



STATEMENT BY MR. SANTOSH BAGRODIA, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND MEMBER OF THE INDIAN DELEGATION, ON AGENDA ITEM NO. 61 [A] TO [C] – OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE UN SYSTEM; TRIENNIAL COMPREHENSIVE POLICY REVIEW OF OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE UN SYSTEM; AND SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AT THE SECOND COMMITTEE OF THE 62ND SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON OCTOBER 18, 2007

Madam Chairperson,

India welcomes this opportunity to participate in the discussions on this important agenda item. We thank the Secretary-General for the comprehensive documentation prepared for our discussions. We associate ourselves with the statement made by the Chair of the Group of 77.

The TCPR process provides a valuable opportunity to Member States to take stock of the functioning of the operational activities for development of the UN system and to make recommendations for the future work of the UN development system based on the present context and conditions while keeping in mind the longer term perspective. The review assumes added significance this year given that we are touching the half way mark for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and not enough progress has been made so far. This lends urgency to our task of improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN development system to enable it to make a meaningful contribution to the efforts of countries to achieve the MDGs.

Madam Chairperson,

Financing of the UN Development System is perhaps the most fundamental factor in the ability of the UN system to deliver effectively. However, the Secretary-General's Report (A/62/73) states that official development assistance diminished in 2006 to 0.3% of the GNI of countries members of the OECD/DAC, from 0.33% in 2005. Without overlooking either the reasons for this or the increase in ODA over 2004, the data underscores the need for urgent effort, given the large shortfall in the resources required to attain the MDGs.

We note with concern from the Report (A/62/73) that the share of core resources in the total contributions received by the UN system has been falling continuously and decreased from 54.4% in 2003 to 44.3% in 2005 in real terms. The growing reliance on supplementary funding undermines the core mandates of the entities of the UN development system. We note, moreover that if all humanitarian funding is subtracted from the total amount of supplementary resources, the growth in resources for long term development cooperation would not be as significant. The predictability and the dependability of funding for development is another important issue. While there has been some progress in this regard, we are not comforted by the observation of the Secretary-General that multi-year funding frameworks have not significantly advanced the predictability of funding.

If the UN development entities are to continue their activities in fulfillment of their mandates, there is no alternative to adequate core resources. The growth of supplementary funding is reported to be a definite factor in increasing the transaction cost of all entities, hindering efforts to maximize efficiency. The failure to make full cost recovery has also been raised by the Report as an important matter with policy implications that requires urgent attention. The lack of full cost recovery creates the false impression that the management of projects from supplementary funding is more efficient than the regular programmes, which undermines the entities' ability to attract core funding in the long term. We hope that these issues would be addressed by Member States during the consideration of this agenda item.

Madam Chairperson,

GA Resolution 59/250(TCPR) emphasizes the role of capacity building in development and the role of the UN development system in this area. We have noted the efforts of the Chief Executives Board (CEB) in implementing the recommendations of Resolution 59/250. In the current context, the UN development system must address the capacity building needs of countries of very diverse profiles and needs. We would, therefore, also emphasize the need for capacity building within the system. This should be done through training of existing staff. However, where necessary, we should not be shy of supporting the recruitment of new professional staff.

We note that UN development entities have become increasingly mindful of the need to give priority to the engagement of national staff and the use of national expertise and institutions. It is also useful that the practice of national execution is becoming widespread. We support the continued strengthening of the use of national execution as well as national expertise and institutions. The UN development system must also make serious efforts to adapt its efforts to the existing financial and technical capacities of the recipient governments and their national institutions.

National ownership and leadership of the development process, and the coordination of all external aid by the recipient country, adds to the sustainability of results, while building capacity at the same time. National ownership and leadership have been emphasized in several GA and ECOSOC resolutions. Continued emphasis and strengthening of national ownership and leadership should therefore be one of the primary objectives of the UN development system.

Madam Chairperson,

India has a long standing commitment to South-South Cooperation. This commitment is reflected in the large number of bilateral projects and cooperation efforts with other developing countries. We, therefore, welcome the effort that the UN development system is investing in South-South Cooperation. However, we believe that there is a long way to go. Not only is there need for adequate funding for this purpose by the UN development entities and through triangular cooperation, there is also need for greater use of the experience, expertise, knowledge and capacities of the South in the ongoing work of the UN development system. Entities of the UN development system should make greater effort to mainstream modalities to support South-South cooperation in their programmes and through their country-level activities and country offices. Contributions of the developed countries, through resources for replicating experiences, and through technological know-how, are also important and add a positive dimension to South-South cooperation.

Gender mainstreaming is another important area of focus. India supports the strengthening of the capacity of the UN development system for gender mainstreaming. In today's world, there is a growing awareness and enhanced effort by the developing countries towards achieving gender equality. While advocacy is important, in the current context there is an even greater need for technical and knowledge based support to developing countries' efforts towards strengthening gender equality and empowerment of women. The UN development system needs to equip itself to better support these efforts.

While we examine the aspect of gender mainstreaming in the work of UN development entities, we cannot ignore the aspect of gender balance within the UN. We may acknowledge the greater awareness, and perhaps commitment, to this objective within the UN Secretariat; but we must express concern at the significant decline in the representation of women at senior levels, especially in the professional category, as also the relatively low percentage of woman Resident Coordinators. We are also concerned at the lack of analysis about the representation of women from developing countries, a need emphasized by Resolution 59/250. We believe that any consideration of gender parity in the UN is incomplete without a discussion about the representation of women from developing countries, especially at senior levels.

The Report highlights the need for adequate funding in the context of transition from relief to development as well. We underscore the need for enhancing the focus on the transition from relief to development especially in post-natural disaster situations. Following the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, this area remains a significant gap.

Madam Chairperson,

We would like to briefly touch upon the issue of reform. The purpose of the reform of the UN development system is to improve its efficiency through reduced transaction costs and to enhance its effectiveness by increasing the impact on the ground. The report of the Secretary-General informs us about the increased allocations for the Resident Coordinator system and additional posts of Country Directors, but not about the savings achieved, nor about the impact on reporting burdens of field offices, or the consequent improvement in delivery. In addition, the reform proposals should display the flexibility to address the diverse set of needs of developing countries, both large and small, low income and middle income, as well as countries recovering from conflict. The ongoing reform and other reform

proposals, such as those presented in the context of System-wide Coherence must prove their value on these criteria through a thorough examination and evaluation.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson

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