

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

**Introductory remarks
H.E. Ambassador Mr. Alexandru Cujba
Vice-President of ECOSOC**

**on the plenary session
“*National ownership and leadership, and capacity development: have they
become a reality?*”**

Thursday, 9 July 2010

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Friends, ladies and gentlemen,

We have opened the operational activities segment in the traditional manner with an introduction of the reports submitted to the Council this year. But what follows this morning is quite different from how we have done things in the past.

In my earlier remarks, I have referred to a larger than usual participation by senior-most authorities from the capitals of programme countries responsible for coordination of development cooperation including that from of the United Nations system. I also mentioned that yesterday, they had an in-depth sharing of experiences and perspectives among them in an Experts' roundtable, and with their audience, on the theme of “national ownership, and leadership, and capacity development”, as a prelude to our official programme. This, we have worked with the Secretariat to introduce as a form of change, in response to our efforts to enhance the governance of operational activities for development as reflected in the recent decision by the General Assembly on system-wide coherence. The Assembly requested that inter-governmental bodies consider measures to facilitate the effective participation of national policy-makers in developing countries in the Operational Activities segment and regular sessions of the governing boards.

This is also a way to build up increasing engagement and to invite inputs directly from the national authorities in the capitals towards the comprehensive review of operational activities for development scheduled in 2012.

The theme chosen for the Experts' roundtable – “national ownership, leadership, and capacity development” is based on core principles of operational activities for development. Dimensions of these three are difficult to measure, they are difficult to report either qualitatively and quantitatively. The reports tell us of alignment of the UN Development Assistance Frameworks with national development priorities and strategies, and with national planning cycles. We read about Steering Committees chaired by or co-chaired the governments. We encourage the use of national systems. Are all these good measures of national ownership and leadership?

The other side of the equation is capacity development, another core principle of operational activities for development. Capacity development is needed to take full and effective national ownership and leadership. The lively discourses at the Development Cooperation Forum last week echoed some of the dimensions.

Let me no longer prolong my introduction, but rather let me thank the Experts who participated in the roundtable for their very important input to the work of the Council.

I would also like to thank our Moderator for this session, Professor Solita Collás-Monsod, who served as facilitator-moderator for the Experts' roundtable. Professor Monsod, was former Minister and later Secretary of Socio-Economic Planning under the administration of President Corazon Aquino. She is the convenor of the Philippine Human Development Network and was its Chairperson for eleven years. The Network produces the Philippines Human Development Report in association with the UNDP in her country. She also currently chairs the Movement for Good Governance. She is a widely known media personality in the Philippines.

May I request Professor Monsod to please give us a few words on yesterday's Experts' roundtable session, and to introduce the presenters.

I thank you. [*Professor Monsod....*]