

Economic and Social Council Operational Activities Segment
General Debate
India Statement
18 May, 2021

Mr. Chair,
President of ECOSOC, Secretary-General

We thank the Secretary-General for the Report entitled “Implementation of General Assembly resolution 75/233 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 2020 QCPR and the reforms of the UN Development System (UNDS). We also thank Madam 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 Guinea on behalf of the G-77.

This year’s Operational Activities Segment is significant as it will be a stepping stone to our substantive deliberations on the review of Resident Coordinator system including its funding mechanism, especially at a time when the world continues to grapple with challenges of COVID-19 pandemic. We need to continue to strengthen our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve a more accountable, transparent and action oriented UNDS.

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, especially in view of the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, should remain at the heart of UN's operational activities for development. This indeed was the mandate of the 2020 QCPR and this strategic direction must be maintained. Reinvigorated resident coordinator system lies at the center of the repositioned UNDS and it must maintain its development focus, with eradication of poverty being the main objective.

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. UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework needs to be developed and implemented in full consultation and agreement with the respective host government, in accordance with their development needs and priorities.

RCs should be appointed in consultation with concerned program countries in accordance with their needs and priorities. We need to enhance representation of developing countries in the system, especially on the selection of RCs and recruitment of UNDCO staff. The current system of RC Funding is not sustainable. We need to have an adequate and predictable system of funding the RC system, and we therefore look forward to hearing more about your ideas of how the system can be made more sustainable.

On 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 financial resources must lead to improvement in system's predictability and impartiality. 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.

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 and challenges faced since the 2020 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 in this decade of action and delivery.

I thank you.