

US Statement for final ECOSOC dialogue session

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Thank you, Mr. Vice President.

My delegation is heartened by the progress we have made over the last almost two years of these dialogues. We are grateful to ECOSOC for its leadership, to Honduras, Colombia and Argentina for their commitment and able stewardship of this process, to the Secretariat, the ITA team, and members of the UN development system who have participated in good faith to contribute detailed and constructive ideas to improve the UN development system. All of us are participating in this exercise because we believe in the UN development system and are committed to its success and continued relevance in the 2030 era. I'd like to briefly summarize some of my delegation's views on the key issues.

Role of the UNDS

There is general agreement that the UN development system going forward must focus on its comparative advantage in order to remain competitive and relevant. This includes its unique role as a multilateral organization with universal legitimacy, neutrality, focus on national ownership and leadership, global reach, and convening power. The new paradigm for cooperation will no longer be of one region giving resources and advice to another; instead, countries from all corners of the globe will work together as partners to achieve the universal goals of the 2030 Agenda. In support of this, the work of the UN development system must become more coordinated, and its core pillars must become mutually reinforcing rather than competitive and overlapping.

Organizational arrangements

In terms of organization and capacity, it's clear that we have to be creative and flexible in imagining how the structure of the UN development system, which has evolved over decades, must change to be able to deliver on the 2030 Agenda. 1200 separate country offices in the UN system worldwide, with more than 10 offices in each of 100 individual countries, cannot be the most efficient or effective way to do this. We are open to ideas from all stakeholders about better options.

Functions

On functions, it is clear that the UN development system should provide different services in different contexts. For example, in middle income countries the UN should provide policy advice, support coherence, leverage financial resources and expertise, and set norms and standards, while in least developed countries the UN development system will still need to play a

more active role in program delivery, strengthening government capacity, and convening the necessary resources and partnerships to help achieve national development goals. In both these contexts, the UN development system also has a critical role to play in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation, which will become increasingly important in helping countries to realize their 2030 Agenda commitments.

Funding

Function should also drive funding, with different aspects of the UN development system potentially funded through different modalities. The 2030 era presents a unique opportunity for Member States and the UN development system to comprehensively review the funding architecture and consider developing one that better supports the new functions, particularly the inter-sectoral challenges between development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding work. There are many intriguing ideas from the World Humanitarian Summit, the ITA papers, and our discussions that could lead to new and constructive changes for the system. The new funding architecture should also reflect the changing development landscape, with more funding capacity available and more able partners than ever before, working together in true partnership to ensure that we all meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Partnerships

Partnerships with multiple stakeholders – the private sector, civil society, academia, NGOs, and others— will be critical to mobilizing the resources needed to address our future development challenges. We are interested in ideas about how the UN can best harness the vast potential of partnerships while reassuring Member States of the quality assurance and accountability they seek from non-state partners. The idea of expanding issue-based coalitions as key partners for implementing the SDGs, proposed in a previous session, is still interesting. And lessons learned in using partnerships to leverage influence and incubate change should be fed back into the system to promote better practices across the UN. One question we must all answer is, what key steps will the UN development system need to take to promote and expand effective partnerships?

Governance

On governance, we know this is an issue of great interest to our colleagues, and we are prepared to take a sincere and comprehensive look at what type of governance arrangements will best suit the needs of the 2030 Agenda. One of the dialogue sessions proposed that governance of operational activities should be devolved and exercised at the country level—and another proposed much more coordinated system-wide governance of operational activities. We look forward to exploring these and other ideas further.

Impact

We and many others share the goal of improving the impact and results achieved by the UN development system at the field level. In the 2030 era, measuring impact at the country level will demonstrate how effective the UN development system is—or isn't—in supporting national policies to achieve the SDGs. To track impact, we will need consistent, high-quality results-based management and detailed results reporting. We are pleased to note that the recent annual session of the Executive Boards showcased the superior quality of results the funds and programs are now able to report as progress against their Strategic Plans. We see this as a very encouraging sign that the system is adapting in the necessary ways, and look forward to even more comprehensive results reporting as more data becomes available.

QCPR

Finally, on the QCPR: we, like many others, look forward to a strategic, effective, coherent resolution that positions the UN development system to help countries achieve the 2030 Agenda. We're open to a variety of working methods, but we trust that the process will continue to be open and inclusive, incorporating all stakeholders. We look forward to working with all delegations in a collaborative, respectful manner, and we are confident we will reach a consensus on QCPR to make the changes that we all want to see in the UN development system.

Thank you.