



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY H.E. AMBASSADOR PETER THOMSON, AT THE 2ND REGULAR SESSION OF THE UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS EXECUTIVE BOARD UNDER THE AGENDA ITEM 2: UNDP STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2017 (New York, 9 September 2013)

Mr. President,

I take the floor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. I wish to thank the UNDP Administrator for her statement, covering both the draft UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017, as well as financial, budgetary and administrative matters relating to UNDP.

Mr. President,

The Group of 77 has actively participated in the successive rounds of consultations in the preparation of the draft Strategic Plan 2014-2017 for UNDP. The Group has submitted detailed comments on relevant aspects of each of the drafts of the Strategic Plan, and has appreciated the consultative process as a means of improving the draft in its various iterations. This consultative approach is appreciated particularly given the importance of the Strategic Plan in guiding UNDP's work going forward.

The period this Strategic Plan will cover will see major developments in the world, notably in the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda. The latter will no doubt give UNDP political guidance on developmental priorities and the implementation of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review resolution adopted by the GA in 2012, which the Strategic Plan should be fully aligned with. It is therefore important to recall in this context that the QCPR gave the mandate to the UN Development System to accord "the highest priority to poverty eradication" and we hope that UNDP will not lose sight of this overarching objective as it embarks upon this Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Plan's guidance of the work of UNDP will also be important in making the UNDP's work more accessible and understood by the countries it serves. Accordingly, it must be clear that the Vision for the Strategic Plan, which has already been endorsed, must find clear implementation paths through the Areas of Work in the Plan. It must be clear to any reader of the Strategic Plan, both in programme countries and donor countries, how any of the Areas of Work and programmes under each of these will link to the Vision Statement. We would therefore request UNDP to further focus its areas on work in meaningfully and substantively achieving its own vision of poverty eradication and inclusive growth.

Mr. President,

In the annual session of the Board, the Group had made its position known on the use of concepts that have not been agreed to by the UN membership either as goals or as approaches in the Strategic Plan. UNDP has explained that the concept of "sustainable human development" links two ideas that are known to the UN membership, and that it will be an engagement principle used in all of UNDP's contributions. The Group remains concerned that two quite different concepts - that of human development, and that of sustainability, are mechanically being incorporated into one "engagement principle" which may not be pertinent to developmental priorities identified by programme countries. The Group would therefore continue to urge caution in the use of such a concept in UNDP's strategic approach, especially its usage across ALL its programmes as

indicated in the Strategic Plan, particularly as a broad cross cutting stroke for all UNDP's contributions. The Group would continue to recommend instead that the engagement principles be those of prioritising the needs and approaches identified by programme countries in terms of what is best for their individual situations, and for individual programmes.

Mr. President,

The Group has in earlier sessions of the Executive Board this year made very clear statements on the importance of UNDP's contribution to South-South cooperation, and the need for UNDP to scale up its efforts in this regard. The Group welcomes the greater emphasis on South-South cooperation in the third draft of the Strategic Plan, particularly the focus on information exchanges on lessons learned, and building capacities of programme countries to implement South-South cooperation in a sustainable manner. The Group looks forward to hearing what comprehensive changes to UNDP's operational approach are being made to translate these focus areas into action, as committed to in the Strategic Plan. Also, an important contribution of UNDP in this regard would be to help and assist developing countries in implementing South South projects, wherever such help is requested and wherever UNDP's resources so permit. In addition, course corrections pointed out by Evaluation Reports on "sustainability being missing in UNDP's projects of the South" also need to be addressed. We would suggest that consultations with Member States on progress in this regard would be in order early in the implementation period of the Strategic Plan.

Finally Mr. President, a word on the Integrated Results and Resources Framework which is to accompany the Strategic Plan. The Group looks forward to continuing to engage in the process that will finalise the IRRF, in particular towards arriving at qualitative rather than quantitative indicators which show improvements in developmental results, and those that look at aspects like gender inequality across the board in a mainstreaming context rather than specific targets in and of themselves in specific sectors. It is such approaches that assist programme countries in establishing systems in place for equality of opportunities, which are likely to yield long term sustainable results.

The Group of 77 and China looks forward to constructive discussions during this Executive Board session on a decision on the Strategic Plan, and to its implementation over the period 2014-2017.

I thank you Mr. President.