

**Statement by Norway**  
**ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment**  
**General debate 18 July 2011**

Mr Chairman,

My delegation would like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the excellent documentation before us at this year's operational segment of ECOSOC. We also highly value the quality of the debates that have taken place and in particular the useful panel discussions and interactive dialogues.

Norway would like to commend the UN operational agencies for their sustained efforts to implement the mandates given to them by the member states, including the normative framework, and for their active involvement in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. We would also like to take this opportunity to give credit and recognition to the thousands of dedicated UN staff worldwide.

An important objective of this year's Operational Segment is to contribute to the preparations for the 2012 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of UN system operational activities by the General Assembly. We look forward to the adoption by the Council of the resolution providing guidance to the preparations of the 2012 QCPR of the General Assembly.

The QCPR will be essential in order to maintain the momentum of System-wide coherence and Delivering as one. We welcome the declaration adopted by the Hanoi Conference in 2010 and the General Assembly resolution adopted on System Wide Coherence last year.

We look forward to the outcome of the Intergovernmental conference on "Delivering as one" in Montevideo, Uruguay in November 2011. The message from the pilot countries and countries who have voluntarily adopted Delivering as One is clear: the old way of doing business is no longer an option. We support program countries' call for the UN agencies and their executive boards to intensify efforts to deliver as one. Clearly, reforms at head quarters level need to speed up, in particular human resources management, business practices and common reporting. In preparing for the QCPR, we would welcome the assessment of UN agencies and of partner countries of the main bottlenecks that need to be addressed in order to advance the Delivering as One.

The report to be submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly for the 2012 Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities will be crucial. It should identify specific measures required to further improve the relevance and impact of operational activities for development of the United Nations system at the country level as well as at the global level.

In this respect, particular attention should be paid to the findings of the independent evaluation of "Delivering as one" as well as to the reports of the country-led evaluations.

The QCPR will also be important in order to assess the functioning of the Resident coordinator system, including its ability to represent and support the entire UN system of around 30 diverse organisations at the country level. We must ensure that the resident coordinators have the necessary authority and resources to lead and coordinate the UN country teams. Effective firewalls are also critical.

We have taken due note of the report of the Secretary-General on the financing of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2009. While total contributions for the UNs operational activities for development grew over the past five years at an annual average rate of 6 per cent in real terms, total contributions in 2009 amounted to some 22 billion USD, the same in real term as in 2008. Compared to 2008, funding for development-related funding increased by 8 per cent in 2009, while humanitarian assistance declined by almost the same rate.

Clearly, the funding of UN operational activities does not match the needs. The funding is not sufficient to meet the objectives set by the international community and it does not allow the agencies to fulfill the mandates given to them by UN member states. UN operational activities for development must be ensured adequate, predictable and stable funding, as well as a critical mass of core resources.

Strengthening of the United Nations is in the interest of each member state. Too often, big words are backed by small contributions. The fact that the top ten donors to the UNs operational activities contribute between 80 and 90 % of core contributions is unsustainable. Enhanced burden-sharing is a key to ensure more secure and predictable funding to the UN.

The level of Norway's development assistance has already for many years exceeded the target of 0,7 per cent of gross national income (GNI). Last year, the Government achieved its target of allocating 1 % of GNI to international development. A substantial amount of this is channelled through the UN operational agencies. In 2009, Norway, a country of 5 million inhabitants, was the 6<sup>th</sup> largest contributor to the UN operational activities for development, while being only the 23<sup>rd</sup> largest economy. The three Nordic countries Norway, Sweden and Denmark together contributed to some 19 per cent of total funding from OECD/DAC countries.

We must address the need for enhanced burden-sharing among OECD/DAC countries. We must also address the need for a broader donor base to the UNs operational activities that includes fast growing emerging economies. For emerging economies, increased funding through the UN, including core funding, can also constitute an important form of South-South cooperation.

This year again, UN agencies have underlined the importance of core funding for the UN operational activities. We share the concern underlined by UN agencies as well as by many member states regarding the increased imbalance between core and non-core funding, with core resources now representing less than 30 per cent of total contributions. Core funding is the bedrock for operational activities of the United Nations system. Core funding enables the UN to have qualified staff and field presence in all 148 programme countries, and it enables the UN to work strategically while ensuring necessary flexibility.

More secure funding must go hand in hand with better performance, oversight, accountability, efficiency and results. Particularly, efficiency and results must be included in the analytical reports of UN agencies. We would welcome increased focus on this in next years' reports from the Secretary-General. We recognize the efforts made by the United Nations development system to improve resultsbased strategic planning and management in order to improve accountability and transparency and we encourage further progress in this regard, as well as measures to further improve its long-term delivery and results.

UN agencies are under strong pressure to demonstrate and communicate results. Governments, including partner countries and donor governments, also need to demonstrate results. We are pleased to see that important progress is being accomplished in this regard. However, the UN still needs to better demonstrate the impact of its work and to communicate better what has been achieved. We encourage UN operational agencies to give high priority to improve their communication strategies, both individually and as a whole.

In this regard, we recognize the challenge underlined by agencies that the new way of doing business by planning and delivering programmes jointly for more cohesion and effectiveness raises questions of accountability and attribution. We welcome efforts to focus not only on individual agencies but also on the broader picture of the impact of the UN system in achieving the development goals. However, we still need to be able to measure results and effectiveness of individual agencies which allow governments, be they donor countries or programme countries, to identify which agencies deliver the best value for money. We look forward to a continued dialogue on these important issues.

Several middle income countries have underlined during this session of ECOSOC that they too have unmet needs and expectations and that the UN must also be there for them. Approximately 70% of poor people live in middle income countries. We agree that UN agencies have important mandates that are also to be fulfilled in middle income countries and emerging economies. However, here the main focus when it comes to financial resources should be to raise national income through taxation and redistribution of wealth. The legitimate needs of poor people in middle income countries should not be met by taking larger part of the limited funds that are today allocated to the least developed countries, fragile states and countries affected by conflict.

Advancing gender equality and empowerment of women is critical to global development. Norway applaud the creation of UN Women and we invite all UN agencies to better address the needs of countries in improving gender equality and women's empowerment according to their respective mandates. We look forward to a review of progress at the country level in improving coordination on mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment.

Thank you