

NORWAY – Speaking points at the conclusion of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN Development System, 7 July 2016

- We would like to express our appreciation for the two phases of the ECOSOC dialogue, which have allowed for useful, extensive discussions on the future direction and improved functioning and delivery of the UNDS. Our discussions and the many proposals made by experts, the Independent Team of Advisors as well as the Secretariat and the UNDG have given us a solid foundation for the formulation of the next QCPR, or as we like to call it (as a working title): the next “resolution on a UN system-wide strategy for more focused, effective and efficient support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda”.
- Norway has provided comments on the ITA papers on several occasions already. I would therefore like to use this opportunity to make a few comments on the UNDG proposals for a more strategic and dynamic QCPR policy response to the 2030 Agenda presented at the informal meeting last week.
- First of all, we welcome the joint commitment of the UNDG to further reform and we are very grateful to the UNDG for coming forward with this proposal. It contains many crucial elements that we need to build on in the next “resolution on a UN system-wide strategy for more focused, effective and efficient support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda”.
- We appreciate the clear message in the proposal that the UNDS needs to concentrate its efforts on those functions where the UNDS can add most value. We believe that the six functions mentioned in the proposal are very relevant. The next step should be to clarify how these functions will be adapted and differentiated in different country contexts. As an example, we think it should be clearer how the UNDS may contribute to sustaining peace and building inclusive states and accountable institutions in fragile situations.
- We further welcome the emphasis on improved joint analyses and, in relevant country contexts, integrated planning across the UN Charter pillars as well as the commitment to move towards the principle of “one country, one framework”.
- We equally support the proposals on transformative, empowered the leadership in order to handle increased complexities and the need for change, as well as the emphasis on more efficient, joined-up operations, including mutual recognition of business practices. Now we need a plan for how the system will take this forward.

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- Which brings me to some of the weaknesses in the proposal. The sections on maximizing synergies and governance arrangements don't seem to respond to the requests from many Member States to find ways to make the system more accountable and to make it comply with the changes we have agreed on. How could the role of the Chief Executives Board, given its broad composition, be strengthened? How can this cooperation be further institutionalized and made more transparent? To us, this issue is also related to the need for improving the way ECOSOC, including its Operational Segment, is functioning.
- To conclude, we agree with the UNDG that the QCPR should be transformed into a high-level system-wide strategic framework for the UNDS as a whole, focusing on outcomes. For us, those outcomes are expected changes in the system. The table with suggestions for reform of the UNDS presented by UNICEF last week should serve as an inspiration for how we can build an outcome-based system-wide strategic framework, in other words: a much shorter QCPR that is easy to understand and is suitable as a working instrument for the UNDS as well as for member states.
- The first outcome should be a more focused UNDS, with clearly defined functions. [Another outcome, directed primarily towards member states and other donors, must be on funding. As member states, we have a huge challenge in ensuring that future funding streams actually will support other reforms measures.]
- Finally, we hope the inclusive and open spirit that has characterized the ECOSOC dialogue will prevail when we start the discussion on the next resolution. We hope we are able to continue informal exchange of ideas on what the zero draft of the resolution could look like, in order to get a new start that matches the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda.