

Statement by Minister Counsellor Marianne Loe in ECOSOC on the Secretary-General's proposals for repositioning of the United Nations Development System, 10 November 2017

Madame President,

Thank you for this opportunity to share some thoughts on the reform of the UN development system with the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General.

Norway is a strong supporter of the Secretary-General's reform agenda. We welcome the vision in his June report, and look forward to the December report.

For us, country level delivery will be the litmus test for success. Changes at headquarters and regional levels should follow from needs and impediments identified at country level. We will therefore focus our comments primarily on the country level and on funding.

But first, let me emphasize that the mapping of functions and capacities asked for in the QCPR provides a rare opportunity to consider adjustments in the mandates – and perhaps even merger – of some of the many entities belonging to the UN development system. We have noted that the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) has not been part of the mapping exercise. We hope to see that DESA is included in the further analysis and development of recommendations on functions and capacities of the UN development system.

The Country level:

An independent Resident Coordinator with authority is key to ensure that the UNDS will deliver as expected at country level. Norway has been an advocate for splitting the dual role as UN Resident Coordinator and Resident Representative for UNDP at country level, and we do thus support this proposal.

It is crucial to define clearly the authority of the Resident Coordinator as well as the mutual accountability between the RC and members of the country team. It is our view that a direct reporting line from members of the country team to the Resident Coordinator in matters relating to implementation of joint priorities is key for improvement, complementing the existing reporting line to their respective headquarters.

The Resident Coordinator system also needs sufficient and robust funding, with more financial resources than today. A total funding package is necessary.

Norway supports the idea of developing different models for physical country presence, based on the country context and national priorities. We have advocated for a differentiated approach to UN engagement at the country level. The UN cannot and should not do everything everywhere. We have to ensure that the total limited resources are used in an efficient manner.

Funding Compact

We welcome the Secretary-General's idea of a funding compact. The rationale for such a funding compact should be to overcome the present mismatch between what member

states expect from the system and the way we fund it. The aim should be to ensure enhanced flexible and predictable financial resources – through increased core resources and outcome-based thematic support to individual organizations, and substantially increased use of inter-agency funding mechanisms at global, regional and country levels. The task is thus to strengthen the multilateral character of the UNDS and the burden sharing among member states again must come higher on the agenda, in particular in the case of core resources. It also means that the call for more flexible resources has to be addressed to all member states “in a position to do so”, not merely traditional major donors, as well as to non-state contributors.

Thank you.