

Statement by FAO, ILO, UNESCO, UNIDO and WHO to the ECOSOC informal session of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN Development System
1st July 2016

Check against delivery

Mr Vice President, distinguished delegates,

Thank you for the opportunity to express our views in this informal session.

I am pleased to speak on behalf of the following group of UN specialized agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization (**FAO**), the International Labour Organization (**ILO**), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (**UNESCO**), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (**UNIDO**) and the World Health Organization (**WHO**).

Our agencies are active members in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and have participated with great interest and commitment in the UNDG discussions in relation to the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations Development System.

As we approach the end of the ECOSOC Dialogue and the beginning of the QCPR negotiations, specialized agencies would like to reiterate our strong commitment to a UNDS that works together in a coherent, efficient and integrated manner to support the needs of Member States.

Our agencies have understood very well the message that “business as usual is not an option” and have been working within our individual governance structures to ensure that our memberships are informed and consulted on the implications of the 2030 Agenda and challenges ahead for the UNDS.

As mandated by our Governing Bodies, we have already taken measures to mainstream the SDGs in our respective programmes and budgets and to maximize our contribution to the delivery of the 2030 Agenda.

As part of the UNDG, we are aligned with the proposals for a more strategic and dynamic QCPR and would like to highlight five core points.

First, **on the scope and application of the QCPR**, we strongly support a QCPR that is high-level, strategic and focussed on outcomes for the UNDS rather than on processes and systems.

Our Governing Bodies have already shown great interest in aligning our agencies’ programmes and outcomes to the Agenda 2030 SDGs. We contribute to the annual report of the Secretary-General on the QCPR and regular reporting on QCPR implementation to our Governing Bodies and in accordance with our respective formats.

The specialized agencies' long-standing agreements with the UN provide sufficient latitude for the enhanced cooperation and integration needed to deliver more joined-up responses to the challenges ahead at all levels.

Second, on maximizing the normative agenda, we would like to stress that in our roles as specialized agencies with normative and standard-setting mandates as well as with policy advice and substantive operational activities, we firmly believe that the 2030 Agenda presents enormous opportunities to advance the operationalization of norms and standards of the system and that the explicit anchoring of the Agenda in these frameworks is the key to greater coherence, collaboration and coordination.

The normative aspect of the 2030 Agenda is indeed the basis for joint action, tools and guidance and this is already apparent in the new UNDAF guidance for UNCTs and in the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) reference guide for UNCTs. All operational activities of the UN system should be anchored and guided by the understanding of underlying normative frameworks, including in countries adopting the 'Delivering as One' approach.

Third, we would also like to underline that **diversity is one of the greatest UN strengths**. Our convening and technical capacity and ability to reach diverse constituencies globally, regionally and within countries and vast range of specialized expertise is unique to the UN system and clearly one of our core comparative advantages.

This diversity is not only reflected in our mandates but also in our specialized operations, planning mechanisms, and role and presence at the regional and country level. We think that the SDGs represent a sea-change in terms of the potential for inter-connecting our work in a more whole-of-system way. The 2030 Agenda calls for the UN to fully deploy the wide range of expertise available, where complementary mandates and skills would help countries to implement the SDGs in an integrated manner.

In support of the new Agenda, specialized agencies are mobilizing deep and extensive networks of partners and stakeholders, including intergovernmental programmes, expert institutes, technological centres, specialized scientific networks, trade unions, private sector and academia to deliver capacity development, research, innovation and benchmarking across various SDGs.

Fourth, we would like to reiterate the need to empower UNCTs to be led by an empowered and impartial Resident Coordinator who is able to leverage the expertise of resident and non-resident agencies to contribute to the UN system's shared results. The RC should empower collective leadership of the UNCT. We believe that the RC system must be properly funded by member States to fulfil its functions. We have and will continue to increase our participation in the pillars of the Standard Operating Procedures based on our assessments of cost effectiveness and the requirements of fulfilling our historic and normative mandates.

We agree with the call for appropriate institutional safeguards to ensure the independence, neutrality and effectiveness of the RC system. The mutual

accountability framework, including the functional firewall, needs to be fully implemented.

Likewise, the selection process for RCs must reflect the highest performance and ethical standards and reinforce agency diversity, along with gender and regional balance.

Finally, **on universality**, specialized agencies have a comparative advantage in addressing the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda. This advantage is grounded in the universal membership, the universal application of international norms and standards, the establishment of monitoring and supervisory mechanisms, knowledge sharing, capacity building and technical networks that could be enhanced to providing support to both developed and developing countries.

I thank you!