



Republic of Cuba
Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations
REMARKS AT THE ECOSOC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT
SEGMENT.
22 May 2020

Mr. Vice President,

Madam President of ECOSOC,

My delegation thanks the Secretary-General for the Report on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) and the repositioning of the UN Development System (UNDS). The report provides a thorough and comprehensive update on the implementation of the 2016 QCPR and the repositioning of the UN Development System.

We also thank the Deputy Secretary-General, her team and the Development Coordination Office for their continuous engagement in the UNDS repositioning process, in particular in the efforts made so far to provide proposals for the outstanding mandates, including the regional dimension and the revamping of the regional assets.

It is necessary to continue to preserve, both within ECOSOC and the General Assembly, the inclusive, open and transparent nature of all consultations that lead up to the final decisions on the UNDS repositioning, in particular of its remaining mandates.

We reiterate that all matters pertaining to the repositioning of the UN Development System must fully respect national sovereignty, independence, national ownership and leadership, bearing in mind the various development levels and realities on the ground in developing countries. It is also important to operate under the premise that "there are no single solutions or pre-established formulas in terms of development".

The regional repositioning must better support developing countries' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in full consultation and agreement with national Governments, according to national needs and priorities.

We would like to underscore that the proposed reorganization of the United Nations presence at the regional level must be tailored on a region-by-region basis, addressing each region specificity and needs. The current proposals, while moving in this direction, need to be further elaborated to better address the specificities of each region.

The review at the regional level must preserve the strength and value of the work carried out so far by the Regional Economic Commissions. This includes their convening power as the primary regional platforms for intergovernmental consultations, and their ability to establish regional agendas ("agenda setting"), and provide research, technical analysis and policy advice, in consultation with its member States. In this connection, my delegation very much appreciates the enormous and very positive contribution of ECLAC to all these endeavors in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

We believe that the proposal to establish the "Regional Collaborative Platform" can be positive, if it certainly contributes to reduce duplications, improve coordination mechanisms, optimize the functioning of operational assets, and facilitate access to expertise in the regions.

It is important as well to reflect the ownership of Member States in the design and operationalization of the regional reform, and ensure that the work of regional UN entities can better meet the development needs of programme countries in each region.

In this context and upon the proposal provided, it would be important to safeguard in any regional agreement the leadership and policy coordination role of Regional Economic Commissions vis-à-vis the role of the DCO, which is more oriented towards monitoring, management and operational support to countries.

With reference to the Issue-Based Coalitions (IBCs), we believe that this is a valuable initiative. However, the UNDS regional architecture should not only be limited to them, but also work on other areas where current mechanisms have already demonstrated comparative advantages and additional value. The IBCs in their current formulation will only account for a small part of all the interagency work already being done by regions.

Additionally, on the Issue-Based Coalitions, there must be clarity on the criteria used to identify, review and approve the priority issues for each region, the scope and content

of each element, as well as the manner in which their periodical reviews will be operationalized.

We believe all this process should be decided through open and inclusive consultations with the countries of each region, aiming at a collective decision.

Finally, we recognize ECOSOC's outstanding role in providing technical guidance, support and accountability in this process. However, we wish to reiterate the central role of the General Assembly in discussing and deciding on matters pertaining to the QCPR and the Operational Activities for Development, as well as the formulation and approval of policy matters. In this regard, we consider that the final decision on the pending mandates on the repositioning of the UNDS, in particular those regarding the regional reform, must take place at the General Assembly.

During these trying times, the international community, developed and developing countries alike and the UN System, must demonstrate more than ever our ability to work together in solidarity.

I thank you.