

ECOSOC Dialogue 26 May 2016

The Role of the UN Development System in Middle Income Countries

Statement by Norway

Thank the VP of ECOSOC for giving us the opportunity to discuss this very important issue as part of the ECOSOC dialogue. I am also very grateful to the panelist for their very instructive presentations)

We have heard very convincing explanations today for why the UNDS has an important role to play in MICs. We fully agree with that. All Member States have the right to request assistance from the UN. And with the 2030 Agenda the assistance of the UNDS may be more relevant than ever.

However, this doesn't imply that the UNDS should do everything everywhere. In going forward in its support to the implementation of 2030 Agenda, we believe that the UNDS needs differentiated models and approaches in different country contexts

In our opinion, this implies that the UNDS may have a quite broad engagement in some situations, like fragile states, while it must be much more targeted in others situations, such as MICs. We agree with many previous speakers, that for MICs the most important contribution of the UNDS is high quality, upstream support to policy development.

In our view, this should imply:

- Assisting host countries, on request, in developing national plans for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, preferably in collaboration with the World Bank, and in anchoring the SDGs among various groups of national stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society. Our impression is that the UNDS already does much good work in many countries in this regard.
- Assisting host countries in developing national policies and legislation that "leaves no one behind", and in particular in lower-middle income countries, and to develop related capacities. To us "leaving no one behind" means focus on non-discrimination and use of human rights-based approaches.

Accordingly, for us "tailor-made approaches" in middle-income countries mean policy advice and capacity building (in line with the two functions mentioned above) based on common context analyses and country circumstances. And of course the priorities should be reflected in the UNDAF developed by the UN Country Team and the host government. This also means that concepts like "ending poverty in all its forms" must be un-packed in each country in order to define government priorities and policies and the support of the UNDS in that regard.

Finally, the question remains who should finance such assistance. While we agree that some ODA may still be necessary and useful in MICs, as was explained by Mr Glennie, we believe that the primary responsible for ensuring the adequate assistance from the UN in MICs must be the host country itself. It would be interesting to hear e.g. from the representative of Costa Rica and the RC in Peru how the very valuable cooperation these governments seem to have with the UN is being funded.

Thank you.