



# Economic and Social Council

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## 2023 session

25 July 2022–26 July 2023

Operational activities for development segment

### Summary record of the 19th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 23 May 2023, at 10.15 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Chimbindi (Vice-President) . . . . . (Zimbabwe)

*later:* Ms. Narváez Ojeda (Vice-President) . . . . . (Chile)

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*In the absence of Ms. Stoeva (Bulgaria), Mr. Chimbindi (Zimbabwe), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.*

### Opening of the segment

1. **The President**, opening the operational activities for development segment, said that the overarching theme of the segment was guiding the support provided by the United Nations development system in response to interlinked crises, with a view to accelerating progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

### Agenda item 7: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation

#### (a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council ([A/78/72-E/2023/59](#) and [A/78/72/Add.1-E/2023/59/Add.1](#); [E/2023/62](#))

#### Statement by the Vice-President of the Council

2. **Mr. Chimbindi** (Zimbabwe), Vice-President, said that the current segment would provide an opportunity to consider the progress made on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and provide guidance for supporting countries in their efforts to implement their national development plans and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The world was facing unprecedented challenges, as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and of conflicts that had ignited new crises, disrupted energy markets, and exacerbated food insecurity and malnutrition in many developing countries. Furthermore, high inflation and the rising cost of living had pushed millions of people into poverty and economic hardship, while the climate crisis and natural disasters continued to cause economic damage and generate humanitarian crises in many countries. Those complex challenges were interconnected, transcended borders and all other divides, and could only be addressed by implementing integrated policies with multiplier effects within and across countries. In that context, rescuing the Sustainable Development Goals and accelerating their implementation needed to be the highest common priority of the United Nations development system.

3. The draft programme for the operational activities for development segment was intended to optimize interactive dialogue and facilitate the sharing of best practices and experiences. During the segment, the Council would consider the report of the Secretary-

General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [75/233](#) on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system ([A/78/72-E/2023/59](#)) and the report of the Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group on the Development Coordination Office ([E/2023/62](#)). It would examine the issue of financing the achievement of the Goals through improved collaboration with financial institutions and would hold an interactive dialogue on the support provided by the United Nations development system to programme countries. The executive heads of the system would provide information on their responses to the measures taken.

4. The Council would take stock of how the United Nations development system was tailoring support to different country contexts, aligning policies and practices with the mandates of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review, and using strategic foresight data and digital transformation to enable countries to achieve structural transformation and accelerate progress towards sustainable development. The Council would also review progress on the regional repositioning of the United Nations development system and on the implementation of the funding compact, and would consider ways of strengthening system-wide accountability in terms of performance and results. Real dialogue between the system and Member States would ensure that the perspectives and feedback of the latter were fully taken into account, and that they were kept abreast of ongoing reforms and developments on the ground. An honest identification of both successes and challenges was critical for shaping the way forward, including as input for the next quadrennial comprehensive policy review, scheduled for 2024. Discussions should go beyond jargon and technicalities to effectively use multilateralism to deliver results and improve the overall well-being of the world's population.

5. The United Nations development system had been severely tested in recent years. Although 2023 was the midway point between the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its planned implementation, hard-earned progress towards the Goals had been reversed. Reforming the system would help it to meet complex development challenges, and a strengthened resident coordinator system would bring country teams closer to achieving the Goals. New United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks were effectively enabling those teams to mobilize collaboration, partnerships and financing. At the same time, reports clearly indicated that the system was generating significant efficiencies. The valuable experience gained during the COVID-19 pandemic should provide a solid

basis for permanently amplifying the effectiveness of the system and its partnership with Governments, other international organizations and development actors.

6. Accordingly, the operational activities for development segment had become even more relevant as the main means of ensuring accountability in the system to improve performance in support of the 2030 Agenda, as endorsed and strengthened by the General Assembly. Despite the notable achievements outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Assembly resolution [75/233 \(A/78/72-E/2023/59\)](#), the challenges and weaknesses remained significant, and would have to be resolved in order for most developing countries to regain the decade of development progress that had been eliminated. The segment should help to pave the way for the integrated support needed by many programme countries to overcome the multiple crises they faced. Such support would require a forward-looking vision and the participation of Governments, the private sector, civil society organizations and all other global partners. Discussions would inform the adoption of a substantive Council resolution, in the lead-up to the upcoming high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Council and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit.

#### **Statement by the Vice-President of the General Assembly**

7. **Mr. Wallace** (Observer for Jamaica), Vice-President of the General Assembly, said that the world had entered a new era and was facing a perfect storm of challenges, which threatened the well-being and future of its inhabitants. Crises relating to conflict, climate change, inflation, hunger, energy insecurity and mounting sovereign debt had sent millions of people into poverty and thrown the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals off track. In order to meet those challenges, the United Nations development system needed to be effective, efficient and coherent in its support for Member States. It also needed to be well-funded, in order to provide the required support during complex emergencies and mitigate the causes of conflict, disaster risk and humanitarian crises.

8. During the operational activities for development segment, the Council would assess to what extent the system was implementing the policy guidance provided by Member States and honouring the promise to leave no one behind. The segment would provide an opportunity to continue strengthening the collaboration between the General Assembly and the Council. The Assembly, in its resolution [75/233](#), on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities

for the development of the United Nations system, had called for a focus on the quality of system-wide reporting on critical funding, performance and programme results that were aligned with the Goals. In the third year of the review, the Council needed to examine the extent to which the system was supporting countries in enacting transformative policies, the areas in which it was struggling to perform, and the ways in which it could better target, and accelerate the provision of, funding. The decade of action and delivery for sustainable development would be judged by its results or its lack thereof.

9. He welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [75/233 \(A/78/72-E/2023/59\)](#), in which the system's progress on related fronts was assessed. In the lead-up to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, there was a need to ensure that reforms were bringing about critical changes in behaviour, culture and mindset, so as to maximize the collective offer of the United Nations. The dual accountability model was at the heart of the reform and would enable the development system to unite behind the Goals. It was encouraging that the model's value and benefits were now well understood across the system. The revised management and accountability framework should be fully implemented, with each entity contributing on the basis of its comparative advantages, with a view to providing whole-of-system support to countries. Funding for the resident coordinator system, which was a strategic investment, needed to be a common priority, so as to prevent the erosion of robust operations as countries faced a make-or-break moment with regard to achieving the Goals.

10. The quadrennial comprehensive policy review mandate that had been conferred by Member States in 2020 was at the heart of the reform. It needed to be resolutely upheld, and the progress made in country configuration, regional support, business operations, reporting and evaluation should be reflected in meaningful results. Member States should uphold the values of international cooperation and solidarity, since unity was key for success.

#### **Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs**

11. **Mr. Junhua Li** (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the international community had reached the halfway point on the timeline set for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Seven years prior, it had made a collective promise to eradicate poverty and hunger so that everyone could thrive and no one would be left behind. Nonetheless, it

had failed to enact the required changes at the scale and speed needed. The Secretary-General, in his forthcoming special edition report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, would indicate that the Goals were in deep trouble. If current trends continued, only one third of countries would meet the target of halving national poverty by 2030. Hunger levels, economic hardship and the number of people fleeing conflict were at record highs. Inequalities were widening and, as a result of the cumulative impact of learning losses and underinvestment in education, by 2030, 300 million children and young people would leave school unable to read or write. None of the gender equality indicators had been met. The planet was worryingly close to the point of no return with respect to global warming. Time was of the essence and humanity could not give up on regaining lost ground.

12. The United Nations development system, five years since the start of its repositioning, needed the support and guidance of Member States as it continued to play a decisive role in helping them to achieve sustainable development. The findings of the reports that were before the Council at the current meeting would serve as a sound basis for discussions, and demonstrated that the reform was delivering results. The system was providing tailored support in response to the multiple and interlinked crises, while maintaining a focus on long-term development goals. It remained the preferred partner for evidence-based and integrated policy advice.

13. Joint action had helped millions of people gain social protection coverage. Resident coordinators were driving just transitions related to food, energy, education and digital technologies, through policy dialogue, partnerships and joint efforts. They were connecting global priorities to local actions, through initiatives such as the Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance, and by implementing the outcomes of the Food Systems Summit and the Transforming Education Summit. Their support had also led to the establishment of the historic loss and damage fund announced at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Stronger synergies in humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities were helping to prevent, or accelerate transitions out of, conflicts and emergencies. Host countries recognized the leadership of resident coordinators in conducting more coherent and collective country-level activities. Country teams were improving their collaboration in relation to a new generation of United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, whose content was, in the eyes of most Governments, adequately reflected in the

activities undertaken by the United Nations development system. Overall, the repositioned system was generating significantly more efficiency gains than expected.

14. However, consolidation was needed in some areas, in order to accelerate the achievement of the Goals. The management and accountability framework needed to be fully implemented to motivate the required behavioural shifts. While most country teams derived their country programme document from the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, full implementation of that practice remained a challenge. Guaranteed funding for the system was also critical; 85 per cent of United Nations headquarters entities were experiencing considerable difficulties in ensuring appropriate financing.

*High-level interactive dialogue with the Secretary-General*

15. *A video prepared by the United Nations Development Coordination Office on boosting support to countries for rescuing the Sustainable Development Goals was screened.*

16. **Mr. Shava** (Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Zimbabwe) said that the United Nations had been at the centre of foreign policy in Zimbabwe ever since the country had become a member in 1980. His country had always sought, in its participation in all the bodies of the Organization, including the Council, to promote and protect the principles, purposes and values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The Organization had a key role to play in addressing current challenges, such as climate change, global poverty, the defence of human rights, the threat posed by nuclear weapons, the provision of peacekeeping forces in conflict zones, the promotion of gender equality, and humanitarian crises resulting from natural disasters, conflicts and other causes. The current polycrisis had demonstrated the immeasurable importance of the Organization, while also highlighting the need to make it more effective, efficient, representative and reflective of global realities. His Government fully supported the broad reform launched by the Secretary-General to improve coordination among agencies on the ground and align their work with the priorities of host countries.

17. Rescuing the Sustainable Development Goals had become more urgent than ever, since, at the midpoint of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the world was on track to achieve only 12 per cent of the Goals, progress towards 50 per cent of the targets was off track and progress towards 30 per cent of the targets had either stagnated or regressed below the 2015 baseline.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which had resulted in the loss of millions of lives, destroyed livelihoods and pushed millions of people into abject poverty, had set back human development, especially with regard to women's rights, by a full decade. It had proven beyond a doubt that ignoring global interdependence was perilous. Disasters did not respect national boundaries and no one was safe until everyone was safe.

18. While developed countries had invested trillions of dollars in their own recovery, the global South had been left to fend for itself. The global financial system, which favoured developed countries and punished those most in need, had worsened an already terrible situation. The much-vaunted solidarity that was inherent in the principles of the Charter and at the core of multilateralism was becoming conspicuous by its absence. Many developing countries had received little support in addressing the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic and other vulnerabilities that had been exacerbated by the climate crisis. Since 2022, the situation had been compounded by the food, fuel and financial crises, which were primarily the result of geopolitical confrontations. At such times, the countries of the global South looked to the United Nations for support and solidarity. With the Organization at the centre, the international community should collectively endeavour to establish linkages between its approaches to climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment, while being guided by the belief that solutions to one problem must be solutions for all.

19. The operational activities for development segment was an opportunity to review the progress made and obstacles faced in implementing the 2030 Agenda. The people of Africa, who faced many interrelated challenges ranging from catastrophic natural disasters to increased geopolitical tensions and unresolved conflicts, fully appreciated the importance of an effective and efficient United Nations development system. Disparities between and among countries were manifold, and growth paths were diverging in the new global environment. Several African countries were unlikely to achieve a single Goal. Issues of gender equality, decent work, economic growth and sustainable food production continued to be a challenge in some parts of the continent and beyond. With the support of the United Nations and other partners, African leaders had made tremendous efforts to find durable solutions to the multidimensional challenges. Five years since the start of the repositioning of the United Nations development system, the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals Summit would be an opportunity to showcase the outcomes of the reform and share

experiences and lessons learned, while formulating the best way forward at an increased scale and speed.

20. At the national level, his country and the United Nations enjoyed an excellent partnership, as outlined in the 2022–2026 Zimbabwe United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework. Under the Cooperation Framework, the United Nations country team engaged strategically in Zimbabwe to help the country to implement its national development plans and achieve the Goals, which had been mainstreamed into the national development strategy for the period 2021–2025. In addition, a development finance portfolio of \$2.8 billion would be mobilized to support the country in meeting its development needs and achieving the Goals. The Cooperation Framework was based on a whole-of-government approach that ensured inclusive participation. In 2022, \$524 million had been disbursed under the Framework to support projects and programmes targeting the populations that were the furthest behind, including children, youth, persons with disabilities, migrants, refugees and rural farmers.

21. Zimbabwe had experienced the benefits of a repositioned United Nations country team, which had supported the national response to the humanitarian disaster caused by Cyclone Idai in March 2019. At the peak of the crisis, the United Nations and other humanitarian partners had increased the provision of emergency food, shelter, water and health-care supplies to hundreds of thousands of affected people across the region. In March 2023, the Cooperation Framework steering committee had reviewed the progress made the previous year in the priority areas of social protection, resilience-building, quality social services, gender equality, and democratic and economic governance.

22. In 2022, efforts had been geared toward attaining the national priorities and achieving the Goals. The World Food Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had complemented the work done by his Government in providing social services, and had provided cash or in-kind support to over 1.8 million people. Through the combined contributions of various United Nations agencies, over 4.6 million people had received social protection services. An additional 250,000 people had benefited from initiatives to rehabilitate community infrastructure. Construction had been carried out by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Office for Project Services, in collaboration with the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, Climate and Rural Development of Zimbabwe, through the Zimbabwe Idai Recovery Project. The country's quest to achieve universal health coverage remained on course. The renovation and construction of

health centres, clinics and district hospitals was being expedited.

23. His Government had worked with UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organization to develop policies on education, school financing, early learning, and technical and vocational education and training. Furthermore, a 2021–2025 education sector strategic policy had been disseminated to all districts. UNICEF continued to work with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education to provide Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for All systems in schools, and to provide hygiene and sanitation kits, including menstrual hygiene products, to over 1.3 million children.

24. The Zimbabwean authorities had worked with UNICEF and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), as well as with justice delivery institutions, to enhance access to and the dispensation of justice at subnational levels. Thousands of people had accessed justice services through legal aid services and the monitoring of children in detention. Virtual courts, child-friendly courts, call centres for the national police and victim-friendly systems had been set up in remote areas, to improve access to justice for vulnerable people, especially women, children and persons with disabilities. Enhanced access to justice was also being bolstered by joint government and United Nations efforts to build the capacity of staff, support the decentralization of services, promote human rights, and combat gender-based violence and child marriage.

25. As part of its re-engagement agenda, Zimbabwe had launched a structured dialogue on arrears clearance and debt resolution strategy in December 2022 to engage with its creditors and development partners, with a view to unlocking new capital from international financial institutions. The dialogue process included three pillars, namely, economic growth and stability, governance and land tenure, and the compensation of former farm owners and the conclusion of bilateral investment protection and promotion agreements. The United Nations co-chaired the meetings related to the third pillar and had been actively involved in drafting the corresponding matrix. In an effort to promote gender equality, his Government had formulated a constitutional amendment in accordance with which 30 per cent of those elected to each local council must be women. In addition, the national gender commission had collaborated with UN-Women to build the capacity of aspiring women political candidates under a training and mentorship programme. Measures had been adopted

to ensure violence-free elections, so as to further encourage women's participation.

26. Resident coordinators played a critical role in supporting countries, by focusing on policy transformations, partnerships and coalition-building to accelerate momentum for achieving the Goals and other tangible results. They must prioritize economic development, with a focus on the overarching goal of the 2030 Agenda, namely poverty alleviation. The investments made in the repositioning of the United Nations development system were delivering results. Country team programming and policy support were increasingly well regarded by host Governments, but must be better aligned with national needs and priorities. Resident coordinators should also provide policy advice in the run-up to the Climate Ambition Summit and the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

27. As in many other developing countries, financing the Goals remained a major challenge for Zimbabwe. With the added burden of illegal unilateral coercive measures imposed on it by some Western countries, Zimbabwe had financed the achievement of the Goals mostly using domestically mobilized resources. It continued to leverage the convening power of the United Nations to enlist other stakeholders, including the private sector and banks, in the hope of finding suitable solutions. His Government applauded the calls made by the Secretary-General and others for the immediate and unconditional removal of sanctions, which would allow Zimbabwe and other countries in the same predicament to better work towards achieving the Goals. While the Sustainable Development Goal stimulus initiative was welcome, the promise to move from billions to trillions was proving difficult to honour, and the means of implementation required further examination. The United Nations development system must help developing countries to leverage robust partnerships with development partners, including international financial institutions and the private sector, to achieve the scale and pace of progress required to implement the 2030 Agenda.

28. At a time when calls for the reform of the global financial architecture were growing, international financial institutions and multilateral development banks needed to provide more liquidity immediately to the countries most in need, and expand fiscal space by allocating more financing in the form of grants and concessional loans. Despite the progress made with respect to the funding compact, more needed to be done to fully implement the required fundamental changes. The commitments made in the compact, and all other

commitments, must be honoured in their entirety, through the provision, by all partners, of funding aligned with national needs, in order to provide integrated support for advancing the Goals. It was critical to ensure that the annual budget for the resident coordinator system was fully funded. He was extremely concerned about the fact that the funding gap had increased to \$85 million in 2022. The current year was crucial, and the operational activities for development segment, the high-level political forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Council and the Sustainable Development Goals Summit were all opportunities that should be seized to put the world back on track to achieve the Goals.

29. **The Secretary-General**, introducing his report on the implementation of General Assembly [75/233](#) on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system ([A/78/72-E/2023/59](#)), said that, halfway along the timeline for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, more than half the world was being left behind. Poverty and hunger were on the rise once again, the climate crisis was escalating, conflict and persecution had forced 100 million people from their homes, and the economic destruction and dislocation wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic had been prolonged and amplified by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The cost of food, energy and finance had risen sharply, with devastating impacts on vulnerable countries and communities. Inequalities and gender discrimination were increasing. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, which were the only comprehensive solution to those crises, was far off track. Progress towards more than 30 per cent of the related targets had been reversed and progress towards another 50 per cent was weak and insufficient.

30. Nonetheless, it was not too late to turn the tide and the United Nations was determined to do just that. The Sustainable Development Goal stimulus, the proposed reforms of the global financial architecture, the Acceleration Agenda for climate action, the Transforming Education Summit, the food systems transformation, the Global Digital Compact, the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, the Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Russian Federation and the Secretariat of the United Nations on promoting Russian food products and fertilizers to the world markets were all aimed at reducing poverty, inequality and hunger.

31. Around the world, the United Nations country teams were leading efforts for sustainable and inclusive

development. They supported Governments, brought together stakeholders and strove to translate global and regional commitments on the Goals into action. Despite operating in very challenging conditions, the country teams had managed to make the ongoing reform process a success. Resident coordinators had brought United Nations entities together in support of countries' priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and were working together to help address cross-border crises. Fully 88 per cent of host Governments stated that resident coordinators provided effective, strategic leadership in support of national plans and priorities. All the least developed countries and landlocked developing countries surveyed had said that the activities of the United Nations were closely aligned with their needs and priorities. Small island developing States had said that collaboration between United Nations entities had improved since the start of the reforms. The system was data-driven and had resulted in new levels of transparency and accountability.

32. In Egypt, the reinvigorated role of the resident coordinator had mobilized expertise and comprehensive action to support the Egyptian presidency of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In Pakistan, the newly empowered resident coordinator system had worked closely with all United Nations entities and the Government to respond to the devastating floods that had affected 33 million people. The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework was the blueprint for a long-term approach to support recovery with the involvement of international financial institutions, beyond the immediate humanitarian response. The integrated support provided by the multi-country offices to small island developing States had helped to address issues ranging from climate adaptation to debt distress.

33. While the transformative vision of the 2030 Agenda relied on global partnership and unprecedented investment, that investment had not been forthcoming. Many developing countries could not afford to invest in achieving the Goals because they were facing a financial abyss. The annual funding gap for the Goals, which had been \$2.5 trillion before the COVID-19 pandemic, was now \$4.2 trillion. Although developed countries had been able to return to their pre-pandemic growth trajectories, developing countries had been hobbled by their inability to do likewise. Vulnerable middle-income countries were denied debt relief and concessional financing, and the Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative was not yet working effectively. On the markets, developing countries could be charged interest

rates that were up to eight times higher than those charged to their developed counterparts. Something was seriously wrong with the rules and governance structures that produced those results. He had therefore called for a Sustainable Development Goals stimulus, namely, an emergency measure to scale up affordable long-term financing for all countries in need by at least \$500 billion each year. Long-term proposals were being devised to right the fundamental injustices and inequalities of the global financial architecture, which reflected the global realities of 1945. The support of Member States in that regard would be key to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

34. Partnerships with the Governments of developing countries were essential to getting the most out of every development dollar, and doing so required adequate, predictable and flexible funding for the United Nations development system. Despite the fact that some Member States had maintained or increased their financial support, the resident coordinator system, which was the anchor for all efforts to support countries in achieving the Goals, remained chronically underfunded. The targets adopted four years before were far from being attained and, in 2022, there had been a funding gap of \$85 million. The level of the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund fell significantly short of the funding compact target of \$290 million per year. Without increased efforts from Member States, the United Nations development system would be effectively starved of the support it needed. A freeze on recruitment was reducing the ability of the Organization to perform, and further reductions would have to be made, which would affect its ability to coordinate the system and bring together partners beyond it.

35. The Organization had responded to the concerns of Member States and now turned to them to meet their commitments. The sum of \$85 million was a small investment for the returns already being witnessed. Development coordination saved lives by eradicating poverty and preventing humanitarian crises. While countries were spending more than \$2 trillion each year on military budgets, it was not credible for them to pledge support for peace if they were not prepared to invest a fraction of that amount in sustainable development, which was the greatest conflict-prevention tool. Member States should therefore reconsider his recommendation for a “hybrid 2.0” funding model for the United Nations development system. The current funding model for the resident coordinator system was far too vulnerable to fluctuations in voluntary funding, and had failed to provide sufficient resources predictably and sustainably.

36. The most logical and principled solution was to fund the resident coordinator system with a greater share of assessed contributions under the regular budget of the Organization. He would therefore launch a transparent and inclusive consultation with Member States in the coming months to allow all views to be heard before the submission of a formal proposal to the General Assembly. Those consultations should be approached with a sense of urgency, solidarity and resolve. The unfinished business of the reforms must be addressed in the lead-up to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit. Creative new approaches had not worked; a new funding model, with a greater share of assessed contributions from the regular budget, was the only sustainable, predictable and realistic option.

37. The United Nations was working with countries around the world towards a generational shift in global development. That shift would bring more fairness and justice to development financing and a dynamic in-country support system that was aligned with the needs and priorities of Member States. The Sustainable Development Goals Summit must give renewed impetus to and accelerate actions for achieving the Goals. It must also result in concrete progress on the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and a clear commitment to overhaul the existing international financial architecture. The coming months were an important opportunity to prepare the ground for what would be the most important initiative of 2023. Significant progress had already been made but more needed to be done. Member States were partners on that journey, and their continued engagement and leadership at the highest levels would be crucial to its success. A robust Council resolution from the operational activities for development segment would be an important first step in that direction. Together, the United Nations and its Member States could create a more sustainable and equitable future for all people, everywhere.

38. **Ms. Navarro Barro** (Observer for Cuba), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, every year, it became clear during the operational activities segment that the international community was far behind in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Words had not been translated into appropriate actions, and recent challenges and crises had further complicated the fulfilment of all previous commitments. Sustainable development was the only comprehensive solution to the problems of instability, vulnerability and structural inequality. It was the only way to leave no one behind and was humanity’s ultimate preventive tool. The focus of the United Nations development system and, in particular, the resident coordinator system, should remain on development issues, given the

different development levels and realities on the ground in all developing countries. The eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions should remain the system's overarching objective. The Group therefore appreciated the information provided in the report on the activities conducted by the system to support countries along that path, in keeping with the principle of national ownership and leadership.

39. The funding of development activities should be a top priority. In that regard, the Group appreciated the references in the report of the Secretary-General (A/78/72-E/2023/59) to activities aimed at enhancing the financing options of developing countries through initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goal stimulus and the reform of the international financial architecture. However, it was concerned about the fact that fewer financial resources were available for development than for the other pillars of the United Nations, and that the very limited funding for development was mainly directed towards non-core funding, which did not necessarily support the overarching sustainable development programme set out by the system, in alignment with the priorities of programme countries. Accordingly, donors should contribute to the system in a way that was more beneficial to its coordinated efforts, through core funding and joint, thematic or pooled funding.

40. While the Group appreciated the manner in which the United Nations development system had responded to the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises in programme countries, there still appeared to be a major gap in the ways in which the entities of the system conducted joint work. The entities' executive and governing bodies should ensure that decisions at the board level were aligned with the mandates of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. There should be less competitiveness among the entities and greater promotion of the benefits of their working together. The Group was concerned about the funding shortfall for the resident coordinator system and noted the Secretary-General's decision to provide the General Assembly with a report in the second half of 2023 on options for funding that system. The system must be sustainably, predictably and adequately funded, and the Group was committed to engaging constructively in future consultations on the subject. The Group would work towards ensuring that the improved development system functioned properly and efficiently to fulfil its mandate of supporting countries in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

41. Some of the Group's members were among the furthest behind in terms of extreme poverty and high indebtedness, and had been the most adversely affected

by climate change and other external economic, financial and health-related shocks. Furthermore, unilateral coercive measures adversely affected the efforts of the United Nations country teams, at the national level, to promote the achievement of the Goals. The international community, including the resident coordinator system, must therefore enhance the assistance it provided to countries that were in special situations or faced specific challenges or circumstances, to properly address those countries' development priorities. The Sustainable Development Goals Summit should give greater impetus to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and the Group would engage with all levels of the United Nations development system to contribute to that collective effort.

42. **Mr. Skoog** (Representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer) said that, as major donors to the United Nations development system, the States members of the European Union were proud of the progress made since the previous report of the Secretary-General on the matter, including the channelling of \$46.5 billion through the system in 2021. Although more core funding was needed, the resident coordinator system, whose repositioning had started only five years previously, was functioning well. The European Union welcomed the efficiency gains of \$405 million and called for more investment in the system.

43. However, progress on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 had been set back by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Russian war and other conflicts, inflation, debt, climate disasters, and slow advancement towards democratization and good governance. The European Union stood ready to continue engaging on all initiatives to accelerate the achievement of the Goals. The United Nations development system was a key asset in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and it needed to be able to fulfil the commitments that would be made at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit. To that end, political and financial investment was needed to improve coordination and effectiveness, joint programming and the delivery of joint results at the country level.

44. The funding of the resident coordinator system remained a major source of preoccupation for various reasons. The European Union and its member States contributed heavily to that system through all its financing pillars, and looked forward to detailed proposals for a predictable, flexible and solid funding model. The possible options, such as funding the system through assessed contributions, should be thoroughly examined. Given the role played by the resident

coordinator system in bringing together United Nations entities at the country level and members of the broader donor community, more information on how Member States could help to facilitate such coordination would be welcome. It would also be interesting to learn how the United Nations development system could, through the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, help to meet the humanitarian needs emerging as a result of conflicts and climate change.

45. **Ms. Joyini** (Observer for South Africa), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the operations of the United Nations development system had been improved to promote coherence and provide integrated policy support to programme countries for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. The efforts made to strengthen the operational activities for development segment of the Council were also appreciated.

46. Africa was the principal beneficiary of the resident coordinator system, with 53 resident coordinators and resident coordinator offices. As such, all challenges facing the system had a direct impact on the continent. Promoting the consolidation of the system and preserving its capacities and resources was of the utmost importance, if African countries were to benefit from truly tailored and integrated support. The Group had therefore, from the outset, supported efforts to reform the United Nations development system, and would continue to actively engage in that regard. The various categories of developing countries in Africa, including small island developing States, middle-income countries, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries, required different levels of support from the United Nations to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063 and other intergovernmental agreements, such as the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

47. The reform of the United Nations development system, under the leadership of the resident coordinators, was delivering customer support that was aligned with specific country needs. According to a survey conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 95 per cent of African Governments found that the technical support provided by the United Nations development system was in line with national needs and priorities. Furthermore, 89 per cent of those Governments believed that they were receiving appropriate support to leverage partnerships for the pursuit of national development priorities. The Group

acknowledged the progress achieved in providing quality integrated policy advice by harnessing expertise from across the system and bringing together partners, under the leadership of the resident coordinators, with a view to mobilizing means of implementation for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

48. Remarkable results had been showcased at the briefings organized by the Development Coordination Office and a number of permanent missions to the United Nations to consider country-specific experiences with the resident coordinator system. Nonetheless, the Group was concerned that the shortfall in the funding of the system would undermine efforts to deliver effective programmes and activities at the country level. The Group welcomed the Secretary-General's efforts to make the current funding model work. The model should be based on the regular budget, to ensure that funding remained predictable and sustainable. The funding gap demonstrated that the voluntary nature of the existing model was no longer fit for purpose. It was therefore critical to initiate consultations on the matter. The Group looked forward to the discussions on the reinvigoration of the funding compact, which was essential to the United Nations development system.

49. **Mr. Vorshilov** (Observer for Mongolia), speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that the Group continued to support the United Nations development system in its efforts to provide integrated, efficient and quality support to countries for meeting their sustainable development needs and priorities. The resident coordinator system was uniquely positioned to provide tailored support by leveraging assets from across the development system. The COVID-19 pandemic had proven that the repositioned development system, with an empowered resident coordinator system at its core, was well-placed to respond to emergencies, build resilience and maintain development at the centre of United Nations activities.

50. In that regard, the reform of the United Nations development system required continued support from Member States. The resident coordinator system needed to be equipped with a predictable, sustainable and adequate funding model, to deliver impactful and concrete results for the benefit of all. His delegation was concerned about the risk that the funding gap would undermine the effective and efficient performance of programmatic country-level activities, especially in countries in special situations, like the landlocked developing countries, to which the resident coordinator system was essential. In particular, their resident coordinators and country teams needed to be fully involved in preparations for, and the implementation of the outcomes of, the next United Nations Conference on

Landlocked Developing Countries, to be held in Rwanda in 2024. The Group would continue to support the United Nations development system and engage constructively with a view to ensuring the full funding and proper coordination of the resident coordinator system, for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

51. **Mr. Rai** (Observer for Nepal), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that, following the recent United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, the Group underscored the critical role of the United Nations development system in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. It welcomed the reforms of the development system and the resident coordinator system, which enhanced those systems' capacity to provide programmatic and technical support, as well as evidence-based policy advice, to the least developed countries, in accordance with their national needs and priorities. The setbacks encountered in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals were particularly worrying. The least developed countries had been the hardest hit by the cumulative effects of multiple global crises and a lack of resources, which had seriously undermined efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

52. In that context, the international community, and in particular development partners and international financial institutions, needed to scale up means of implementation, by providing financial resources, and technical and capacity-building support, to the least developed countries. The Group fully supported the call made by the Secretary-General for a Sustainable Development Goal stimulus of at least \$500 billion per year. The shortfall in the funding of the resident coordinator system, which had been an estimated \$85 million in 2022, undermined the capacity of the system for programme implementation at the country level, especially in the least developed countries. A chronically underfunded system could not function effectively, and the annual amount of \$281 million needed to be fully mobilized in a timely and predictable manner. Development partners should replenish the \$290 million needed each year for the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund, so that it could continue its support to the least developed countries and other vulnerable countries.

53. While some progress had been made with respect to core funding, more needed to be done. The sources of funding needed to be diversified, and the Group welcomed the proposal by the Secretary-General to make funding for the resident coordinator system predictable. The Group hoped that the operational

activities for development segment would culminate in concrete recommendations for rescuing the Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals Summit would be a crucial moment for raising ambition and investing in the transformations required to accelerate progress.

54. **Mr. Luteru** (Observer for Samoa), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that, despite the strong commitments made in numerous development agreements, no development challenges had been seriously addressed and multilateralism and financial obligations in development had been constantly neglected.

55. The Alliance was committed to ensuring the success of the repositioned United Nations development system and the resident coordinator system. However, despite relying on those systems, small island States could not contribute to their funding, owing to existing debt, the financial and economic impacts of climate change, and the numerous other economic, financial and health shocks that affected those States more than other countries. The improvements made, under the funding compact, in coordination and the effectiveness of operations were welcome.

56. As the discussions on the new quadrennial comprehensive policy review approached, it was important to establish which of the mandates of the previous review had been implemented. The reformed multi-country offices had benefited small island States and the Alliance was hopeful that the multidimensional vulnerability index for small island developing States would be taken into account in the discussions on reforming the international financial architecture.

57. **Ms. Rodríguez Mancia** (Guatemala), speaking on behalf of the Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries, said that progress had been made in the repositioning of the United Nations development system, which played a crucial role in helping programme countries to implement the 2030 Agenda and overcome the multiple recent crises.

58. The Group called for sustainable, predictable and adequate funding for the resident coordinator system to ensure that resident coordinator offices and United Nations country teams could support countries in addressing multidimensional international challenges. The Group reiterated its call for comprehensive and inclusive international development cooperation with all developing countries, including middle-income countries, and for the improved allocation of support and resources from United Nations funds and programmes through the enhanced application of measures of progress other than gross domestic product,

in order to reflect the multidimensional vulnerabilities of each country. The benefits of such measures could be included in the results of the mapping exercise conducted to provide a detailed overview of the support available to middle-income countries, results that would be presented at the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly. The Group would welcome a briefing on the progress of the mapping exercise, which was being conducted in order to consider the development of a comprehensive system-wide response plan that took into account the multidimensional challenges faced by middle-income countries.

59. **Ms. Webster** (Observer for Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that Member States must collectively adapt to global challenges and remain committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. While the three delegations welcomed the accomplishments of the residential coordinator system and the increased satisfaction of small island developing States owing to the reforms of the multi-country resident coordinator offices, further work was needed. It was essential that the best people were on the ground in resident coordinator roles, that there was clarity about the centrality of the resident coordinator system and that resident coordinators were in a position to appropriately lead United Nations country teams. She wished to know what Member States could do to promote unity and joint leadership in that regard.

60. In the light of the shortfall in the funding of the resident coordinator system, she asked how the system could be given greater operational flexibility to navigate financially challenging times. She wondered how the United Nations ensured that resident coordinators demonstrated the expected standards of behaviour in their interactions, both internally and externally, and created a safe environment for staff, in order to maintain confidence in the system.

61. **The Secretary-General** said that the resident coordinators should work actively with the donor community to ensure that funds were provided in a coordinated way and that contributions were strategically oriented to meet the basic needs of beneficiary countries. Humanitarian work needed to focus on building resilience and enabling a transition towards development. For example, work to address internal displacement was increasingly organized through a solution-based approach that would help to avoid permanent dependence on humanitarian assistance.

62. He fully supported the efforts made by Member States to respond to the stalled progress in the

implementation of the 2030 Agenda and was committed to working with all groups to overcome the difficulties faced by the countries that they represented. When resources were scarce, they must be used well, priorities must be established, strategies must be put in place and actors in each country must not work in isolation. Strategies for coordinated development in developing countries would only be hindered by an uncoordinated United Nations system and a donor community that contributed funds arbitrarily, without considering each country's priorities. Such an approach had been the norm in the past, when agencies had had their own programmes, coordinated loosely among themselves and had a limited idea of the role that resident coordinators could play in ensuring effective coordination.

63. Resident coordinators must now be empowered and have the necessary resources to ensure that United Nations agencies coordinated effectively among themselves, aligned themselves with established government coordination mechanisms and discussed country priorities with donor communities. Ensuring that they could do so was the best way to make real savings in the operations of the United Nations and to avoid wasting the scarce resources available. A lack of a strong coordination mechanism would lead to greater spending and less coherent and coordinated action.

64. The current reliance on voluntary contributions was not working, as in many other areas of the Organization's activities. For example, the Group of Five for the Sahel was funded by voluntary rather than assessed contributions, and there was now chaos in the region and a lack of capacity to respond to terrorist threats. A hybrid model including assessed contributions was therefore the best way to invest in effective coordination.

65. Accountability and performance measurement would be easier to guarantee within a coordinated system. He was open to discussing any performance measure or accountability, reporting or monitoring mechanism proposed by Member States, with a view to improving coordination among agencies, guaranteeing the effective functioning of the system and ensuring accountability in the use of donors' contributions. The system was working better than in the past; it was desirable to avoid reverting to previous arrangements, which had entailed an enormous cost for Member States and an enormous waste of the money made available for development by the donor community.

66. **Lord Ahmad** (United Kingdom) said that the United Nations development system was needed more than ever to get progress towards the Sustainable

Development Goals back on track. The progress made with regard to reforms was welcome, but those reforms needed to be seen through to their conclusion in order to address increasingly complex challenges.

67. The United Nations should ensure that the right tools were available to ensure coherence and coordination among humanitarian, development and peace operations, and the United Kingdom supported the Secretary-General's call for further progress, particularly in relation to surge capacities. The full breadth of expertise in the United Nations system should be harnessed, including through strengthened regional architecture. The United Nations system also needed strong leadership and adequate funding to eradicate poverty and support delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. The role of the Secretary-General and the Initiative on the Safe Transportation of Grain and Foodstuffs from Ukrainian Ports were essential in that regard.

68. The United Kingdom welcomed the announcement that consultations would be held on the funding of the resident coordinator system before proposals on the matter were submitted to the General Assembly. The country had provided \$6 million to the system in 2022 and would provide a further \$6 million in 2023.

69. **Ms. Brandt** (Kingdom of the Netherlands) said that the Sustainable Development Goals Summit would be a decisive moment for the 2030 Agenda, particularly in the light of the crises and complex challenges disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable. All Member States, both donors and programme countries, had a shared interest in ensuring that the Goals were achieved. Member States also had shared responsibilities that included enabling a reformed United Nations development system with country teams to provide support for people on the ground.

70. The Kingdom of the Netherlands had increased its core funding, renewed its commitment to the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund and increased its contribution to the resident coordinator system on a multi-annual basis; it called on other Member States to do the same. Her country stressed the importance of a sustainably funded resident coordinator system and welcomed the "hybrid 2.0" funding model proposed by the Secretary-General.

71. **Ms. Chan Valverde** (Costa Rica) said that the resident coordinator system had allowed middle-income countries to use their collective strengths and resources to face urgent global challenges. The support of the resident coordinator in Costa Rica was thus not a luxury, but a necessity.

72. In the light of the funding needs of the resident coordinator system and the multiple economic and social challenges faced by developing countries, she wished to know what alternative measures could be taken to remedy the situation without placing the burden of maintaining the system on the countries it was intended to support. She also wished to know how measures of progress other than gross domestic product could be further integrated into the United Nations development system as a cooperation model to be replicated by other organizations and financial institutions.

73. **Mr. Hikmat** (Observer for Tajikistan) said that his country welcomed the emphasis of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review on national ownership, leadership and priorities, which had resulted in more tailored and demand-driven interventions by the United Nations. To maximize the collective impact of the operational activities for development segment, Member States must enhance coordination mechanisms across United Nations entities at all levels, foster greater coherence in policies and approaches and eliminate duplication and fragmentation.

74. His Government welcomed the strong emphasis in the report on scaling up means of implementation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Collaborative action, innovative financing mechanisms and the exchange of expertise would unlock new opportunities for sustainable development. For instance, Tajikistan had made progress in rolling out an integrated national financing framework that would help to catalyse the flow of development finance needed to achieve the Goals.

75. To accelerate progress towards the Goals, the United Nations should forge stronger partnerships with Governments, civil society and, particularly, private sector entities, including international financial institutions. Digital transformation should be embraced in order to harness the power of artificial intelligence, big data and other emerging technologies, and to address development challenges effectively. Tajikistan commended United Nations teams that were already applying artificial intelligence to tackle hunger, deliver medicine and connect schools. The United Nations must respond to evolving global challenges and shifting geopolitical dynamics. To that end, Tajikistan had supported the proposals made in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Our Common Agenda" to invigorate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

76. **Mr. Niang** (Observer for Senegal) said that the work of the resident coordinators must be sustainable

and their cooperation with host-country Governments must be improved. Although difficulties had been encountered, the resident coordinator system had enhanced the Organization's work in developing countries and must not be jeopardized; the issue of the system's financing must therefore be resolved. The resident coordinator system, which was essential to the repositioning of the United Nations development system and the eradication of poverty by 2030, could not be a poor relation of the United Nations. All Member States must contribute to it; none must be allowed to adopt a cautious mindset and remain passive while others acted.

77. The financing model for the resident coordinator system was not sustainable because it was largely based on voluntary contributions, which resulted in unpredictability even when States made multi-annual commitments. If the Secretary-General's proposal to fund the system from the regular budget had been followed from the outset, the current deficit might have been avoided. That proposal was the most suitable solution and should be adopted. The proposed "hybrid 2.0" model was an alternative solution designed to avoid the recurrent funding problems. Senegal looked forward to reaching consensus on the funding of the system during the consultations announced by the Secretary-General.

78. **Ms. Carty** (United States of America) said that, four years into the reform process, the United Nations development system was at an inflection point in its efforts to fulfil the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals. The operational activities for development segment was a critical milestone as the international community continued to assess collective progress and obstacles to success.

79. The international community must balance its ambition with pragmatism as it sought to strengthen transparency, accountability, programme support and, most importantly, the delivery of results. To that end, Member States should engage in the conversations necessary to strengthen the role of the Council as an essential governance function of the United Nations development system.

80. The resident coordinator system results framework should be improved to ensure that it captured the impact of the resident coordinator system. Her Government would appreciate receiving a briefing on resident coordinator recruitment, placement, retention and performance, and would welcome more opportunities to engage informally with resident coordinators, including at their global retreat, to be held in the autumn of 2023. System-wide evaluation was essential to understanding how the reforms were helping to achieve the anticipated

results; her Government would also welcome a briefing on the status of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-wide Evaluation Office, and further information on how Member States could support the Office.

81. **Ms. Narváez Ojeda** (Chile) said that, today more than ever, it was necessary to reflect on the progress made, through the repositioning of the United Nations development system, in aligning the system's activities with the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level, based on the specific needs of each country. As noted in the report of the Secretary General, the development system had demonstrated its ability to deliver urgent responses in global emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

82. The leadership of resident coordinators had been strengthened, which allowed for better collective action, leveraged the comparative advantages of individual entities, reduced duplication and generated synergies to ensure the efficient use of resources, which remained one of the most important purposes of the reform. Every dollar saved through more efficient operations could be allocated to development activities. In Chile, those advances had become evident during the formulation of the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2023–2025, the aims of which were to ensure that human rights were exercised on an equal basis; strengthen democratic institutions, social cohesion and civic security; create wealth more equitably while addressing the triple planetary crisis; and make progress towards gender equality. The implementation of the Cooperation Framework was monitored through a governance and management structure that reinforced coordination, maximized complementarity and involved country team entities in the achievement of each strategic priority. To safeguard those advances, the financing of the resident coordinator system must be sufficient, predictable and sustainable.

83. **Mr. Hermann** (Denmark) said that Denmark was a strong supporter of the United Nations development system, which had mitigated some of the challenges resulting from intersecting global crises. Denmark shared concerns regarding the continued shortfall in the funding of the resident coordinator system. His country had made its contribution, but the system could not depend on voluntary funding, and he encouraged all parties to compromise and arrive at a sustainable funding model.

84. He would welcome further information on the ways in which the international community could, through the Council and the operational activities for development segment, incorporate objectives related to

climate, nature and the environment, which were key to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, into United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and national plans, in order to bridge gaps in policy and capacity.

85. *Ms. Narváez Ojeda (Chile), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

86. **Mr. Verninas** (France) said that the reform of the United Nations development system was essential to the provision of integrated and efficient support that responded to the needs of countries. In order to continue the reform, resident coordinators must have the capacity needed to play their roles within country teams, the country programme documents of United Nations agencies must be fully aligned with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, the fragmented governance arrangements of the governing bodies of United Nations agencies must be addressed, and the funding of the resident coordinator system must be strengthened. France had made financial contributions since the beginning of the reform and had increased its contribution by 36 per cent in 2023; it invited other Member States to do likewise. France stood ready to discuss other proposed methods of ensuring stable and sustainable funding for the system.

87. **Mr. Shen Xiaokai** (China) said that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals was a shared commitment of the international community. Progress towards the Goals had been seriously hindered by various challenges, such as worsening poverty in developing countries and a difficult post-COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

88. China acknowledged the effective support of the United Nations development system in addressing the most urgent needs and priorities of developing countries. Resident coordinators had played an effective leadership role, development agencies had conducted cooperation, and priority had been given to helping developing countries to improve food and health security, promote technological progress and facilitate digital transformation.

89. The international community must pursue development as a core goal and prioritize the elimination of poverty. Developing countries should be helped to enhance their capacity-building efforts; coordinate responses to challenges such as food insecurity, unemployment and climate change; and accelerate the pace of recovery. Resident coordinators should play a role in improving consistency in agencies' policies and activities, and the representation of

developing countries in the resident coordinator system should be enhanced.

90. Cooperation in international development should be consolidated primarily through North-South cooperation, with South-South cooperation as a supplement. Developed countries must honour their commitments with regard to official development assistance and climate financing.

91. China was a staunch promoter of and active contributor to global development and, by proposing the Global Development Initiative, aimed to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achieve stronger, greener and healthier development.

92. **Ms. Ruder** (Observer for Switzerland) said that her country remained committed to the funding compact and to the provision of assessed contributions to the resident coordinator system. Her Government urged the Deputy Secretary-General and the United Nations development system to engage with Member States in a dialogue on incentives for quality funding and options to improve the predictability, sustainability and adequacy of funding. Member States' role as the bilateral development partners of United Nations agencies could sometimes distort the Organization's mission and hinder reform. On occasion, the United Nations development system should consider rejecting funding or accepting it subject to conditions. There was a limit to the feasibility of asking the United Nations development system to do more with less.

93. Member States must make collective efforts to continue invigorating the resident coordinator system, and a comprehensive monitoring framework was indispensable in planning and budgeting for that system. Furthermore, the governance of the special purpose trust fund should be more participatory and inclusive.

94. It was important to make United Nations reform a system-wide effort. Switzerland urged the Secretary General to ensure the full alignment of all United Nations development system agencies with that reform. Instruments such as the Peacebuilding Fund and performance incentives could improve coordination by the United Nations in such areas as the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, gender mainstreaming and partnerships with local actors. The United Nations development system should collaborate more with international financial institutions.

95. As the intergovernmental oversight body of the United Nations development system, the Council, through its operational activities for development segment, must be enabled to guide the system and hold it to account. During the segment, the Council must,

through substantive and actionable resolutions, provide instructions to the system and support the implementation of quadrennial comprehensive policy review resolutions.

96. **The Deputy Secretary-General** said that the United Nations was committed to starting a dialogue with Member States regarding the funding of the resident coordinator system, including by bringing together Member States and donors in countries to discuss integrated approaches to climate action and other investments. The benefits of coordination at the country level had been emphasized in case studies produced by the Development Coordination Office. Ultimately, however, such coordination had not been sufficient to close the funding gap, and the Office and the resident coordinator system had been obliged to scale back their support.

97. The expertise, behaviour and impact of resident coordinators was constantly being independently evaluated. It was encouraging to note that many more people, from inside and outside the system, were applying to be resident coordinators as a result of the improved selection system. The United Nations was improving its interaction with countries in order to improve resident coordinators' skill sets and ensure that they matched the needs of each country, including African countries, which needed resident coordinators capable of addressing conflicts and cross-border issues. United Nations country teams were working closely with resident coordinators on country-level projects such as the transformation of education and food systems.

98. The United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks were constantly reviewed and updated to take into account changes in Governments' priorities. Aligning the Frameworks with country project documents had been a key part of the work of the resident coordinator system and had been facilitated through engagement with various parties, including the boards of specialized agencies, human rights entities and humanitarian agencies.

99. Briefings would be provided on resident coordinator recruitment, placement, retention and performance, and on the United Nations Sustainable Development Group System-wide Evaluation Office. In addition, the engagement of Member States with resident coordinators at their global retreat would be facilitated. The Office constituted a means of obtaining independent feedback on the resident coordinator system. Because the Office depended on voluntary contributions, she encouraged Member States to support it as much as possible. The results of a recent review of

United Nations capacities in the area of gender equality, which indicated some regression in terms of gender mainstreaming, would inform work on the United Nations 2.0 policy brief as part of Our Common Agenda.

100. The United Nations and international financial institutions would strengthen their engagement as they looked ahead to the biennial summits that would begin in 2024 after the Summit of the Future. The United Nations development system welcomed concrete guidance from the Council through the operational activities for development segment.

101. The transition from social to sustainable development had been at the core of the Organization's activities since 2015. During the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, participants would be provided with information on poverty eradication efforts at the regional and country levels. Through the means of implementation referred to in the report of the Secretary-General ([A/78/72-E/2023/59](#)) and the Sustainable Development Goal stimulus, the Organization would address liquidity and debt issues, which had reached crisis levels in many countries. South-South cooperation represented another opportunity to implement the Goals as the international community sought to improve the international financial architecture.

*The meeting rose at 1.30 p.m.*