



*Unofficial translation from Russian
Check against Delivery*

R E M A R K S

**of the Representative of the Russian Federation, Andrey PIROGOV,
at the informal ECOSOC meeting on the issue of transition from relief to development**

13 July 2005

Mr. President,

We thank the UN Secretary General for his report, in which the issue of transition from relief to development is raised both in the context of natural disasters and post-conflict situations. We believe it makes a substantive additional contribution to the discussions, held in the UN on this topic, to which the Russian Federation attaches great importance.

When it comes to the issue of **natural disasters**, the main vector of the international cooperation under the aegis of the UN, in our opinion, should be aimed at their prevention and strengthening of the appropriate capacities of countries and regions. The key tool here, we believe, is the International Strategy on Disaster Reduction, and we expect it to improve its effectiveness. We support the integration of its key elements into the national development programs, which would facilitate the maintenance of development capacities through ensuring the preparedness of the countries for natural disasters.

In disaster response efforts, the national ownership of the Governments should be realized through ensuring the coordination of the, including the external efforts as well, aimed at delivering assistance to the victims in accordance with the national response strategies. External, first of all, UN expertise capacity may be employed for their elaboration.

In this connection, we see external disaster recovery efforts as supplementary to the national efforts.

In order to ensure smooth transition from relief to development, we believe that it is needed to pay special attention to the strengthening of the UN coordination functions in the field. In this regard, we support the idea of the Secretary-General's report that this process should be ensured through the strengthening of the role of resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator. We think that an important role is to be played by training programs for resident coordinators on the specificities of the international humanitarian activities.

It is in the interests of ensuring coordination at all levels to designate, in a timely manner, lead UN operational agencies responsible for concrete sectors in case of emergencies. We welcome the measures already taken in this direction.

From the outset of the emergency relief operations, it is necessary to focus humanitarian work on mid-term and long-term needs. Therefore, due account should be taken of long-term tasks

of rehabilitation, recovery and development in the assessment of the needs, as well as in the planning of the ways to meet them from the very beginning of the operation.

An important aspect of the efficiency of overcoming long-term disaster consequences is adequate access to the necessary financial resources. We realize that the specificity of the transition periods consists in the necessity of their prolonged funding, which may go beyond the framework of the UN Consolidated Appeal Process. In this context, of particular interest is the experience of the operation on long-term recovery of the regions, affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami, involving bilateral as well as multilateral investors.

In the case of mobilisation of significant financial resources, the problem of better accountability of the UN OCHA to the donors as well as to the recipient Governments becomes topical. We welcome the measures taken by OCHA for ensuring the transparency in this issue.

Mr. President,

In principal, we believe it is necessary to continue to elaborate, under the guidance of the UN, a comprehensive approach to **post-conflict situations**, implying the interaction between political, peace-keeping, operational and humanitarian efforts, which, in practical terms, leads to the integration of the humanitarian component into multidimensional peace-keeping operations while preserving the humanitarian space. We think that all countries are interested in the success of this particular conception, as it will emphasise once again the advantages of multilateralism over unilateral measures in such important sphere as post-conflict settlement.

We are confident that despite objective difficulties of the post-conflict situations, the efforts of UN entities should be aimed, as in the case of natural disasters, at ensuring national ownership of the recipient Government, strengthening its capacity, and should be carried out in close cooperation with it for the purpose of determining strategic priorities and needs of the country.

The humanitarian-development interface should be ensured not only through timely preparation of "exit strategies" of the humanitarian agencies, but also through the involvement of UN programs and funds into post-conflict rehabilitation efforts at the earliest stages. To this end, the UN operative agencies must have a stand-by potential of rapid response to the needs of the countries in emergencies.

The experience accumulated by the ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Groups on African countries emerging from conflict deserves attention in the context of addressing the gap in the funding of emergency relief and development assistance in terms of the elaboration of special instruments of assistance to post-conflict countries. In particular, this relates to the UNDP-managed Emergency Economic Management Fund operating in Guinea-Bissau, as well as the efforts of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups to return the Bretton Woods institutions and other multilateral donors to these countries.

In the broader context we believe that the experience of the Ad Hoc Advisory Groups in this deserves to be taken into account in the framework of the future Peace-building Commission, which, probably, should focus its work on the regular review of the problems of the countries emerging from conflict.

Thank You,