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## Second Committee

### Summary record of the 27th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 29 October 2014, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Ms. Stepowska (Vice-Chair) . . . . . (Poland)

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*In the absence of Mr. Cardi (Italy), Ms. Stepowska (Poland), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 24: Operational activities for development** (*continued*) (A/69/215)

**(a) Operational activities for development of the United Nations system** (*continued*) (A/69/63-E/2014/10, A/69/125 and Add.1 and A/69/392; A/C.2/69/2)

**(b) South-South cooperation for development** (*continued*) (A/69/39, A/69/153 and A/69/392; A/C.2/69/2)

1. **Mr. Vichaidit** (Thailand) said that efforts had to continue to improve the system-wide effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, relevance and impact of the work of the United Nations. In that regard, he commended the new comprehensive monitoring and reporting framework of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the United Nations development system.

2. Operational development activities had to be universal, neutral and independent. Referring to the Secretary-General's report (A/69/63-E/2014/10), he said his delegation supported the proposal that the United Nations should undertake a process of internal reflection in the context of the changes in the global environment and the new landscape of development cooperation.

3. The enhancement of global partnerships to expedite the mobilization of financial resources would help fulfil the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and promote sustainable development, but Member States and United Nations entities would in turn have to address the growing imbalance between core and non-core resources. Moreover, it was regrettable that both the growth rate of funding for United Nations operational activities and official development assistance (ODA) were stagnating.

4. Although there had been progress in scaling up and mainstreaming South-South cooperation, the latter should complement and not substitute North-South cooperation. Thailand urged the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation to coordinate inter-agency efforts and the more efficient use of resources. Greater cooperation across the United Nations was needed to make development cooperation more coherent and efficient.

5. Thailand was committed to the intensification of South-South and triangular cooperation and had been extending technical cooperation within and beyond its own region with a range of partners. His Government was ready to share knowledge, experience and expertise in areas such as disaster risk reduction, food security, agriculture, health and education. In 2015, cooperation between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations would be strengthened through the ASEAN Economic Community.

6. **Ms. Kyaw** (Myanmar) said that the operational activities of the United Nations system were crucial to helping States achieve socioeconomic development but the availability of financial resources was essential to their implementation. Her Government was concerned by the stagnation of overall ODA and the decline in the core contribution for United Nations operational activities for development and therefore urged donors to make a priority of core funding, which was important for the efficient implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. Developed countries must honour their ODA commitments and all stakeholders should commit to South-South and triangular cooperation in order to achieve the development goals of developing countries.

7. The approach of the United Nations must be more harmonized, must respect national policies and the policy review and must include the principles of the "Delivering as one" approach, which had a number of benefits, including cost-effectiveness. Myanmar welcomed the action of United Nations entities to align their strategic plans with the policy review since a more coherent and efficient United Nations would contribute to the development of developing countries. United Nations entities were critical to building coherence and to mobilizing funding from the donor community.

8. Following a 2013 visit to Myanmar by a joint team of six United Nations agencies the United Nations country team had been developing a transition strategy to help Myanmar in all aspects of life. His country was making every effort to make effective use of international assistance and was grateful for the contribution of the United Nations and other development partners in that regard.

9. **Mr. Grant** (Canada), speaking also on behalf of Australia, said that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review was groundbreaking for United Nations reform. Attention was already being paid to the next

review in 2016 and the opportunity to ensure that reform enabled the United Nations development system to deliver the post-2015 development agenda. In that regard, Canada and Australia welcomed the initiation of a consultative dialogue on the United Nations development system in the post-2015 era but called for a clear focus on ongoing reforms, which were particularly significant for the two delegations in a number of areas.

10. With regard to the financing of operational activities, Canada and Australia welcomed the engagement of funds and programmes in the structured dialogues on strategic financing plans. Proposals on the relationship between core and non-core funding and the potential of new financing from non-governmental and private sources were encouraging but more reflection was needed on how best to mobilize quality contributions from Member States with emerging economies. The two delegations were pleased with the refinement of the definition of the critical mass of resources and appreciated the efforts of each agency to implement that concept. Discussions on funding must continue annually and be linked with other major developments and outcomes such as cost recovery and financing for development.

11. The United Nations system was crucial to bringing humanitarian, peacebuilding and development activities together in the context of transition, post-crisis and recovery. Opportunities such as the 2015 review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and post-2015 development agenda could improve delivery of assistance and advance a more coordinated response in support of the national efforts of countries in crisis, post-crisis and transition situations. Agencies had to better harmonize and simplify programming and funding instruments, processes and business practices to facilitate a truly coordinated response.

12. Gender equality had to remain high on the United Nations development agenda. Canada and Australia welcomed the roll-out of the system-wide action plan on gender equality and women's empowerment and they would monitor future efforts to ensure that strategic planning documents of entities of the United Nations system included adequate gender analysis.

13. All funds and programmes and specialized agencies should take timely and well-aligned action to reform headquarters at regional and country levels. Progress had been achieved in that regard but more remained to be done. System-wide coherence was

necessary for world-class policy guidance and operational effectiveness and to establish a robust monitoring and accountability system for the new development agenda.

14. The policy review and its implementation were essential to creating a relevant, coherent and efficient United Nations development system; the two delegations were pleased with the elaboration of the policy review cost recovery framework, which was a major improvement on previous practice and which was already producing beneficial results. The operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council in 2015 would provide the opportunity to identify the key subjects to include in the next policy review cycle.

15. **Mr. Timbe Baka Zolay** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that South-South cooperation played an increasingly important role in the development of production capacities and the sustainable growth of developing countries. The value of such cooperation was growing because of the diversity of its partnerships and it brought great economic benefit for developing countries. The United Nations must lead the way in giving special attention to South-South cooperation and in building its capacity. Support to improve the competitiveness of production in countries of the South was essential but should take into consideration the national priorities of each State. To that end, entities of the United Nations system, development partners and the private sector should release substantial funds in order to promote activities connected to South-South cooperation.

16. Owing to multiple armed conflicts, the Democratic Republic of the Congo faced more challenges than other countries of the South in implementing development programmes in the context of South-South cooperation. Nonetheless, the Government was making great efforts to support such cooperation, inter alia, by furthering its partnerships with public and private bodies in countries of the South as part of a national five-year programme. As a result, citizens and businesses from countries of the South were working throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo in agriculture, infrastructure development and other areas to achieve the country's socioeconomic development.

17. He called on the international community to recognize his country as a State that could benefit from long-lasting support through a development partnership. That support should not be limited to

emergency humanitarian relief, as was the case concerning the Ebola virus disease, but should cover vital sectors such as health, water and education.

18. **Mr. Hajilari** (Islamic Republic of Iran) welcomed the developments that had been identified in the report of the Secretary-General on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, including the new monitoring and reporting framework and the alignment by several United Nations entities of their strategic plans with that review.

19. His delegation regretted the decline in ODA and the negative impact on contributions to United Nations operational activities for development caused by the decrease in overall development aid. Core aid was generally the most efficient tool to build effective partnerships with programme countries to deliver operational activities, while core resources were critical to ensuring capacity to deliver mandates and to provide leadership and innovation. The imbalance between core and non-core resources therefore had to be addressed.

20. Iran welcomed the upgrading of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation to the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the appointment of its head as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on South-South Cooperation. South-South cooperation was a central factor in international relations and, since it was an expression of solidarity among countries of the South, it was upon them to set the South-South cooperation agenda. It should not be considered a traditional form of development assistance nor should it substitute North-South cooperation. The United Nations development system could play a significant role in supporting South-South and triangular cooperation in areas such as trade and agriculture. The policies and programmes of the United Nations should further incorporate South-South cooperation with a view to building the human and institutional capacities of developing countries.

21. **Mr. Wang Min** (China) said that global development was remarkably under-resourced and that developing countries faced increasingly grave challenges in their pursuit of development. He urged all agencies in the United Nations development system to meet the requirements of General Assembly Resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review in a steadfast and comprehensive manner.

22. The United Nations development system must maintain poverty eradication and the promotion of

development at the centre of its activities and make efforts to improve its operation. Relevant programmes and funds should respect the principle of country leadership and ownership and scale up input for capacity building. In that context, development resources must be continuously increased, in terms of their amount and structure. The downward trend in financing for development and the imbalance between core and non-core resources had affected the capacity of the United Nations development system to carry out its functions effectively and were a source of concern for developing countries. The system and its agencies, therefore, should take steps to reverse that situation.

23. Development finance should continue to make the fulfilment of ODA commitments a priority and the United Nations system and agencies should urge developed countries to bear primary responsibility for development financing while scaling up their assistance for developing countries. North-South cooperation remained the principal channel for international development cooperation but a more balanced global development partnership needed to be established. In that respect, more support should be provided for South-South cooperation, through which developing countries could help each other in the spirit of solidarity and in the pursuit of common development. South-South cooperation should be led only by developing countries and it should supplement, but not replace, North-South cooperation. The United Nations development system and agencies should provide the necessary policy and financial support that respected the special features and principles of South-South cooperation and fully utilize the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the Special Envoy on the subject.

24. **Ms. Ibrahimova** (Azerbaijan) said that her delegation, while pleased that the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals had included means of implementation among the proposed sustainable development goals, nonetheless noted that a holistic approach was needed to address many issues, such as falling ODA flows, volatile capital flows and continued debt problems, which all served to exacerbate development challenges for developing countries.

25. As a contributor to ODA, Azerbaijan continued to combat humanitarian and socioeconomic challenges in developing countries: over 30 countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia had benefitted from its international aid. It had also built partnerships with well-established international organizations in order to support sustainable development.

26. With regard to landlocked developing countries, the proposals of the Open Working Group showed that the international community was eager to commit to the full implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and to address the needs of those countries with a new framework for transport cooperation for development purposes. Azerbaijan had made progress in that area with the launch of many projects including the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway and a new seaport which would be a major gateway on the intersection of the East-West and North-South transport corridors.

27. **Ms. Ravilova-Borovik** (Russian Federation) said that attention must be focused on increasing the quality of analytical reporting; in that connection, she welcomed the consolidation of reporting on the implementation of the comprehensive policy reviews of the operational agencies. Programmes and funds should report on their development activities in conformity with the unified parameters established by the United Nations Development Group.

28. The Russian Federation welcomed the measures taken to improve the level, stability and predictability of financing for operational activities and underlined the need for timely and appropriate replenishment of core resources. It was inadvisable to review the level and calculation of the cost recovery rates before 2016, when the midterm reviews of agencies' integrated budgets would be conducted.

29. Her country was keen to expand cooperation with the United Nations system to help deliver technical support for the socioeconomic development of States most in need. The work of the operational agencies should focus on achieving the sustainable development of programme countries, strengthening health-care systems, combatting poverty and other areas, including employment, agriculture and trade. Further adjustments were needed to the thematic scope of operational activities in order to align it with the needs of developing countries rather than the considerations and priorities of the operational agencies. In addition, project activities and funds must be more closely linked to national development strategies and the measures that had been taken to implement them in recipient States. The planning cycles of operational agencies and programme countries should be synchronized.

30. South-South and triangular cooperation should be further integrated into the operational activities of the United Nations development system and that process should be guided by the decisions of the eighteenth

session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the resolution adopted by Economic and Social Council following the operational activities segment of its 2014 substantive session.

31. **Mr. Biya** (Cameroon) said that when the post-2015 development agenda was adopted, it should be integrated into the forthcoming strategic plans of funds, programmes and agencies and the existing plans at their midterm implementation reviews.

32. Africa had to remain at the centre of the United Nations development system and it therefore must receive an according level of financial and human resources. More than ever, Africa needed a development system that could respond to the many challenges that the continent faced. In that context, the availability of regular and predictable core resources was essential for the fruitful implementation of operational activities. However, the alarming imbalance between core and non-core resources must be urgently redressed so as to help strengthen the agencies, funds and programmes. While the imbalance was not caused necessarily by a scarcity of resources, political will continued to play an important factor. The unusually high level of earmarked funds was preventing the United Nations development system from duly executing its role and from helping States implement their development programmes.

33. In that regard, agencies, funds and programmes must carry out their mandates in conformity with the decisions of intergovernmental bodies and with respect for national priorities. In any event, the eradication of poverty must remain the rallying cry of the United Nations development system.

34. Cameroon welcomed the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on resident coordinators ([A/69/125](#)) and emphasized the importance of immediately diversifying the system of coordinators with regard to geographic distribution, gender and organization of origin. To that end, selection criteria would have to be amended so that they reflected different education systems and cultural sensitivities.

*The meeting rose at 4 p.m.*