



Statement

**ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment (17-19 May 2022)
Session 1: High-level dialogue between the Secretary-General and UN Member
States
United Nations
New York
17 May 2022**

**Your Excellency, Mr Secretary-General,
Madam Deputy Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,**

At the outset, South Africa aligns itself with the statement delivered by Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as well as that of the Africa Group.

We join other delegations in recognizing with appreciation the efforts of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General in reforming and seeking to improve the UN Development System, towards providing greater support to national governments in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. We also appreciate the opportunity of this meeting for a comprehensive review of these efforts.

Excellencies,

We are pleased to read in the Secretary-General's report of the positive assessment of the progress achieved under the repositioned United Nations Development System. The importance of the UN Development System in providing support for recovery from the devastating consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, towards achievement of the 2030 Agenda, cannot be over stated. As the report states "The lives of billions of people across the globe depend on keeping the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals" which "remain the world's best chance for a future of peace, dignity and prosperity". This is particularly true in Africa, which is also the biggest recipient of the Resident Coordinators System with 53 Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams.

South Africa remains strongly supportive of the reform efforts, and recently signed a vital instrument to drive the principles of the UN reform at a national level, in the form of the United Nations Strategic Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2020-2025 between the Government of South Africa and the UN. This framework is aligned with the country's long-term National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 and is

centred on four broad pillars and strategic-level priority areas of cooperation for the SA-UN partnership:

- a) Inclusive, just and sustainable economic growth.
- b) Human capital and social transformation.
- c) Effective, efficient and transformative governance.
- d) Climate resilience and sustainably managed natural resources.

Development of this framework was a positive example of the effectiveness of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system, which was instrumental in coordinating and formulating the framework's development. This process saw rigorous, wide-ranging consultations with various stakeholders from government, private sector, labour and civil society organisations.

Excellencies,

As we have learned in the report, and seen in our own context, these reform processes are already bearing fruit. As we go forward, South Africa would like to add its voice to others in emphasizing the following key points:

- The importance of upholding the underlying principles of the RC System, those of policy space, non-politicization of the role of the RC, national ownership, predictable and sustainable financing of the system as well as "no one size fits all";
- The need for the UN Development System to reflect, as it positions itself to better support developing countries towards the realisation of the SDGs, on the negative implications of the classification of upper middle-income country status on countries that are addressing the highest levels of inequality and unemployment. In this regard, we support the call by the UN Secretary General to consider existing complements or alternative measures to GDP, such as the human development index, the inclusive wealth index, the Genuine Progress Indicator, the multidimensional poverty index and the inequality-adjusted human development index.

I thank you.