

**ECOSOC substantive session, 2010
Operational activities segment**

**Remarks by
H.E. Ambassador Mr. Alexandru Cujba
Vice-President of ECOSOC
(Monday, 12 July 2010, New York)**

Summary of key points of Day 1

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to warmly welcome our Distinguished Heads of Funds and Programmes. Before they engage in the dialogue with the Council, allow me to briefly highlight key points and messages that have come out of our discussions thus far.

Last Friday yielded a rich body of information, lessons, and reflections on the work of the United Nations system at country-level. I was very impressed by the quality of discussions, their interactive character, and the level of engagement by the Member States with our panellists.

On national ownership and leadership and capacity development:

- First, an overriding theme throughout the day was that national ownership and leadership, and capacity development were critically important in achieving national development goals and sustained development.
- Second, comprehensive, well-formulated national development plans and strategies prepared through inclusive processes are key to strong national ownership and leadership in managing external partnerships. So are well-developed platform for coordination of external assistance. The development of national capacities in this regard is essential.

- Third, the United Nations has a key contribution to make in national development processes as a long-standing and trusted partner in countries. This includes supporting governments in the management of external assistance.
- Fourth, the UN system's development assistance has become more demand-driven and better aligned with national priorities and planning processes. Delivering as One has demonstrated a more coherent and efficient way in this regard.
- Fifth, conditionalities tend to undermine national ownership and leadership. In such cases, the UN is seen to have a potential role as mediator, helping to provide objective assessment and policy space.

On the UN system's capacity at the country-level:

- First, the demand for and nature of external assistance is changing, with more countries graduating from Low Income status. Expectations for assistance by the UN development system are likewise changing towards more policy-oriented and specialized technical advisory contributions, with increasing potential for the use of South-South cooperation.
- Second, UN country teams accordingly need to assess their capacities to determine whether they have the profiles that meet the needs in the UNDAF, including gender mainstreaming, as well as the rapidly evolving demands within the countries. The no "one-one-size fits all" principle of assistance was reaffirmed.
- Third, in moving towards policy advice, care has to be taken to remain attuned to the needs of communities.
- Fourth, there is need to fully use the expertise of national consultants and staff, as recommended by the General Assembly.
- Fifth, specialized and non-resident agencies need to enable greater access to their capacities including in the context of the Delivering as One, by increasing their field capacities and through knowledge management systems.
- Six, undg Regional Teams are providing increasingly important support to UN Country Teams, notably on cross cutting issues such as gender and the

development impact of climate change. Promoting South-South cooperation should be a corner stone of activities at regional level.

- Seven, there is need to ensure the recruitment of highly competent resident coordinators who can credibly articulate and channel the wider set of issues that the UN development system covers and provide leadership to the UN country team.

On the outcome of the Hanoi “*High-level Tripartite Conference on Delivering as One: Lessons learned from country-led evaluation and way forward*”

- The outcome of the Hanoi Conference was welcomed. The “tripartite approach”, where the government, with donors and the UN system are all contributing to a more coherent UN country programme, makes for a strong partnership behind the reform.
- There has been much investment in Delivering as One. It is now yielding gains towards greater coherence and reduced transactions costs. The programme pilot countries see no turning back.
- The support expressed by a number of donor countries to Delivering as One was most encouraging. A number of areas need to be further enhanced, such as the authority of and support for the resident coordinators and delegation of authority to members of UN country teams.
- UN headquarters – both management and inter-governmental bodies- must match the pace of reforms undertaken at country level, with the same vigor, urgency, and commitment. Guidance might be needed on common benchmarks and results to be achieved on the implementation of the DaO.
- Improving the quality of funding remains a key factor to the success of Delivering as One.

With this summary, I am pleased to move to the main event of this morning. I thank you for your patience.

[See text of the Chair's Opening remarks for the Dialogue with the Executive Heads....]