



**Economic and Social Council**

**Operational Activities Segment – General Debate**

**1 March 2017**

**Statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States**

*Mr. President,*

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The European Union and its Member States attach great importance to the issue of operational activities for development, and the work of the Council in this regard. We welcome the fact that this year's Operational Activities for Development Segment (OAS) has concentrated on the pertinent question of the implementation of the 2016 QCPR resolution. Indeed, we believe that the provisions of the latest QCPR represent an opportunity for a new beginning in terms of the functioning of the UN development system at headquarters and field levels, and improving the governance and financing architecture of the operational activities for development. The necessary reforms should allow the UNDS to adapt to new requirements and expectations, to face growing global challenges that require collective action such as climate change or large movements of refugees and migrants, and work better together in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

The QCPR resolution contains a number of important mandates addressed to the Secretary-General (SG) and the UNDS. We encourage the SG to be bold in his visions for the UNDS and to send a strong signal to the system to focus on delivering together on the 2030 Agenda. We are looking forward to working with the new SG and DSG in this endeavor.

Let us highlight some elements of the QCPR resolution which we find particularly pertinent, and which have been discussed in detail throughout the Segment. First of all, partnerships will be critical to delivering the 2030 Agenda and making the UNDS work more effectively. Delivery of the Agenda will also require a system that is adequately resourced and more efficient. Both Member States and the system itself have responsibilities in this regard. We are convinced that the mandates in the QCPR, including regarding pooled and innovative funding, full cost recovery and integrated financing approaches at the country level constitute important steps to improving the financing architecture, and, ultimately, making the system better equipped to support Member States in a more responsive, coherent manner over longer timeframes. We call for enhanced transparency and accountability with regard to the financing of the system, as well as for the observance of the principles of aid/development efficiency as important building blocks in this regard.

The EU and its Member States attach great importance to the results of the system-wide outline of present functions and existing capacities of all United Nations entities carrying out operational activities for development. We look forward to the recommendations for addressing the identified gaps and overlaps in coverage. These will form the basis for a system-wide strategic document, to be presented by the UNDS in 2018, leading to the alignment of funding modalities with the functions of the UNDS. The identification of comparative advantages will help improve the inter-agency approach in support of the 2030 Agenda.

We look very much forward to seeing a real change in the vital area of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system. We cannot underestimate the importance of an empowered RC, supported by a more efficient and integrated UNCT, which entails common planification and programming as well as the mutualization of human and financial resources, if relevant. Among vital aspects of the follow-up to the QCPR resolution will be a strengthened and more widespread implementation of the Standard Operating Procedures and business operations strategies. We must also build on the progress made on "Delivering as One" which we see as the most effective way for the UN working together at a country level.

With that in mind, the EU and its Member States continue to underline the importance of full implementation of and respect for the existing cost-sharing agreement for the RC-system and we deeply regret that the Fifth Committee failed yet again to approve the agreed contribution by the UN-DESA during its present session. This contribution is essential to ensure that the RC-system can fulfil its coordination tasks, which benefit all entities of the system – including the UN-DESA.

In the follow-up to the QCPR resolution we will pay close attention to the issues of gender equality and the empowerment of women as well as human rights and the human-rights based approach to sustainable development. We emphasize the need for a more coherent and strengthened coordination between the UN development system and humanitarian actors, while recognizing that humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the humanitarian principles, we strongly welcome the practical steps set out in the QCPR on joint risk analysis, needs assessment and practice response.

Similar coordination is needed between sustainable development and sustaining peace, as these two agendas are mutually reinforcing. Sustaining peace aims at building a common vision of a society through an integrative approach, ensuring that the fundamental needs of all segments of the population are taken into account, preventing the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence of internal conflicts, addressing root causes, assisting parties to conflict to end hostilities, supporting local governments to implement national reconciliation and moving towards recovery, reconstruction and development. As such, the UNDS has a central role in sustaining peace, including when it comes to conflict prevention. This was well highlighted during the high-level dialogue on synergies between the 2030 Agenda and sustaining peace, arranged by the PGA in January. The UNDS should enhance its capacity to recognize and address root causes and drivers of conflict, including by working together across UN pillars and agencies. We are encouraged by the SG's vision in this regard, and the strong emphasis that he is putting on conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

The EU and its Member States look forward to the full and effective implementation of the 2016 QCPR. We have high hopes and expectations in this regard, and will play our part to support the SG and his Team, the Secretariat and all the entities of the UNDS in this endeavor. We remain committed to making good on our promise to ensure that No One is Left Behind. We will only be able to achieve this through a refocused UNDS, which mainstreams the 2030 Agenda into all its operational activities, using resources in an efficient manner, that is collaborative, coherent and accountable for results.

*Thank you.*