



General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
15 November 2013

Original: English

Second Committee

Summary record of the 25th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 29 October 2013, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Diallo (Senegal)
later: Ms. Rebedea (Vice-Chair) (Romania)

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13-53679 (E)



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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 26: Towards global partnerships

(A/68/326 and A/C.2/68/3)

1. **Mr. Kell** (Executive Director, United Nations Global Compact Office), introducing the Secretary-General's report on enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector (A/68/326), said that it focused on two main areas: (a) progress on integrity measures and implementation of the Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector; and (b) strengthening of Global Compact Local Networks. With regard to the first, the report recommended that the United Nations system should consider: improving integrity standards across all relevant activities; shifting from a risk-averse to a risk-managed approach; ensuring capacity, skills and objectivity of staff to conduct due diligence and developing more effective knowledge management systems to document partnership experiences in order to reduce transaction costs and risks; and, promoting transparency through more effective internal and external communication with the general public and by disclosing successes and failures.

2. With regard to the second, the report recommended: promoting more diversified participation and reach; further embedding the Global Compact's principles and partnerships locally; stimulating greater activity and impact; facilitating additional knowledge-sharing between Local Networks; and encouraging additional partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector.

3. Finally, he expressed his gratitude to the numerous Governments which had provided support to the UN Global Compact and assured them that it would also complement Government priorities and seek to mainstream responsible business practices everywhere.

4. **Mr. Bart** (Saint Kitts and Nevis), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that global partnerships must remain a guiding principle in the elaboration of the post-2015 agenda. Global partnerships should involve not only Governments and their development partners, but also people living in poverty, women, indigenous and local communities, multilateral institutions and business communities.

5. The world was faced with a serious global governance gap with regard to achieving global partnerships for development. CARICOM urged countries to ask for a review of country classifications for official development assistance (ODA), as higher overall income did not necessarily indicate lower levels of poverty. The metric of gross national income (GNI) often obscured the fact that the majority of a country's citizens might live in poverty, and failed to take into consideration the debt and vulnerability of each country. Donor Governments must increase the transparency, predictability and use of ODA in order to accomplish the MDGs.

6. Strong linkages to the economies of the United States and Europe, as well as a high dependency on tourism, meant that the Caribbean region had suffered greatly from the recent financial crisis. Combined with the erosion of trade preferences, extreme weather events, high tariffs imposed on developing countries and agricultural subsidies in developed countries, the crisis had led to poor and sometimes negative economic growth. All forms of agricultural export subsidies must be eliminated and support should be increased for strengthening productive sectors in developing countries.

7. Belize, Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Kitts and Nevis had sought to restructure portions of their debt in 2012. However, international financial structures generally remained inflexible. Accordingly, CARICOM agreed that there was a need to establish an international mechanism for early, cooperative and comprehensive resolution of sovereign debt crises.

8. Looking forward to the post-2015 development agenda, the international community would need to focus on shaping the types of partnerships it wanted to develop. New ways of working must go beyond an aid agenda. CARICOM recognized the importance of putting its own house in order, inter alia by reducing corruption, money-laundering and tax evasion. At the same time it would champion free trade and technology innovation, transfer and diffusion, and would seek to promote financial stability.

9. **Mr. Vrailas** (Observer for the European Union) speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey; the stabilization and association process countries Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the

Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, stressed the importance of working with all stakeholders and strengthening partnerships. The United Nations was a unique partner for the global business community wishing to contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication. While corporate social responsibility was enjoying increasing support worldwide, recent incidents had revealed that it was still far from being implemented.

10. Like other stakeholders, private sector actors had important responsibilities and obligations, not only towards their employees and Government but also towards broader communities to ensure that partnerships genuinely benefited all. He welcomed the significant progress that had been made in building partnerships with the private sector, in particular the Rio+20 Corporate Sustainability Forum, and a number of initiatives of the Secretary-General such as Sustainable Energy for All, Every Woman Every Child, the Global Education First Initiative and the Zero Hunger Challenge.

11. The Member States of the European Union would soon be submitting their customary draft resolution on the subject and they invited all interested Member States to co-sponsor the draft.

12. *Ms. Rebedea (Romania), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

13. **Mr. Nyembe** (South Africa) said that efforts and resources for the achievement of the MDGs by 2015 should be increased. The main focus of a strengthened global partnership for development should be national ownership. All development commitments should be urgently fulfilled, especially ODA commitments relating to Goal 8 of the MDGs. The United Nations must continue to push forward with new, improved and diversified forms of private sector collaboration in the context of achieving the MDGs.

14. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's call for greater accountability of the private sector through a code of conduct and strong monitoring of corporate social responsibility and it noted the important role played by the Global Compact Local Networks in sharing best business practices and encouraging transparent and accountable corporate commitments. The Global Compact had played a critical role in December 2010 when the United Nations had launched an anti-corruption project. By continuing to shift from a risk-averse to a more

risk-managed approach, the United Nations had positioned itself to influence business behaviour.

15. **Mr. Khitchadeth** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that more effective, inclusive and transparent global partnerships involving the United Nations system, Governments and all other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, were needed to ensure that everyone benefited equitably from globalization. Enhanced public-private sector partnerships and United Nations-private sector collaboration would contribute significantly to the efforts to achieve internationally agreed development goals. Private sector partnerships must be in full compliance with the development priorities of partner countries, and cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant sectors must strictly adhere to United Nations guidelines.

16. Partnerships at all levels were crucial for national development within the Association and for efforts to build the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) by 2015. In particular, ASEAN would continue to foster public-private sector engagement. ASEAN leaders had begun to engage actively with the private sector on the sidelines of their Summits and in expositions and trade fairs. Additionally, the ASEAN Corporate Social Responsibility Network had been launched in October 2010 and the ASEAN Rules of Procedures for Private Sector Engagement had been developed. The Association hoped that global partnerships would be further enhanced so as to promote inclusive and equitable economic growth that would benefit all people.

17. **Mr. AlSharrah** (Kuwait) said that his country, which was classified as a high-income developing country, had undertaken a number of initiatives to assist developing and least developed countries. The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development had provided preferential and flexible loans to fund hundreds of development projects in Asia, Africa and Central and South America with private sector involvement. Kuwait participated prominently in poverty reduction and debt alleviation efforts, particularly with a view to helping countries that were struggling to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Its policy was consistent with the trend towards the establishment of global partnerships aimed inter alia at encouraging donors to allocate 0.7 percent

of their gross national income to development assistance.

18. **Ms. Medvedeva** (Russian Federation) said that combating poverty by promoting balanced economic growth and sustainable development should be the main focus of all global partnerships. The United Nations was an optimal platform for building multilateral partnerships ensuring flexible coordination among partners, as well as balanced interests. Innovations in strategic frameworks should primarily respond to the interests of Member States. The present-day world required working with the private sector, just as globalization had made business an essential factor for development.

19. She commended the Executive Director for all that he had done to promote corporate social responsibility. The Russian Federation was interested in developing cooperation between its business sector and the United Nations, firmly believing that local businesses would benefit if they applied the leading international standards in management, audits, environmentally clean production, financial reporting and anti-corruption measures. An increasing number of companies in the country were adhering to standards of transparency, accountability and social and environmental responsibility. The creation of a new United Nations partnership mechanism would be welcome, but more detailed information was needed. She wondered which accountability mechanism the new structure would use and how its effectiveness would be determined.

20. **Mr. Mackay** (Belarus) said that the inclusive approach of United Nations global partnerships was specifically suited to solving issues of inequality, poverty and social and economic discrimination. In a world with increasing numbers of global players, as well as transnational threats and challenges, global partnerships involving the United Nations, civil society and the private sector offered the best prospects for collaboration. Nevertheless, development partners should take a country's national priorities into account, for that was the key to successful implementation. Global partnerships were an important factor for elaborating the post-2015 development agenda.

21. **Mr. Oguntuyi** (Nigeria) said that the recent United Nations Global Compact Leaders Summit had been a landmark event serving to define the roles of businesses and other private sector players in the

shaping of a new world. The implementation of sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals would depend on the active engagement of both public and private sectors. The United Nations could play a fundamental role in developing partnership practices in pursuit of global development objectives. Partnerships should operate in conformity with the national development strategies of partner countries.

22. His delegation believed that the experience and lessons gleaned through partnerships should be summed up in a timely manner and that partnerships should take into consideration the fundamental principles of probity, transparency and accountability. The Global Compact had been a catalyst for system-wide cooperation between the United Nations and the private sector and had helped promote the internalization of its ten universal principles in the work of the United Nations. The Global Compact Office also functioned as a focal point for the sharing of lessons and experiences.

23. His Government had engaged in various forms of cooperation with Governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society and would continue to work closely with all parties to enhance global partnership. Particular attention should be given to such partnerships in the ongoing discussion on the post-2015 development agenda.

24. **Mr. Zinsou** (Benin), after drawing attention to the ministerial declaration contained in document A/C.2/68/3, regarding implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, said that global partnerships were needed to promote accelerated growth, and to help least developed countries overcome the structural problems they faced. The main thrust of the Istanbul Programme of Action was to build a critical mass of productive capacity especially in agriculture, manufacturing and services. Doing so would require the broadest partnerships possible.

25. His delegation hoped that development partners would fulfil their ODA commitments. Regional aid should be targeted to the least developed countries--for whom ODA remained the main source of funding--and they should have access to duty-free and quota-free markets. Noting that foreign direct investment could play an important role in job creation and development, he said that least developed countries were attempting

to create a more attractive environment for investment. In that connection a technology database had been designed specifically for such countries.

26. Finally, he stressed the need for greater South-South and triangular cooperation at all levels, adding that a ministerial conference on new global partnerships for the development of the productive capacities of the least developed countries, was being planned for the following year.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.