



Statement

by

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**in the
Second Committee of the
59th session of the UN General Assembly**

on

Agenda Item 90: Operational activities for development

**United Nations
4 November 2004**

Mr. Chairman,

United Nations operational activities for development form a staunch pillar of support for the national efforts of the Least Developed Countries, the Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States --- the three most vulnerable groups of the international community. In other words, the field presence of the United Nations and their respective mandates are also key to the implementation --- and here I emphasize implementation --- of the Brussels, Barbados and Almaty Programmes of Action.

The analysis in the 2004 Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review (TCP), including country-level assessments, and the ECOSOC debate during 2004, confirmed the importance that continues to be attached to progress in field-level coordination. The review emphasizes that field-level coordination should not be limited to the UN system's activities but should encompass the entire range of international assistance to a country, including activities of other multilateral institutions and bilateral donors. In the final analysis, full integration of the UN system's activities with country-level efforts, under the leadership of the Government, should be the ultimate goal of the international development community.

The Triennial Review further calls for a number of actions to enhance the effectiveness of UN system's development cooperation, which are:

- * Strengthen coherence within a unified nationally owned development framework,
- * Ensure adequate use of all relevant capacities available in the system,
- * Give higher emphasis to results and their evaluation, and
- * Translate internationally agreed development goals into national terms.
- * Provide adequate funding, and further reflect on funding arrangements, and
- * Make organizational and structural changes, including strengthening of the resident coordinator system.

The Resident Coordinator system's country-level presence has to be responsive to the national priorities and needs, ensuring support to those dimensions that are important to efforts in sustainable development. Intensified field-level coordination and participation of all relevant parts of the system, including those entities that do not have country-level representation, are essential. Greater consideration should also be given to the regional dimensions of development cooperation.

The implementation of the recommendations of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review will go a long way in aiding the fulfilment of the mandates and responsibilities of the Office of the High Representative for LDCs, LLDCs and the SIDS. The Office's mandate is not only to advocate for enhanced support to the development efforts of the vulnerable countries but also to seek support for the follow-up and coordination, and in the case of the LDCs and the LLDCs, to monitor and to report on the implementation of the international programmes for these countries.

Towards fulfilling its mandates, my Office has already taken steps to work closely with UN agencies and other entities to mainstream the Brussels Programme of Action into their respective spheres of activities. Thus far 19 UN system entities and other multilateral organizations have mainstreamed the Brussels Programme in their respective programmes of work. In addition, my Office also undertakes close consultations with the World Bank, IMF, civil society, the private sector, intergovernmental organizations and other relevant regional and multilateral bodies towards supporting implementation of the programme. The Office of the High Representative is also a member of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).

The Office, in close collaboration with LDC delegations in New York, encouraged the establishment of national mechanisms and National Focal Points in LDCs in order to enhance their ownership and capacity for the country level implementation of the Brussels Programme. The number of National Focal Points in the 50 LDCs has increased from 9 to 45 and National Forums from 9 to 18, as compared to the previous year.

My Office also organized a "Workshop of the National Focal Points on the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries" in May this year in New York. Other UN agencies also collaborated in this endeavour. The workshop provided an opportunity to get information on the country level activities, and to identify concrete measures for implementing the Brussels Programme by the LDCs and their development partners. But again, in any of the efforts made at the national level in implementing the Brussels Programme, there is a need for close coordination with local and other concerned UN system organizations.

In the course of undertaking these tasks to fulfil its mandates, my Office has found that there is a great necessity to further strengthen the bridges of cooperation and understanding at the national levels of implementation --- after all, that is where the action really is, and where we can make a big difference.

The UN Resident Coordinator system is no doubt a laudable achievement of the UN in helping countries to implement the outcomes of the major international conferences at the national and even at the regional levels. But the Triennial Review of the Secretary-General also said that "there was, at the same time, a clear sense that this effort did not, as yet, draw as fully as desirable on the system as a whole, particularly agencies, programmes, regional commissions and other UN entities without field presence. The system moves at varying speeds in participating in, and contributing to, a coordinated country-level response to country needs. There was also an equally strong sense that much remains to be done in further shifting the focus of reforms from process to results."

While the need to promote and move ahead with the specific Millennium Development Goals are critical to say the least, the Brussels, Barbados and Almaty programmes not only complement the MDGs but add to and qualify the specific measures necessary to overcome the handicaps of these, if I may say so, "extra-vulnerable" groups of countries. It is because of this that the mainstreaming of the Barbados, Brussels and Almaty Programmes has to be done not only at an international level but at the country and regional levels as well. This is very much in keeping with the mandates of the UN

Resident Coordinator system and the recommendations of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

What is the Office of the High Representative proposing towards this end?

My proposal in the first instance is to reiterate that it is essential for LDC governments, with the assistance and close cooperation of the UN Resident Coordinator system, to specifically devise measures in their national development plans for the fulfilment of the seven commitments of the Brussels Programme of Action. We have to address each of the seven commitments in the national development programmes, in the UNDAF, CCAs and the PRSPs as relevant, as called for specifically in the Brussels Programme.

The UNRC system must also have the inbuilt mechanism to monitor and include in its reports to headquarters on the progress or lack thereof on these specific commitments. It is in this way, when a true picture emerges through the UNRC system as to what exactly is transpiring at the country and regional levels, that the UN headquarters offices will get to understand better the direction the Programme is taking --- and the speed at which objectives are being achieved. Without such a national level perspective, the work of headquarters in advocacy and coordination, the efforts to mobilize international support and resources for the Least Developed Countries will be seriously handicapped.

Mr. Chairman, I hope that the Second Committee will give due consideration to these proposals of mine.
