for the UN development system to deliver technical expertise to leave no one and no place behind, to support country transitions, to enhance collaboration across humanitarian,

development and peacebuilding interventions, and strengthen response to the interlinked crises.

We had the opportunity to hear from Government Representatives, Resident Coordinators, and UNCT members from two different country cases in Moldova and Viet Nam and hear about the successes and challenges in the UN country team's contribution on the ground. Despite the diverse situations, there was a clear and consistent message in both cases, that the reforms have transformed the delivery of UN support and created a much more effective channel of collaboration and coordination between the UN country team and the Host Government.

The regional assets of the UN development system are a key part of the repositioning. This morning, we heard diverse examples of how the system is responding to cross border and transboundary issues that are increasingly impacting programme countries. Examples in Africa, including in the Sahel, in Asia and in Latin America showed how the system is responding to bring common resources and global and regional expertise to support national priorities and action. There was, also, recognition that more must be done to match country-centric responses with cross-border coordination and a regional lens to regional development challenges.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen

We have heard from countries in special situations and Middle-Income Countries on the responsive UN development system's tailored support to their specific circumstances and examples of leveraging the system assets to support the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for Least Developed Countries and preparations for the upcoming conferences for Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. The discussion, also, recognized the positive feedback regarding cooperation on the ground between host Governments and the UN country teams. This has

been a notable and welcome contrast to the negative global outlook for SDG progress.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen

UN country teams are helping leverage financing for the SDGs, including in partnership with international financial institutions, as well as regional and national development banks. It is encouraging that Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs) are delivering tangible results in this regard, supporting countries in both tackling the short-term financial constraints they face and articulating their national development priorities. We have, also, discussed the significant barriers that developing countries encounter in accessing both private and public finance which remains a major concern. As noted during our discussions, we stand at a critical time of the climate crisis that will require a mass mobilization of significant amounts of public and private finance. Indeed, financing for development is the variable that will allow countries to come out of this crisis or fall deeper into it.

During the Funding Compact session, we have heard how the implementation of the Funding Compact commitment is mixed. Calls were made to Member States and UNSDG entities to meet their respective commitment to the Funding Compact. We look forward to the dialogue to be convened by the Deputy Secretary General with Member States, as well as at the national level with the Resident Coordinators, on the future of the Funding Compact.

The dialogue with the Executive Heads of UNICEF, UNOPS, and UNDRR this morning candidly addressed the impact of the reform on the UN development system's joint ability to support countries in responding to and mitigating the worst effects of multidimensional crises while keeping the focus on long-term development goals. Executive Heads highlighted how they are aligning their work and business models, by further adopting

integrated approaches, enhancing technical tools, improving knowledge sharing and working together to unlock transformative pathways and build resilience based on the needs and priorities of the countries they are supporting. Your calls for joint programming, where possible, and avoiding competition between entities were clearly heard.

In the session on Just Transitions, we heard how the UN development system is contributing towards efforts to achieve the transition to low carbon, an environmentally sustainable and climate-safe future, which is a matter of justice in itself, for people in vulnerable situations, and future generations who stand to suffer the most from climate change and environmental degradation.

The accountability session was greatly beneficial to remind ourselves of the role of ECOSOC as the governing body of the UN development system as a whole. This is particularly clear for the Resident Coordinator system which is at the heart of the UN development system, and which was discussed extensively throughout the last three days.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

We are deeply grateful to all the panellists who gave us informed and expert information, insight, and feedback, and to our moderators, who were instrumental in helping focus the discussions.

With our deliberations now complete, the Segment has fulfilled its expected role as a platform for accountability of the UN development system. I, also, welcome the intention of Member States to consider an ECOSOC Resolution on Operational Activities. I strongly encourage delegations to take the opportunity of a substantive Resolution to strengthen the role of the ECOSOC and address key outstanding issues and concerns, including those brought to our attention by the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-

General. In my role as Vice President responsible for the Segment, I will also prepare a Chair's Summary of our discussions that will be shared on the ECOSOC Operational Activities website.

Finally, I would like to thank the Secretariat, in particular DESA, DGACM, the Executive Office of the Secretary General and DCO for helping bring the Segment together and making it a success. I, also, thank the interpreters for their tireless work and dedication over the 3 days of the Segment, as well as the technical staff who facilitated our ability to hear from countries and UN staff outside New York and in the field. And lastly, I thank each and every one of you for dedicating your time and expertise to this essential work.

I wish good health to all of you and to your families.

And I now declare the 2023 OAS closed.