



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. FARUKH AMIL, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PAKISTAN, ON AGENDA ITEM 3: UNDP STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2011 DURING THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF UNDP/UNFPA EXECUTIVE BOARD (New York, 10 September 2007)

**Mr. President,
Mr. Administrator,
Distinguished Delegates,**

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on the UNDP Strategic Plan. I would like to thank the President for leading this process. I would also like to thank the Administrator and Associate Administrator for their valuable comments.

2. Allow me, Mr. President, to express our thanks to the UNDP for presenting the Strategic Plan of UNDP 2008-2011 (DP/2007/43). We appreciate the improvements made in this draft in the light of comments from Member States conveyed during Annual session of the Board as well communicated during the process of informal consultations.
3. Despite welcome efforts by UNDP to revise some sections of the draft Strategic Plan, many of the main concerns expressed by the G-77 and China, conveyed to the UNDP during the previous months formally, informally, verbally and through written submissions have not been adequately addressed.
4. On the Internal Audit matters, touched by the Administrator in his comments, we reiterate our earlier stated position without going into details at this stage.
5. The G-77 and China reaffirms the importance of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of the operational activities of the UN Development System and General Assembly's consultations on Secretary General's High Level Panel Report on System Wide Coherence. It is, therefore, important that UNDP Strategic Plan should not pre-empt or prejudge the outcome of the General Assembly negotiations. In this context, we reiterate our belief that UNDP should avoid promoting and using the concepts and approaches, which are not yet intergovernmentally agreed.
6. We believe that the Strategic Plan of UNDP should be based on universally agreed concepts and principles. It should be broad enough to accommodate and cater to the variety of expectations and requirements of diverse membership of United Nations. UNDP should have sufficient flexibility to meet the varied needs of diverse UN membership.
7. We still find elements in the draft Strategic Plan that could undermine the principle of national sovereignty. Full respect for the UN Charter principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of the States, should continue to guide the operational activities of UN. We find that the Plan continues to contain certain elements and concepts, which undermine these principles. The UNDP should focus on supporting national priorities rather than trying to set or establish them.
8. The Group stresses that UNDP activities and its Strategic Plan should focus on delivering effectively in development related areas. We have noted with concern that through this Plan UNDP

would deviate from its core development mandate, particularly as regards poverty eradication. As the core mandate of UNDP, we would have liked to see stand alone focus on concrete measures for poverty reduction. The main aim should be to eradicate poverty through economic growth and capacity generation, not merely to redistribute poverty.

9. Regarding Annexes to the Strategic Plan, we are dissatisfied over their tone and content. We reaffirm that the effectiveness of UNDP activities should be assessed by their impact on the poverty eradication efforts, economic growth and sustainable development of recipient countries. The results framework should be linked to national priorities rather than overseeing the activities of programme countries. We would like to measure the development results produced by UNDP its contribution in assisting programme countries in the achievement of their national development plans/strategies and not the vice versa.

10. We want to reaffirm our position that funding for development activities should not be tied to any conditionalities, or earmarked for certain focus areas. Instead, it should be allocated according to the respective national priorities and plans of programme countries.

11. In view of these reasons G-77 and China is not in a position to endorse the Strategic Plan as contained in document DP/2007/43. In order to save time, we are circulating together with this statement our comments on the Strategic Plan detailing the position of the G-77 and China.

12. Let me assure that we attach great importance to the work of UN Development Programme and its Strategic Plan. We stand ready to find a way to ensure the unhindered continuity of UNDP activities.

13. We would like to support a Strategic Plan focusing on how to support developing countries to achieve the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals from major United Nations summits and conferences. It is imperative for the UNDP to be focused on areas, which are more relevant to its core development mandate.

I thank you.

Comments by the Group of 77 and China on UNDP Strategic Plan (DP/2007/43)

We appreciate the improvements made in this draft in the light of comments from Member States conveyed during Annual session of the Board as well communicated during the process of informal consultations.

2. Despite welcome efforts by UNDP to revise some sections of the draft Strategic Plan, many of the main concerns expressed by the G-77 and China, conveyed to the UNDP during the previous months formally, informally, verbally and through written submissions have not been adequately addressed.

3. The G-77 and China reaffirms the importance of the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of the operational activities of the UN Development System and General Assembly's consultations on Secretary General's High Level Panel Report on System Wide Coherence. It is, therefore, important that UNDP Strategic Plan should not pre-empt or prejudice the outcome of the General Assembly negotiations. In this context, we reiterate our belief that UNDP should avoid promoting and using the concepts and approaches, which are not yet intergovernmentally agreed.

4. We believe that the Strategic Plan of UNDP should be based on universally agreed concepts and principles. It should be broad enough to accommodate and cater to the variety of expectations and requirements of diverse membership of United Nations. UNDP should have sufficient flexibility to meet the varied needs of diverse UN membership.

5. We still find elements in the draft Strategic Plan that could undermine the principle of national sovereignty. Full respect for the UN Charter principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and national unity of the States, should continue to guide the operational activities of UN. We find that the Plan continues to contain certain elements and concepts, which undermine these principles. The UNDP should focus on supporting national priorities rather than trying to set or establish them.

6. The Group stresses that UNDP activities and its Strategic Plan should focus on delivering effectively in development related areas. We have noted with concern that through this Plan UNDP would deviate from its core development mandate, particularly as regards poverty eradication. As the core mandate of UNDP, we would have liked to see stand alone focus on concrete measures for poverty reduction. The main aim should be to eradicate poverty through economic growth and capacity generation, not merely to redistribute poverty.

7. We reiterate the support for the maintenance of the six drivers for development effectiveness of current MYFF, which are:

- i. Developing national capacities,
- ii. Enhancing national ownership,
- iii. Advocating for and fostering an enabling policy environment,
- iv. Seeking South-South solutions,
- v. Promoting gender equality,
- vi. Forging partnerships for results

We would like to be informed about the evaluation process that led to their exclusion from the Strategic Plan.

8. Regarding 'UNDP coordination for coherence', we see no legal justification for very elaborate new role proposed to be assumed by UNDP. For example, we have noted that UNDP intends to "Prioritize three global agenda items for resident coordinator system advocacy and support". We would like to know which three items are to be promoted, and how and by whom will they be selected? Another example is para 41 (e), we are not clear as to what new, tailored courses for resident coordinators will be developed and rolled out?

9. We are also concerned about the suggested role of the Resident Coordinator as intermediary between governments and NGO and civil society. We stress that the role of the resident coordinator is not to act as intermediary between governments and civil society, a role which is the prerogative of national governments.

10. In the section on "UNDP Operations", under sub-section on "Capacity Development: UNDP's overarching contribution", we are still concerned to see that UNDP's presentation of capacity development with a narrow focus on "human-rights based approach" and "civic engagement", has distorted the true meaning of capacity development. These areas are not

contained in the mandate of UNDP. This approach is unacceptable to the G-77. The primary focus of UNDP should be institutional and human capacity building to achieve the MDGs and other development objectives on sustainable basis. We expect UNDP's work in the area of capacity building as delineated in the TCPR Resolution 59/250.

11. In the same section, we have difficulty understanding as how the "Principles and approaches for Development Effectiveness: National Ownership, Effective Aid Management, and South-South Cooperation" relate to section on "UNDP Operations". Moreover, we urge UNDP to use intergovernmentally agreed principles as the basis of its work rather than inventing new principles. South-South Cooperation has been proposed as a "principle" for development effectiveness. This is unilateral and unwarranted.

12. While, we value the importance given to South South Cooperation (SSC), we have reservations on the approach adopted by UNDP in the draft Plan in presenting South South Cooperation as one of the three principles for Development Effectiveness. Implementation of the driver of "South South cooperation" in the current MYFF is in the context of "Seeking South South solutions" whereas in the current Strategic Plan it appears that the concept is being interpreted as a partnership modality. We prefer the retention of this driver as interpreted in the current MYFF as "Seeking South South solutions."

13. South-South cooperation is complementary to North-South cooperation, and is a way to enhance exchange of best practices and support among developing countries, regardless of their levels of development. The Special Unit for South- South Cooperation should have measurable targets to support developing countries, and means and resources to implement these targets.

14. In "UNDP Business Model" sufficient attention has not been given to national priorities. Elaboration and clarity is needed on how UNDP operations would ensure national ownership and how its work will be aligned not only with national programme cycles but also with national priorities.

15. In the section on "Democratic Governance", there are elements, which undermine the national sovereignty of States and constitute a clear intrusion in the domestic affairs of the programme countries. Deciding on the nature of a relationship between the governments and civil society falls within the competence of the governments and not of the Funds and Programmes. We are concerned about the use of the term "marginalized groups" in this section as well as in the whole text, which is not clearly understood in the UN and could lend itself to several interpretations. The UNDP should retain its impartiality and work on the basis of principles, which have universal acceptance and applicability.

16. Under the section on "Crisis Prevention and Recovery", we have noted improvement; however, we still feel that cases of countries emerging from conflict are merged with countries suffering form natural disasters. We feel that it is important to further recognize the need for coordination with governments in relation to actions in this area, including those related to conflict preventions.

17. Additionally, any support that the UNDP extends in the context of Hyogo Framework of Action should be as one of the members of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction system and in close coordination with the ISDR Secretariat. It is important that UNDP should continue to work within its mandated role on crisis prevention and recovery on the basis of intergovernmentally agreed concepts and approaches.

18. If UNDP has to address health issues, this should not be limited only to HIV/AIDS and should include Malaria and Tuberculosis also, which happen to be the major killer diseases in developing countries, especially in Africa. The current reference to these diseases in the Plan is not clear and sufficient.

19. We believe that “Accountability Framework” relates to a broader and institutional mechanism of UNDP, whereas Strategic Plan relates to the programmatic aspects of UNDP. Any attempt to cover accountability under the rubric of Strategic Plan, which lasts for a limited timeframe of four years, amounts to limiting the scope of accountability itself. We look forward to receiving information on a comprehensive ‘Oversight Policy’ that explains, inter alia, the concept of accountability. In the absence of clear definition of ‘accountability’ in UNDP context, it is far from adopting an ‘Accountability Framework’.

20. On the “Use of Resources”, we are interested to receive further information and a comparative analysis of estimated projections in the Strategic Plan with those of last ten years’ allocations for programmes, management functions and for UN coordination.

21. We have noted that Strategic Plan is suggesting that UNDP will not engage in some key areas. We believe that while avoiding duplication and overlap, the process of withdrawal should not be at the expense of sectors that are critical to the development processes of developing countries such as education and health.

22. We have noticed that an MDG “monitor” is being established to track progress towards achieving the MDGs. We request clarification on what exactly and how monitoring would be carried out, what would be the role of programme countries in data collection, analysis and presentation? We are also interested to know whether progress towards monitoring all MDGs including MDG-8 would be monitored? There is need for clarification on the relationship between the mechanism in UNDP and other existing mechanisms in the UN performing this task such as, the Statistical Commission.

23. We have noted that the section on “Setting” has not comprehensively and sufficiently highlighted the global challenges to development. Rather, its focus has been on country level.

24. On “Building on lessons learnt”, this should have been a joint exercise including responses from governments in order to identify obstacles and challenges and ways to resolve them and help build evaluation capacities of national governments. It should not be solely based on UNDP’s internal reflection.

25. With reference to UNDP's cooperation with UN Peace Keeping Operations, particularly in countries emerging from conflict, we would like to emphasize that both entities should work together where and when appropriate, and that their activities should be undertaken under national ownership and within their specific mandates, bearing in mind the need to maintain the independence of the UNDP as a development agency dealing with long term development, as distinct from UN Department of Peace Keeping Operations which works in the transitional phase.

26. Before proceeding to Result Based Budgeting (RBB), we would like to know if any evaluation of RBB has been done so far.

27. We find that interpretation of provisions of TCPR and Resolution 34/213 have not always been accurate in particular in the context of “UNDP coordination for coherence”, which has been expanded beyond what has been agreed at intergovernmental level.

28. In the light of revised Strategic Plan, we are interested to know the status of revision of “UNDP strategic Vision on Assistance to Crisis-Affected Countries” (DP/2007/20), which is meant to be an integral part of the Strategic Plan.
29. Regarding Annexes to the Strategic Plan, we are dissatisfied over their tone and content, which are intrusive in general. We reaffirm that the effectiveness of UNDP activities should be assessed by their impact on the poverty eradication efforts, economic growth and sustainable development of recipient countries.
30. We find that the “Development Results Framework” undermines the concept of national ownership by being overly intrusive in its content. It is not linked to national priorities of programme countries. Rather, its focus is on overseeing the activities of programme countries. We find this approach unacceptable.
31. We have serious concerns over the way in which the indicators have been developed, as these are not aimed at assessing or measuring the performance of UNDP. We would like to measure the development results produced by UNDP rather than by the programme countries. There is complete absence of outcomes or outputs to be delivered by UNDP. We would prefer to measure the contribution of UNDP to assist programme countries in the achievement of their national development plans/strategies and not the vice versa.
32. We are concerned at the projections in the Annex-III “UNDP Resources in real and nominal terms in relation to ODA trends”, particularly the fact that during the period 2000-2005, a 28 % increase in ODA was accompanied by a less than proportional 13 % increase in real contributions to core resources of UNDP. More alarming is the fact that ‘non-core income displays a weaker correlation with ODA: during the above 2000-2005 period, non-core resources grew by 75 per cent in real terms’. We feel that a strategic vision must be outlined to address this problem. We have found that UNDP has simply narrated the facts without suggesting concrete measures.
33. We want to reaffirm our position that funding for development activities should not be tied to any conditionalities, or earmarked for certain focus areas. Instead, it should be allocated according to the respective national priorities and plans of programme countries.
34. In view of the reasons mentioned above and many others, which we may express while reading the whole text, G-77 and China is not in a position to endorse the Strategic Plan as contained in document DP/2007/43.
35. We attach great importance to the work of UN Development Programme and its Strategic Plan. We stand ready to find a way to ensure the unhindered continuity of UNDP activities.
36. We would like to support a Strategic Plan focusing on how to support developing countries to achieve the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals from major United Nations summits and conferences. It is imperative for the UNDP to be focused on areas, which are more relevant to its core development mandate.