

ECOSOC 2022 Operational Activities for Development Segment

UN development system's support to building back better from COVID-19 and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

General Debate

India Statement

Madam

Chair,

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", which provides an update on the system-wide implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review and the reform of the United Nations development system (UNDS); and also apprises on the progress made in the implementation of the review of the resident coordinator system and the additional mandates contained in resolution 76/4 in that regard. We also thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her personal commitment and continuous engagement on the re-positioning of the UNDS.

2. The year in review had been a challenging one, especially for developing countries as they have tried to combat the Covid crisis and the resulting socio-economic impacts. **This year's Operational Activities Segment** is therefore significant as it will deliberate upon new results framework (with performance indicators and targets) for the resident coordinator system, and the RC system's funding model; supporting integrated policies and programmes to ensure equitable and universal access to social protection through the Cooperation Frameworks; assessing how repositioning of the UNDS at regional level is improving support to countries for achieving the SDGs; cross-border development challenges; among others. Thus, in terms of the implementation of the reformed UNDS, the discussions are timely and crucial.

3. India attaches great importance to the UNDS and its guiding principles. It is vital that the system does not weaken its focus on the needs of the poorest and the most vulnerable. We agree, Secretary General with your call to "rescue" the SDGs. 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 2020 QCPR, requesting stronger action on poverty eradication; 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 building back better from the pandemic.

4. It is equally imperative that the fundamental principles of sovereignty, **national ownership and leadership**, and deference to national development plans and priorities be the pivot around which UN development activities are modeled and implemented. Externally imposed prescriptions should be avoided and national policy space respected.

5. On the **Resident Coordinator system**, the existing funding model should continue. Should the modalities be changed following a review, focus should be on making the RC system more accountable and transparent, with effective and timely reporting by the UN country teams to the host government. It is important that the process is member-state driven and consultative. This includes the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, Regional Collaborative Platforms and Issue Based Coalitions. UN is an intergovernmental organization and it is our responsibility to strengthen this fundamental character in line with the interests of the Members States.

6. We are three years into the **Funding Compact** and would like to underscore that the quality and volume of resources for implementation of this arrangement should lead to improvement in system's predictability and impartiality, as per objective set out by the Secretary General at the beginning of the reforms. We reiterate 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.

7. UN Development System needs to amplify its impact while working to enhance support for **South-South cooperation**. If we are to be on track to achieve 2030 Agenda, it must be ensured that resources meant for core development programmes are not re-purposed. If so, they need to be brought back on track. Otherwise, it will have a deleterious effect on the development agenda of the developing countries, in particular on **LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS**.

8. In **conclusion**, the UN system must focus on those tasks it is uniquely qualified to deliver. And these should be supported with adequate and predictable volume of flexible resources. Let me assure you of India's active engagement and full support to the UNDS for the implementation of 2030 Agenda to ensure that we go back to the path of development and of achieving the SDGs.

I thank you.