

Economic and Social Council
Operational Activities Segment
General Debate
India Statement
by Mr. Siddharth Malik, First Secretary,
on 19 May, 2020

Mr. Chair,
Madam President of ECOSOC
Secretary-General

We thank the Secretary-General for the Report entitled “Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR)” which provides an update on the implementation of the 2016 QCPR and the reforms of the UN Development System (UNDS). We also thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her personal commitment and continuous engagement on the re-positioning of the UNDS.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Chair,

This year’s Operational Activities Segment is significant as it will be a stepping stone to our substantive deliberations in the QCPR negotiations later this year. Moreover, the segment will deliberate upon and will also give an opportunity to complete the remaining mandates of the re-positioning of UNDS – the Regional Review and the Multi-Country Office Review. Thus, in terms of the implementation of the reformed UNDS, the discussions are timely and important.

Mr. Chair,

India attaches great importance to the UNDS and its guiding principles. It is of utmost importance that the system does not slacken its focus on the needs of the poorest and the most deprived. An unrelenting focus on poverty eradication as the central and primary objective should therefore remain at the heart of UN's operational activities for development. This indeed was the mandate of the previous QCPR and this strategic direction must be maintained. The UN System must in fact sharpen its tools to attack the problem of poverty more directly especially in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is equally important that the fundamental principles of sovereignty, national ownership and leadership, and deference to national development plans and priorities must be the

pivots around which UN development activities are modeled and implemented. Externally imposed prescriptions should be avoided and national policy space respected.

We expect RCs to be transparent and fully accountable to the host national government. This includes effective and timely reporting from RC and UN Country Team (UNCT) to the host government. The UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework should be developed in full consultation and agreement with the respective host government. The Regional Collaborative Platforms and Issue Based Coalitions must be established after consultation with the respective Member States. These mechanisms should be based on priorities of the region decided by respective Member States of the region and not by UNCTs.

Mr. Chair,

We want to underscore the voluntary and non-binding nature of the Funding Compact. The ability to meet various commitments will vary as different Member States may pursue different elements of the Compact, from different starting points, progressively and at different speeds. The quality and volume of resources for implementation of the new arrangement must lead to improvement in system's predictability and impartiality, as per objective set out by the Secretary General at the beginning of the proposed reforms. We have to ensure that resources meant for core development programmes are not diverted; else it will have a deleterious effect on the development agenda of the developing countries, in particular on LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS.

Mr. Chair,

We look forward to a frank and interactive virtual discussion, which will provide overall coordination to the UNDS and an update on the progress made since the 2016 QCPR.

Let me assure you of India's active engagement and full support to the UNDS for the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as we enter the decade of action and delivery.

I thank you.