

9 June 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Closing of the Tarrytown Retreat for the Dialogue on UN
Operational Activities for Development: Preparations for the 2012
QCPR**

Remarks delivered by H.E. Dr. Mutlaq Al-Qahtani, Chef de Cabinet to the President of the General Assembly

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, as the President of the General Assembly mentioned last night that he had to fly out of town today on an important mission. He regrets for not being able to be with you today. It is my honour to deliver the following remarks on his behalf.

Mr. Werner Puschra,

Mr. Navid Hanif,

Dear colleagues,

First, let me begin by thanking all the moderators and speakers for their excellent contributions. I am delighted that this dialogue has been frank, practical and forward-looking.

I believe that this retreat and the previous two seminars have been very valuable in helping forge a common ground and a constructive spirit for our upcoming QCPR negotiations later this year. This was an important objective when my Office, the Friedrich-Ebert Foundation and DESA decided to launch this dialogue series.

Your rich discussions have pointed out a few key areas that Member States should focus their attention on when providing concrete guidance to the UN development system during the QCPR.

First, the changing development landscape calls for a special dialogue on the issue of long-term strategic repositioning of the UN system. The QCPR provides an opportunity to launch such a dialogue process.

Second, as global challenges become increasingly cross-sectoral and multi-faceted, the UN will only succeed in supporting national development efforts by bringing together, in a coherent manner, the capacity of all its entities. Thus, the system as a whole can deliver more than the sum of its individual parts.

But, as your deliberations have highlighted, this will not happen without further changes in:

- the funding architecture,

- the Resident Coordinator system, and
- the country planning and programming instruments and processes of the UN development system.

For example, there is also a growing realization that the UN system needs to attain a viable balance between core and non-core funding. This is crucial for it to strengthen its normative, standard-setting and statistical competencies. Those will become even more important in the changing development cooperation landscape.

The critical mass dialogue mandated by the GA in resolution 64/289, on system-wide coherence, needs therefore to be launched as soon as possible and show results.

At country level – where an average of 15 UN entities with varying mandates and business models co-exist –, there is also a growing recognition that the role of the Resident Coordinator needs to be strengthened. The QCPR process will undoubtedly pay particular attention to this important issue.

Also, as repeatedly pointed out during this retreat, the QCPR needs to address the issue of horizontal accountability. Without it, there is limited incentive for UN entities to collaborate and exploit synergies in their work.

At the same time, it is important that the approach to coordination be tailored to specific country contexts.

In transition countries, where the boundaries between development and political/humanitarian work have become blurred, the silos must be broken down, particularly at headquarters level. This has to start with a serious reflection of why the current integration policies have not worked as effectively as expected. Integration among the different pillars is not an objective in itself, but a means towards more effective functioning of the UN system in transition countries. The principle of sustainability should also drive the work of the UN system in transition countries from the outset.

In middle-income countries, where governments have implementation capacity and access to resources, we must find the right balance between traditional development assistance and upstream support. In turn, the country presence and funding system of UN entities should also be adapted to this evolving business model in the middle-income countries.

Dear colleagues,

Our reflections throughout this dialogue series will provide important inputs and serve as a reference point for the ECOSOC substantive session this July and to the General Assembly negotiations on a QCPR resolution later this fall.

I trust that we will carry forward our spirit of collaboration and work collectively towards a successful QCPR.

Finally, I wish to thank the kind words of delegations that have expressed to me their gratitude for the initiatives we have taken in the last few months to support the QCPR process and other discussions on development issues. I am glad they have found the recent seminars, panel discussions and thematic debates held in the General Assembly to be useful.

I thank you all for your attention and I wish you a safe journey back home.