



**Executive Board of the
United Nations Development
Programme, the United Nations
Population Fund and the United
Nations Office for Project Services**

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Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Organizational matters

**Report of the first regular session 2019
(21 to 25 January 2019, New York)**

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I. Organizational matters

1. The first regular session 2019 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 21 to 25 January 2019. The newly elected President of the Board welcomed all delegations and thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their leadership and commitment to the work of the Board in 2018. He congratulated the new members of the Bureau on their election.

2. In accordance with rule 7 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board, the Board elected the following members of the Bureau for 2019:

President:	H.E. Mr. Cho Tae-yul	(Republic of Korea)
Vice-President	H.E. Mr. Walton Webson	(Antigua and Barbuda)
Vice-President:	H.E. Ms. Besiana Kadare	(Albania)
Vice-President:	H.E. Ms. Geraldine Byrne Nason	(Ireland)
Vice-President:	H.E. Mr. Collen V. Kelapile	(Botswana)

3. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its first regular session 2019 (DP/2019/L.1), and approved the report of the second regular session 2018 (DP/2019/1). The Board adopted the annual workplan for 2019 (DP/2019/CRP.1) and approved the tentative workplan for the annual session 2019.

4. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2018 appeared in document DP/2019/2, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).

5. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2019/9 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2019:

Annual session 2019	3 to 4 and 6 to 7 June 2019 (New York)
Second regular session 2019:	3 to 6 September 2019

Statement by the President of the Board

6. In his opening address, the President of the Board highlighted that, with United Nations policy support, effective institution building and public-private partnerships had significantly contributed to eradicating poverty and preventing the waste of development resources in his country at a critical time of its development. The Presidency of the Board gave his country the opportunity to share its experiences and support countries on their path to socioeconomic development. He underscored that 2018 had been a critical year in laying the foundations for United Nations development system reform, and the Executive Board would have to play a key role in guiding UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals

7. The President set four priorities for the Board in 2019. One, the Board would become a forum for strategic, forward-looking discussions, focused on the bigger picture and future of each organization, and be more flexible to adapt to changing contextual needs. In that regard, current and future interactive dialogues would accommodate the Board's more strategic discussions. Two, it would be more action-oriented and produce tangible results, whether on reform implementation or improving Board working methods. Three, as partnerships were key, it would enhance its engagement with the private sector, civil society and outside stakeholders, crucial for successful delivery of the three organizations' strategic plans. In that regard, the Board would act as facilitator to provide entry points with stakeholders. Four, it would strengthen its engagement with other organizations' Boards to foster coordination and collaboration, including through stronger, regular interaction among the Presidents of the Boards and better use of existing coordination platforms such as the joint meeting of the Boards.

UNDP segment

Statement by the Administrator and interactive dialogue

Statement by the Administrator

8. In his address, (available on the [Executive Board website](#)), the Administrator said 2018 was a year of reform, reflection and transformation that marked the ‘next generation’ UNDP. Through financial and efficiency measures, UNDP had balanced its institutional budget for the second year, setting foundations for investment and growth. UNDP was on track to exceed the 2018 delivery target, reduce the level of institutional budget expenditure, hit 99 per cent of its regular (core) resources target, mobilize \$4.5 billion in other (non-core) resources, and increase the financing international financial institutions invested in partnership with UNDP. Thanks to contributions from traditional and programme country donors, core had increased after years of decline and UNDP was working to broaden its donor base.

9. On reform, UNDP had been instrumental in ensuring the transition of the resident coordinator system to the United Nations Secretariat by 1 January 2019. That included seconding 63 senior staff as resident coordinators, facilitating transition of Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) staff, committing to serve as principal operational service provider to the resident coordinator system, and being among the first to double its cost-sharing contribution to the resident coordinator system. Simultaneously, UNDP re-staffed its leadership cadre at country level, selecting a new cohort of resident representatives, while reaching its promised 50/50 gender balance and equal geographic diversity, as it continued to drive forward implementation of its Strategic Plan, 2017-2021.

10. The next generation UNDP was pushing the boundaries: (a) reaffirming its position as global development thought leader through the *Human Development Report*, global policy centres and collaboration with partners; (b) responding to Member States call for an integrated approach to sustainable development through its country platforms, backed by its new Global Policy Network and Accelerator Labs Network; (c) investing and encouraging investment, through partnerships with private sector and promoting impact investment through SDG Impact and the Country Investment Facility; and (d) making its business model more innovative, effective and efficient.

11. The Administrator highlighted the significant pressures on multilateralism, which demanded reinvigorated political momentum around a shared vision for humanity. The coming year offered critical moments to demonstrate the capacity of multilateralism to prevent conflicts, mitigate risks and advance development progress through, for example, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the Climate Change Summit. UNDP would contribute to those and other key events, promoting a common vision of humanity and accelerating action. Implementing its Strategic Plan, 2017-2021, UNDP would drive three main priorities in 2019: inequality, climate change and migration, and their drivers and root causes – focused on poverty eradication through a multidimensional approach.

Regional and national statements

12. Board members emphasized that *development* remained the focus of the UNDP mandate, through a programmatic approach to the 2030 Agenda, in line with the 2016 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. They stressed the importance of national capacity building in achieving the Goals, in line with national priorities and to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions. They expressed continued concern with the core/non-core imbalance and underscored the importance of predictable, multi-year core funding. They expected that the funding compact would help to realize that goal. They reiterated their support for the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and looked forward to an expanded UNDP role in South-South efforts, noting that

South-South cooperation was not a substitute for, but a complement to, North-South cooperation.

13. Delegations welcomed the innovative approach of the interactive dialogue. On reform, they welcomed the UNDP integrator role to ensure smooth repositioning of the United Nations development system and the effectiveness of UNDP and the system at large. They looked forward to the next generation UNDP and expressed full support for the transformation process. One group highlighted the need for the new resident coordinator system to review multi-country offices in sub-regions, with equal consideration to efficiency and effectiveness, including through adequate funding for long-term results and sustainability. The group underscored the unique, fragile development circumstances of small-island developing states (SIDS) and middle-income countries (MICs), which suffered high rates of poverty, inequality and risk of certain population groups falling back into poverty.

Interactive dialogue with the UNDP Administrator

14. The Board held an interactive dialogue that gave members an opportunity for a strategic, high-level exchange on the organization's development offer. The dialogue was organized into two discussions: a morning session on *UNDP work on poverty* and an afternoon session on the *humanitarian-development nexus*. Each session began with a short video that highlighted examples of UNDP work at the country level followed by a facilitated discussion.

UNDP work on poverty

15. The President of the Board, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea and UNDP senior managers joined the Administrator for the morning session. The Administrator noted that poverty was multidimensional and socially manifested. Poverty was not inevitable and was intrinsically linked to governance. UNDP was helping governments to determine where poverty was occurring and who was being left behind. The President of the Board highlighted two approaches from his country's experience to reduce poverty – effective institution building and public-private partnerships.

16. The Board discussion highlighted the following points. The multidimensional character of poverty demanded multidimensional solutions. Poverty eradication was a social and political process that demanded political will to address root causes – inequalities and social injustice. UNDP was well positioned to address poverty's multidimensional nature. It used a holistic approach to poverty eradication that combined inclusive and sustainable development – including environmental protection and resilience to natural disasters – along with democratic governance and national capacity building. Eradicating poverty could not be boiled down to a social welfare approach alone. It had to go hand-in-hand with sustained economic growth built on effective inclusive growth policies and public-private partnerships that fostered innovation.

17. Delegations noted key challenges to poverty eradication, including illicit financial flows, rising inequality, and the impact of brain drain in perpetuating poverty. They highlighted the roles South-south cooperation, social protection measures, human rights and governance-based approaches, women and youth empowerment, digitalization and information and communication technology played in enabling poverty eradication. The Administrator emphasized the centrality of poverty eradication in UNDP work, especially in least developed countries (LDCs) and poverty's complex nature; poverty was a phenomenon affecting most countries independent of their gross domestic product per capita level. Solutions should be framed within each country context. As knowledge leader and integrator, UNDP was a conduit able to marshal expertise from across and outside the larger United Nations development system.

Joint session on the humanitarian-development nexus

18. The Emergency Relief Coordinator and Director, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Vice President of the Board, the Permanent

Representative of Ireland, the Director, Crisis Bureau, UNDP, and the Director of the Center for International Cooperation joined the Administrator for the afternoon session.

19. The Administrator said the new way of working was a common-sense approach. Working together in crises had to begin with a sustainable development perspective that converged the United Nations system toward a *preventive* mode. The Emergency Relief Coordinator stated that although the humanitarian system was more effective and efficient than ever, it did not tackle underlying problems. Collaborating with the development system was essential, especially given limited flows of international assistance. The Permanent Representative of Ireland stressed the need for mutual accountability among Member States through increased collaboration and adequate funding to the United Nations development system. The Director, Center for International Cooperation said the purpose of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus was to reinforce national capacities, whose challenges UNDP was well placed to address.

20. Board members expressed support for UNDP focus on crisis-affected states. They recognized that a humanitarian approach to protracted crises was not enough and welcomed UNDP integrating peacebuilding in the prevention agenda. Focus should shift to country level and start with better information sharing and joint analysis for joint planning. UNDP and OCHA had strong political support and leverage, which they should use in coordinating and operationalizing the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. They welcomed the UNDP offer to pursue sustainable development by building national/local capacity to address root causes. The funding challenge was critical, however, and included humanitarian-development funding silos and conflicting budget cycles between donors and annual appeals.

21. The Administrator said the nexus enabled pragmatic humanitarian-development coordination. The UNDP integrator role, through a whole-of-government approach and revamped resident coordinator system, was well suited to help governments incorporate disaster risk reduction in national strategies, building on the Sendai Framework and International Strategy for Disaster Reduction. UNDP was also well placed to tackle nexus challenges through its knowledge and experience in capacity and institution building, long-term relationships with governments, ability to convene peacebuilding, security and peace actors, and strong partnerships with international financial institutions and donors.

II. Evaluation

22. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNDP, presented the evaluation of UNDP support to poverty reduction in the least developed countries (LDCs) (DP/2019/4) and the report of the IEO on its support to evaluation capacity development (DP/2019/6), and the Director, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, provided the interim management note.

Evaluation of UNDP support to poverty reduction in the least developed countries

23. Board members welcomed the evaluation, and expressed interest in the evaluation on poverty in MICs, to be presented at the first regular session 2020. Delegations drew attention to the number of LDCs graduating out of the LDC category, a testament to development progress and role of development actors and partnerships in tackling multidimensional poverty. They cautioned that LDC graduation was not a panacea and graduating required continued support to prevent their falling back into poverty. Clarification was sought on next generation UNDP assistance to countries and how UNDP adjusted its assistance based on country categories. On evaluation practice, they sought clarity on the difference between decentralized and independent. On recommendations for conflicted-affected states, there was a request for details on UNDP efforts to pay attention to intersecting vulnerabilities through its work on governance and its relation to data and capacity strengthening.

24. Delegations commended UNDP for its implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 2018/26, which called on the United Nations development system to prioritize

allocation to LDCs through clear operational guidelines and budget targets. While the programmatic approach was a good first step, UNDP had to ensure LDCs and others benefitted from system-wide assistance. They commended UNDP for its work on climate change in LDCs through its Global Policy Network and sought details on progress UNDP had made in prioritizing climate change in LDCs. They stressed the importance of and encouraged UNDP to continue to facilitate horizontal and vertical coordination when providing assistance to LDCs. There were requests for information on whether IEO and UNDP could collaborate with other United Nations organizations to achieve scale and greater impact, and how UNDP was working with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) to leverage private sector approaches.

25. A group of delegations said they would have preferred if the evaluation had been discussed along with the management response, while others supported the consultative process and offered to engage further. They supported the recommendation that UNDP focus on LDCs in recurrent, protracted crises, especially in Africa, and sought details on UNDP work to develop pro-poor solutions in Africa. They commended UNDP capacity-building work in vulnerable countries to break negative patterns, and called on UNDP to invest further in its thought leadership on multidimensional poverty, using the Human Development Report Office to help countries develop their own data, analysis and policies. UNDP governance work was key in addressing multidimensional poverty. They supported the recommendation to allocate resources for gender equality, women's empowerment and youth in LDCs. They counted on the UNDP integrator and expert role on poverty to support country teams in joint programming and monitoring. Attention was drawn to the evaluation's indication that in LDCs UNDP needed to step up efforts to translate policy and assessments into action and ensure local-level engagement was backed by long-term strategic thinking, including through South-South cooperation.

26. In response, the Director, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, said UNDP had not submitted a management response because, in the spirit of 'co-creation' between IEO, UNDP and the Board, it sought first to distil different perspectives before finalizing the response. UNDP recognized that, without continued assistance, graduated LDCs risked falling back into poverty, which it helped counter through structural transformation assistance, governance programmes and helping to open political space. UNDP aimed to double the number of LDCs where it undertook climate-related activities. On the humanitarian-development nexus, UNDP focused on root causes and resilience-building to head off crises before they took root. As part of its multidimensional approach to poverty, UNDP experts in different specializations no longer worked in silos but collaborated with colleagues to address the Goals. As integrator, UNDP assisted country teams with analytics, financing and planning through country platforms and accelerator labs. The UNDP private sector offer focused on guiding countries through de-risking for investment while providing 'SDG intelligence' to private sector partners. On disabilities, in 2018 UNDP had issued guidance to country offices on the mandatory integration of disabilities into country programmes.

27. The Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, highlighted that ending poverty was a political commitment. UNDP played assisted stakeholders to adhere to that commitment. Because extreme poverty in Africa was located predominantly in borderlands and urban centres, UNDP would launch a programme on borderlands. Since traditional development models were not suitable to borderlands, UNDP would invest in developing new models grounded in sound diagnostics. As for unplanned urban areas, UNDP would invest in 'smart cities' labs at regional levels. On thought leadership, UNDP helped countries create and own the policy space needed to allow Africa to emerge from poverty.

28. The Team Leader for the 2030 Agenda, UNDP, highlighted how UNDP used vertical funds to address multidimensional poverty and other development challenges, such as climate change and women's empowerment. UNDP collaborated with UNCDF on local development finance and financial inclusion that allowed deployment of expertise and innovative financing models in over 30 LDCs to examine local-level poverty challenges. Inclusive, equitable local

development approaches examined structural impediments that women faced, and used local and public investments to unlock domestic capital for their empowerment. UNDP played a central role in integrating such inter-agency partnerships at low cost and high impact.

29. The Deputy Executive Director, UNCDF, said the Fund worked with UNDP through its country platforms on investment cycles, pipeline sourcing, de-risking, assessment of investment opportunities, and issuance of loans and guarantees, driven by the Goals and inclusive growth. UNCDF was a leader on innovation, be it development-focused investments on the stock exchange or connecting investment capital. As integrator, UNDP was a driver of system-wide private sector partnerships at country level aimed at expanding use of financial instruments. UNCDF combined its expertise with UNDP on digital finance, municipal finance and fiscal decentralization.

30. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, explained that independent and decentralized evaluations informed each other. Independent evaluations drew off country-level work (decentralized and other work) while independent evaluations were independent and reported to the Board. A key consideration of decentralized evaluations was learning; most UNDP evaluations were decentralized. The IEO quality assessments of decentralized evaluations, one of its main roles, would be presented to the Board at its annual session 2019. In June 2020, IEO would submit its evaluations of disaster and risk management and the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan, 2018-2020 for Syrian refugees. The Board had approved a portfolio of evaluations in its four-year plan that included environment and climate change.

31. The Executive Board took note of the evaluation of UNDP support to poverty reduction in the least developed countries (DP/2019/4) and the accompanying management note.

Report of the IEO on its support to evaluation capacity development

32. There were no interventions by Board members on the report.

33. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Independent Evaluation Office on its support to evaluation capacity development (DP/2019/6).

III. Country programmes and related matters

34. The Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, on behalf of the Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item and provided overviews of the country programmes and country programme extensions up for approval. The regional directors for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean presented and elaborated on the following country programmes from their respective regions: Burundi, Niger and Togo (Africa), Cambodia (Asia and the Pacific), and Chile and Ecuador (Latin America and the Caribbean).

35. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for: Burundi (DP/DCP/BDI/4 and Corr.1), Cambodia (DP/DCP/KHM/4), Chile (DP/DCP/CHL/4), Ecuador (DP/DCP/ECU/3), Niger (DP/DCP/NER/3) and Togo (DP/DCP/TGO/3).

36. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina and approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Africa, as contained in document DP/2019/3.

UNFPA segment

Statement by the Executive Director

37. In her statement (available on the [UNFPA Executive Board website](#)), the Executive Director underscored that 2019, which marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the fiftieth anniversary of UNFPA, was a time for stocktaking, reflection, and renewed resolve and partnerships. The Fund was committed to reenergizing and expanding the global movement for rights and choices for all – essential for achieving the three transformational results and fulfilling the promise of the ICPD and 2030 Agenda. She drew attention to ICPD regional reviews that would feed into the full review of the programme of action by the Commission on Population and Development, as well as the launch of the *State of the World Population 2019*. She highlighted the November 2019 Nairobi Summit on ICPD+25: Accelerating the Promise, and the march of young activities carrying a torch from Cairo to Nairobi to raise awareness.

38. On United Nations reform, UNFPA was moving forward with internal change to build organizational culture, systems and skills to deliver with the United Nations development system on the 2030 Agenda. That included a new vision for intergovernmental and interagency affairs, a new Humanitarian Affairs Office, and realignment of global, regional and subregional functions. Programmatically, the Fund's three transformative results were accelerators to achieve Agenda 2030, and UNFPA was intensifying investments in partnerships to scale up programmes and results with the rest of the system. The Fund was engaged with partners in strengthening health systems, integrating universal health coverage in a comprehensive package of sexual and reproductive health services, ensuring sexual and reproductive health services were integral to primary health care, and ending all forms of violence against women through the Spotlight Initiative. UNFPA was co-coordinating two important reform processes: the Strategic Financing Results Group, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Redesign Group and the Sustainable Development Results Group.

39. A top priority for UNFPA was its coordinated work with United Nations partners to end sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment through the Office of the Special Coordinator, the Victim Rights Advocate and the Inter-Agency Steering Committee. Internally, it had strengthened its structure to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse at country and regional levels, and introduced stronger management accountability. At the session, UNFPA would submit the first ever evaluation of its support on gender-based violence. The Fund continued to prioritize innovation to create and scale up data-driven, sustainable, open solutions to bring about transformative change through, for example, the Population Data Platform. In 2018, it signed some 60 new partnerships, including with private sector, bringing its total to 184. Those partnerships were linked to funding, including individual contributions; in 2018 UNFPA received funding significantly above its targets for core and non-core resources. The number of government donors had nevertheless declined and the Executive Director made an appeal for an upturn in 2019.

40. The Fund's humanitarian work was central to its mandate and in 2018 together with partners it reached an estimated 18 million people in over 55 countries. UNFPA expected similar needs in 2019 when it aimed to reach millions of women, girls and youth in crisis situations with life-saving sexual and reproductive health services, supplies and information, and interventions to prevent gender-based violence and respond to the needs of survivors, grounded in a human-rights based approach. UNFPA continued to strengthen its ability to respond quickly in emergencies, and had scaled up its roving team and augmented its surge mechanism, while strengthening support for staff serving in high-risk duty stations.

41. Board members expressed continued strong support for the Fund's mandate and welcomed its active engagement in United Nations reform and its related aligning of resources and priorities. They welcomed UNFPA leadership and participation in the Strategic Financing Results Group, UNDAF Redesign Group and Sustainable Development Results Group. They stressed the importance of the Fund's mandate in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Goals and requested regular updates on how UNFPA would deliver against its three transformative results, how it would support the new resident coordinator system, and how it was working to improve

system-wide coherence. They sought details on reported ongoing competition among United Nations development organizations noted in the revised evaluation policy. They called on the Fund to work closely with programme countries to advance the repositioning of the United Nations development system, including efforts to redesign the UNDAF, enhance common country assessments, and strengthen resident coordinator system capacity.

42. Delegations welcomed the Fund's good financial standing, despite ongoing funding challenges, and encouraged it to continue to broaden its donor base and pursue innovative funding approaches and partnerships, including with non-traditional donors and the private sector. They were pleased with the emergence of and increase in funding from programme countries. They welcomed the clean audit findings and management approach, including audit-based management, building on recommendations of the Board of Auditors. Delegations encouraged countries to abide by their funding commitments and ensure predictable, multi-year contributions to core resources. They called on countries, in a position to do so, to step up contributions to core. They requested details on how the Fund would stay focused on practical delivery of its Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and what Member States could do to improve the funding situation. They sought information on how the Fund was planning for the Nairobi Summit on ICPD+25: Accelerating the Promise, and how Member States could be involved.

43. A group of delegations stressed the importance of national ownership and nationally defined priorities. They underscored the important UNFPA role through the three transformative goals in the LDCs and Africa, and welcomed the Fund's investments in education, demographic dividend and youth-focused programmes. They encouraged UNFPA to continue to support the Maputo Plan of Action to deliver sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services in LDCs and Africa. Another group from the SIDS welcomed the Fund's work in the Caribbean sub-region in addressing gender equity, young girls and youth and gender-based violence. They stressed the need for UNFPA to allocate adequate, predictable funding resources to the sub-region and to continue to strengthen its regional platform, including through a review of multi-country offices, connecting them to technical expertise and best practices, as per Samoa Pathway principles. They welcomed UNFPA efforts to streamline its work and structure its portfolios to avoid duplication. Delegations stressed the importance of and UNFPA successes in using South-South cooperation as a means to addressing the ICPD programme of action and achieving the Goals.

44. Board members underscored the Fund's sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights work and adherence to a rights-based approach and 'choices for all' in all areas and levels, to advance gender equality and women's empowerment, crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the Goals and ICPD programme of action. They expressed strong support for the Fund's continued work in humanitarian and crisis settings, providing sexual and reproductive health services, and preventing and combatting gender-based violence, abuse and harassment. They welcomed efforts to eradicate social norms that perpetuated gender-based violence and divisions that impeded women's and girls' human rights. They reaffirmed the right to development as universal, inalienable and central to the human-rights approach. They stressed the importance of an 'inclusive' approach to addressing gender equality, women's empowerment and gender-based violence to include the most vulnerable and engage all stakeholders and partners, including men and boys. They expressed strong support for universal health coverage and the key role UNFPA needed to play.

45. Board members welcomed the Fund's work on data collection and analysis in population dynamics, the demographic dividend and advocacy for youth. They encouraged continued investment and engagement in information, data gathering and innovation as part of advocacy efforts and to inform programme and policy design. They called on UNFPA to take into account country-specific demographic trends, including ageing, declining fertility rates and family reproductive behaviour, when supporting countries in designing programmes and, in general, as a depository and thought leader in those areas.

46. In response, the Executive Director said delegations' feedback helped UNFPA refine its programmes and address development challenges. UNFPA actively supported United Nations reform and system-wide coherence, and engaged only in competition that drove innovation, such as in the Spotlight Initiative. Thanks to the increase in adequate, predictable resources in 2018, UNFPA had been able to plan better and be more proactive and reactive. UNFPA focus on demographics, building on census and applied health survey data, had allowed it to address youth issues in Africa, among others. It would continue to build on successes to define future assistance and inform its preventative approach to development. The Maputo Plan of Action was a UNFPA priority as it focused on woman through a family-wide perspective. UNFPA sought to create a 'peace' environment within crisis situations and households to protect women and girls against violence, working with local communities and youth. The pressure on the ICPD agenda only spurred the Fund to drive practical implementation of its strategic plan and build resilience at country level through capacity strengthening. UNFPA was also stepping up cooperation in the area of disabilities. In closing, she highlighted that the 'full review' covered both the ICPD programme of action and the Goals.

47. The Director, UNFPA Programme Division, said the transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda demanded urgent action. UNFPA was working to pinpoint ICPD accelerators that drove action, and explore financing of those accelerators at global, regional and country levels. The change needed to propel the 2030 Agenda began by addressing women's and girls' reproductive health. UNFPA worked through academic partnerships and national governments to identify priority areas, and would ensure that women's and girls' reproductive health and rights featured prominently in redesigned UNDAFs. It would do so in collaboration with partners and through South-South initiatives in driving the ICPD programme of action, built on innovative knowledge sharing and cross-fertilization. It was crucial to change the narrative of women's and girls' reproductive health and place it at the centre, along with the three transformative goals, to guarantee success. All funding to UNFPA served that sole purpose.

48. The Deputy Executive Director (Management) highlighted that UNFPA was committed to becoming more effective and efficient corporately, programmatically and operationally. The Fund had worked with the Board since 2016 shaping internal change toward that end. The internal information and communications technology transformation changed how UNFPA functioned, and UNFPA continued to outsource service provisions to United Nations organizations. UNFPA shared some 70 per cent of its country offices with United Nations organizations, and continued to seek shared services. The Fund was an active participant in the United Nations Development Group Business Innovation Group focused, among other topics, on common back office services.

49. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) highlighted that the five regional reviews of ICPD had been successful in the Fund's engagement with Member States and strengthening national capacity to conduct country reviews. UNFPA was engaged with civil society organizations and youth groups in the review process. The reviews explored successes, gaps and emerging issues, which informed the regional reports and the Secretary-General's final report to be submitted to the fifty-second meeting of the Commission on Population and Development.

IV. Evaluation

50. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, presented the main results of the revised evaluation policy (DP/FPA/2019/1) as well as the evaluation of UNFPA support to the prevention, response to and elimination of gender-based violence and harmful practices, 2012-2017 (DP/FPA/2019/CRP.1). In turn, the Deputy Executive Director (Management) provided the management response (DP/FPA/2019/CRP.2).

UNFPA revised evaluation policy

51. Board members welcomed the revised evaluation policy, and transparent consultative process and preparatory work by the Evaluation Office, which was aligned with the evaluation policies of United Nations organizations. Delegations encouraged the Fund to use the revised policy to support national capacity building for evaluation and inform future country programmes. They recognized the norms laid out in the revised evaluation policy, including the universal indicators of credibility, impartiality, ethics, transparency and professionalism. South-South cooperation best practices in evaluation could benefit the Fund's work in that area. They sought clarification on the extent to which the drop in core funding might jeopardize the evaluation practice. They noted that the revised evaluation policy should more fully address gender and human rights aspects. And they sought clarity on the difference between joint and system-wide evaluations, and whether UNFPA was collaborating with the World Health Organization on system-wide evaluations.

52. A group of delegations stressed the importance of allocating adequate resources to the evaluation function, and welcomed the proposal to enhance funding to maintain a strong evaluation function. They expected UNFPA to periodically report on resource allocation and budgeting measures to improve capacity to conduct and disseminate evaluations. They requested that future evaluation reports include analysis of how decreased core funding impacted its ability to conduct high quality evaluations. They welcomed increased focus on joint evaluations and coordination with United Nations development organizations, and that evaluation of the common chapter formed part of the revised evaluation policy. They welcomed the focus on national capacity building for evaluations to support public policy in programme countries.

53. In response, the Director, Independent Evaluation Office, affirmed UNFPA had the resources to conduct high quality evaluations, and welcomed establishment of a resource range to identify where evaluation could be strengthened. In that regard, the revised evaluation policy aimed to protect funding for decentralized evaluations. The Evaluation Office would continue to report annually on UNFPA allocations to evaluation, as part of reporting against the key evaluation indicators. As a testament to the Fund's commitment to reform, almost 50 per cent of centralized evaluations were conducted jointly or system-wide, in addition to joint evaluation work on the common chapter. UNFPA was committed to working with United Nations organizations and others to strengthen national evaluation capacity, on request by national governments and through South-South initiatives. Joint evaluations differed from system-wide evaluations in that they focused on how a few United Nations organizations were performing in a certain programme, while system-wide evaluations assessed how the system as a whole was performing in a much larger area, such as humanitarian delivery.

54. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) said UNFPA worked jointly on evaluation of the common chapter with United Nations organizations concerned, and had put in place a structure at global and regional levels to identify programme accelerators. UNFPA sought first to make use of its finance and expertise to develop indicators, while exploring innovative ideas for implementation. The Fund aimed to build results-based management, monitoring and evaluation capacity into country programmes throughout the programming period, focused on national capacity strengthening. On the issue of establishing a higher range for annual evaluation funding, UNFPA sought first to use cost recovery to fund evaluation, though it was open to the idea of an evaluation funding levy.

55. The Executive Board adopted decision 2019/1 on the revised UNFPA evaluation policy.

Evaluation of UNFPA support to the prevention, response to and elimination of gender-based violence and harmful practices

56. Board members strongly welcomed the evaluation focus on gender-based violence as a means to improving UNFPA programming and assistance in development and humanitarian settings. They welcomed the Fund's work in combatting gender-based violence from a health

and prevention perspective, including addressing practices such as female genital mutilation/cutting. They welcomed the Fund's work on data and trend analysis of gender equality, women's empowerment, gender-based violence and harmful practices, and recognized its role in addressing social and behavioural change through culturally sensitive approaches in consultation with all stakeholders, including government. That included its role in raising the awareness of political leadership at country level. They valued efforts aimed at addressing cultural norms as part of a strengthened inclusive and holistic approach that included marginalized groups and men and boys. They recognized resource inadequacies and welcomed UNFPA efforts to ensure adequate allocation of resources to its gender-based violence activities.

57. Delegations sought clarity on reported challenges to interagency coordination at country level and government efforts to address interagency competition, and welcomed the idea of governance agreements at global level to mitigate competition. They encouraged the cross-fertilization of experiences at country level and in leveraging South-South cooperation in combatting gender-based violence. They noted that gender-based violence needed to be addressed in all areas throughout the organization, including in humanitarian settings in the provision of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services through a human-rights based approach. They stressed the importance of maintaining gender specialists and using a crosscutting approach to gender-based violence. They highlighted the need for a common definition of gender-based violence understood by all partners. They suggested using the resident coordinator's office and redesigned UNDAF to spearhead system-wide gender-based violence and gender equality programming, and connecting fraud prevention efforts to gender-based violence in the workplace through the resident coordinator system.

58. In response, the Director, Evaluation Office, said the office collaborated with United Nations organizations' evaluation offices within the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) to advocate for UNDAF evaluations' compliance with normative evaluation frameworks, both within the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and UNEG norms and standards.

59. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) highlighted UNFPA work in the Spotlight Initiative with United Nations organizations in addressing gender-based violence, including female genital mutilation/cutting, as part of its three transformative goals. UNFPA took a preventive approach to combatting gender-based violence, addressing social and cultural norms at community level and conducting data analysis. The Fund welcomed the proposal to coordinate interagency work on gender-based violence through the resident coordinator system and within the workplace. On control and prevention of fraud, UNFPA efforts to create a corporate environment free of fear by improving leadership and culture, including through regular audits, helped address gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace.

60. The Director, UNFPA Programme Division, explained that redesigned UNDAFs had yet to be completed because the working group sought to ensure they contained enough detail to be used for programming and accountability. Likewise, it was still not clear whether the system-wide strategic document would be operational in focus and linked to the UNDAFs through results statements and indicators. Furthermore, because the development-humanitarian divide on gender-based violence activities had yet to be determined, monitoring and reporting on UNFPA gender-based violence programming would focus solely on development activities, including through the resident coordinator system. In that context, the Fund was focused on coordinated interagency, cross-partnerships activities grounded in the common chapter and Spotlight Initiative; both had reporting and accountability frameworks. All the Fund's work focused on gender, but the profile of gender experts had to evolve to address the changing dynamics of gender-related challenges. UNFPA had to continue to assess evolving gender challenges and determine how to address them. The redesigned UNDAF could serve to establish clear lines of responsibility and funding, a topic for financing for development discussions.

61. The Executive Board took note of the evaluation of UNFPA support to the prevention, response to and elimination of gender-based violence and harmful practices, 2012-2017 (DP/FPA/2019/CRP.1)

V. Country programmes and related matters

62. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) provided an overview of the two country programmes for Cambodia and Niger, as well as the second country programme extension for South Africa. In turn, regional directors for Asia and the Pacific, west and central Africa, and East and Southern Africa provided details from the regional perspective.

63. The Executive Board, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, reviewed and approved the country programmes documents for Cambodia (DP/FPA/CPD/KHM/6) and Niger (DP/FPA/CPD/NER/9). The Board also approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for South Africa (DP/FPA/2018/11).

UNOPS segment

VI. Statement by the Executive Director

64. In her statement, the Executive Director, UNOPS, provided an update on the implementation of the organization's Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and highlighted the key focus areas for 2019. She underscored UNOPS support for United Nations reform and readiness to share its experiences in driving it forward. The funds needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals however far surpassed what the United Nations could contribute. The United Nations had to find ways to catalyse official development assistance, in cooperation with others, to unleash larger sources of sustainable financing, both public and private. Through its Social Impact Investing Initiative, UNOPS mobilized the large-scale investments in sustainable infrastructure developing economies needed. Social impact investing gave opportunities to socially conscious investors to generate financial returns while ensuring their contributions made positive social, environmental and economic impact. UNOPS role was based on its decades of operational experience in difficult settings, willingness to invest, and commitment to de-risk projects so the private sector more easily stepped in. Those efforts helped to accelerate the Goals and promote learning from the private sector through access to technologies and know-how. UNOPS fostered gender-sensitive infrastructure to promote gender equality and ending discriminatory practices related to infrastructure.

65. On the humanitarian-development front, UNOPS had earned a solid reputation for its rapid, flexible response to crises through, for example, quick restoration of electricity for health, water and sanitation facilities in Gaza or help in delivering food, fuel and supplies in Yemen through the United Nations Verification and Inspection Mechanism. Its rapid deployment of new technologies and efficiencies into projects helped to introduce artificial intelligence to humanitarian responses in Afghanistan and set up call centres in Iraq to more efficiently assist displaced populations. Its revitalized information technology systems saved hours of work and its process automation reduced time spent on procurement. UNOPS played a key role helping governments fight corruption, bureaucracy and inefficiency through public procurement and, for several years, had been awarded the gold standard in sustainable procurement. In 2018, UNOPS launched two major initiatives to prioritize gender equality corporately and in projects, on which it would report to the Board at its annual session 2019.

66. Board members expressed strong support for UNOPS work in developing countries and in supporting the work of United Nations organizations. They underscored UNOPS central role in United Nations reform and resident coordinator system repositioning, focused on greater efficiency and effectiveness for results delivery and providing common services. They expected

UNOPS to play an increased role in country teams and in UNDAF design and implementation. Innovation and innovative financing were key, and areas where UNOPS should continue to play a central role, including through innovative partnerships. They welcomed UNOPS unique self-sustaining business model, a model for other United Nations organizations. UNOPS should make reinvestment a key priority without seeking maximum profits. They called for UNOPS continued collaboration with the United Nations system, while avoiding competition and duplication.

67. Delegations encouraged UNOPS to design tailored, demand-driven, cost-effective approaches to meet programme countries' needs, with sustainability as the driver of operational priorities, focused on sustainable project management, infrastructure and procurement. That approach was pertinent to UNOPS work in LDCs and SIDS, in line with the principles of the Samoa Pathways, as well as in MICs. Other delegations highlighted UNOPS support to the public sector to strengthen national capacities, improve public administration, and create production capacity and swift response to operational challenges. UNOPS role in infrastructure management helped to promote economic efficiency, safety, local job creation, transfer of expertise, environmental and social consolidation, and fiscal soundness. They welcomed its work in social impact investment in Africa and requested information on whether it planned to expand such work to other regions. They encouraged UNOPS to respond in a timely manner to Board of Auditors' recommendations.

68. Delegations welcomed UNOPS work in the humanitarian-development nexus and in providing peace and security solutions in conflict settings. They sought details on UNOPS role in conflict prevention, including its engagement with the private sector, and how UNOPS approached sustainable development in long-term refugee camps. They welcomed UNOPS work on gender equality, including gender mainstreaming, in programmes and projects, and looked forward to UNOPS fulfilling its objective of gender parity by end 2019 and further collaboration with United Nations organizations in that area. They welcomed its work on gender-sensitive architecture and sought details on how it promoted it in development planning.

69. In response, the Executive Director highlighted UNOPS work to address the needs of SIDS through a model that capitalized on its innovation centres to connect technology to local entrepreneurs working with national governments. UNOPS had been able to bring social impact investing to the level where private sector demonstrated the will to invest. UNOPS fully supported reform and establishment of an independent resident coordinator working on behalf of United Nations organizations. UNOPS had made its required contributions to the resident coordinator system, and actively helped implement Agenda 2030 through and beyond official development assistance to include cooperation with the private sector. It was committed to working with country teams and developing UNDAFs, and ready to collaborate with UNDP and OCHA to determine more efficient, effective engagement in the humanitarian-development nexus. UNOPS aimed to ensure development aid worked efficiently in helping governments spend public resources better and access private funding. UNOPS was ready to work with organizations to explore shared services, procurement practices, access to new funding and innovation. Social impact investing, innovation centres and public procurement support were examples of UNOPS support to MICs. On conflict prevention, UNOPS played multiple roles through rapid response and mitigation measures and by being a neutral implementation partner focused on developing new solutions.

Joint segment

VII. Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

70. The Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, introduced the UNDP and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) report on the implementation of the

recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2017 (DP/2019/7). The Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, introduced the report of UNFPA: follow-up to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2017: status of implementation of the recommendations (DP/FPA/2019/2). The General Counsel, UNOPS, introduced the report of UNOPS on the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2017 (DP/OPS/2019/1).

UNDP

71. Board members welcomed UNDP unqualified audit opinions for 2017. They sought clarity on whether the fact that most Board of Auditors' recommendations for 2017 were country-focused meant UNDP needed to undertake a more systemic response. First, on management risks related to implementing partners, they noted that despite improvements risk assessments remained a concern, including under the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT), and they welcomed the inclusion of fraud clauses on fiduciary risk management and control in programme agreements. Second, noting the continuing low recovery rate of funds lost due to fraud, they encouraged UNDP to address recurring findings and recommendations on its compliance with existing operational rules and procedures, and urged it to review procedures to determine if concerned offices could liaise earlier to speed up processes and recover funds. Third, on reported ongoing procurement weakness, while recognizing improvements, they encouraged UNDP to continue to digitize and integrate procurement, focused on centralization and greater levels of transparency, integrity and accountability. Delegations urged UNDP to take steps to improve staff completion rates for mandatory training; sought clarification at the annual session 2019 as to why in 2018 UNDP had budgeted 50 per cent more than its actual expenditures; encouraged UNDP to address recurrent findings about information technology weaknesses at country level; and sought details on how UNDP would address areas on which audit opinions were partially satisfactory.

UNFPA

72. Board members welcomed the Fund's unqualified audit opinion for 2017 and overall healthy financial standing, despite funding challenges, and encouraged it to continue to broaden its donor base and pursue innovative funding approaches and partnerships, including with non-traditional donors and private sector. They were pleased with the increase in funding from programme countries. They welcomed the clean audit findings and management approaches, including audit-based management, building on Board of Auditors' recommendations. Delegations encouraged countries to abide by their funding commitments and ensure predictable, multi-year contributions to core resources. They called on countries in a position to do so to step up contributions to core. They requested details on how the Fund would stay focused on practical delivery of its Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, and what Member States could do to improve the funding situation. Delegations recognized initiatives to handle implementing partners and strengthen operational controls, but suggested strengthening risk management at country levels, including under HACT. They welcomed implementation of a formalized enterprise risk management policy and the results of the qualitative review undertaken by the Risk Treatment Working Group, and recognized efforts to improve the maturity of risk management. They welcomed the checklist for micro-assessments and strengthened staff capacity to conduct spot checks, but stressed the need for follow-up, enhancing methodology and ensuring findings informed learning and decision-making. They commended the start of inventory audits in 16 countries in 2019 and the accompanying training, and requested that management monitor resourcing and follow up. They urged UNFPA to adhere to procurement plans to ensure efficiency in operations and transparency, and to strengthen monitoring of distributed inventories to provide assurance they were used as intended. They expected UNFPA to address issues related to non-recovery and non-authorization of cash advances, as they were related to fraud and corrupt practices. They commended UNFPA for efforts to close outstanding audit recommendations and encouraged it to continue to implement recommendations. While

welcoming the shift from a deficit to a surplus in 2017, they requested an action plan with clear sub-goals for increasing the share of unearmarked contributions and broadening the donor base, including as part of the structured funding dialogue. They stressed the importance of continuous follow up and recurring sensitivity analysis of employee benefit liabilities.

UNOPS

73. Board members welcomed UNOPS robust financial health while urging it to develop a strategy for effective use of increasing surpluses. They welcomed the sustainable procurement criteria checklist but, noting their variability of application, encouraged UNOPS to ensure it incorporated sustainability concerns in all procurement processes. Recognizing its actions to focus on gender mainstreaming, they encouraged UNOPS to allocate enough time and resources to facilitate timely implementation of and follow up to its gender mainstreaming activities. They encouraged timely implementation of the enterprise portfolio and project management system and the enterprise resource management system to set the foundations for its integrated risk management system. Recognizing the reduced number of new audit recommendations, delegations called on UNOPS to focus more on ensuring it addressed outstanding recommendations.

Response

74. In response, the Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, reiterated UNDP commitment to fulfilling audit recommendations and achieving greater development effectiveness. UNDP had redesigned its programme and policy manuals and streamlined its operational procedures to facilitate delivery at country level. It had revised its enterprise risk management approach to improve risk management and link it to programme planning. On compliance with rules and procedures, especially recovery, UNDP would present its report, with breakdowns by year and amount recovered, at the annual session 2019. UNDP was making improvements in procurement, including appointment of regional procurement specialists. On mandatory training, especially for sexual harassment and abuse, the Administrator had introduced a system by which managers declared in writing completion of mandatory courses by staff and group training and disclosed any case at country level. On information technology, the UNDP digital security team was pursuing ISO 27001 certification. On budgeting, between 2014-2017 UNDP had seen significant reductions in core resources compared to aspirational core, which it had offset through reduced institutional spending. Building on lessons of aspirational budgeting, UNDP had moved to base its budgeting process, under the Strategic Plan, 2017-2021, on an income derived model. On income, it applied a risk management approach to corporate budgeting for core resources, using different possible scenarios to counter risk. On spending, it maintained its promise not to run a deficit organization, and retained its surplus of core in reserve. On project weaknesses at country level, UNDP tracked each country office on its compliance with audit recommendations, held country office leadership accountable, conducted national-level audits between independent audits, and used guidance from independent evaluations. On pooled funding, UNDP was subjected to two separate audit protocols, one as system-wide fiduciary for the Multi-party Trust Fund and two for its programme delivery at country level in joint programmes.

75. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, affirmed the Fund's capacity to monitor implementation of audit recommendations through a dedicated staff member within the Executive Office. UNFPA continued to improve its preventive measures, including maintaining a running item on Board fiduciary matters in senior management meetings, where discussions on performance were informed by country and regional data to ensure timely action. In 2018, for example, the Fund had undertaken a full evaluation of its supplies programme that offered recommendations for improvement.

76. The Director, Division of Management Services, UNFPA, said the Fund embraced preventive measures in risk management. UNFPA was revising its information technology

infrastructure, including the new enterprise resource planning, and sought to improve its risk management. HACT constituted the Fund's primary risk management tool in audits and spot checks of implementing partners. On information technology audit coverage, audits by independent audit firms, along with spot checks, ensured over 90 per cent spending by implementing partners was covered. Its efforts to boost risk management included review of assurance methods and revision of workplan policies for implementing partners. The enterprise resources management system tracked risk management performance and mitigation plans for each business unit. That said, UNFPA sought to differentiate risk management processes to address greatest areas of risk, including 'last mile' audits and local cash transactions and advances. In 2018 the Fund had released its new inventory policy that contained risk and responsibility measures, had put in place measures to control cash advances in response to recovery concerns, and would undertake a complete review of its supply chain. On fund balance, UNFPA had carried over funds received for non-core activities, which represented additional cash for it to spend; the move from deficit to surplus was not a significant development and did not affect its strong financial position.

77. The General Counsel and Director, UNOPS New York Office, said the points raised correlated to those on which UNOPS was focused to become more efficient and effective in results delivery. On gender, UNOPS maintained a running item on gender on its senior management agenda, which changed regularly based on whether measures were working or not. UNOPS fully supported the proposal to develop a strategy on managing its increasing surplus. The first part of the reserve was meant to cover the minimum necessary for UNOPS personnel in the event of UNOPS closure, especially in light of potential significant exposure of UNOPS projects. The larger part of the reserve was meant for innovation and investment, and became crucial when it moved to a new enterprise resource planning system.

78. The Board adopted decision 2019/2 on the recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

VIII. Update on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on repositioning of the United Nations development system

79. The Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, and the General Counsel and Director, UNOPS New York Office, presented updates on their organizations' progress and plans in response to General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning exercise.

80. Board members reaffirmed their support for resolution 72/279 and role of reform in making the United Nations development system fit for purpose to deliver the 2030 Agenda and the Goals. A group of delegations welcomed the timely financial contribution of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS under the expanded cost-sharing arrangement for swift operationalization, and commended them for signing a memorandum of understanding on mutual recognition to improve cooperation. They sought clarity on when changes to each organization's financial rules and regulations, to reflect the memorandum, would be presented to the Board, and requested a UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS assessment of the need to update internal guidelines and regulations to align with provisions in resolution 72/279. They encouraged UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to support non-resident agencies' efforts to strengthen their impact at country level and engagement in repositioning. They welcomed UNFPA co-chairing of the UNDAF Redesign Group and called on United Nations development organizations to ensure the UNDAF became the most important instrument for planning and implementation of United Nations development activities in partnership with host countries.

81. The same group encouraged UNDP and UNFPA to integrate perspectives related to implementation of resolution 72/279 in midterm reviews of strategic plans and adjust results to reflect reforms, including on mutual accountability. Delegations looked forward to the common chapter evaluation on impact of joint work in the six outcome areas, and requested that the

organizations include results in their midterm reviews. They called on UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to work together to implement the funding compact in line with ongoing structured funding dialogue to ensure better reporting, transparency, efficiency and accountability for results. They called for system-wide harmonized cost classifications, definitions and methodologies, and asked that the United Nations development system make changes to ensure greater administrative and organizational efficiency. Delegations reiterated their call for the United Nations development system to meet the Secretary-General's target of achieving 50 per cent common premises by 2021 and fully shared services by 2022. They welcomed the establishment of a steering committee that fostered synergies in humanitarian and development action, and mobilized global action for crises, and called for strengthened alignment and integration with the peace and security pillar, especially in peacebuilding, conflict prevention and rule of law.

82. Other delegations requested details on when the organizations would consult the Board on UNDAF redesign and resident coordinators' reporting on UNDAF implementation. They suggested that UNDP, UNFPA, UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, in accordance with the management and accountability framework, present updates of progress on the repositioning to allow the Boards to fulfil their oversight role, including through the Economic and Social Council and General Assembly. They called on UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to reorient freed up funds, resulting from shared contributions to the resident coordinator system, toward development activities, and requested information on progress, including guidelines on resident coordinator system fund collection. They expected the redesigned UNDAF to be analytical, useful in financing implementation of the Goals, and aligned with national priorities. They highlighted that a United Nations development system-wide strategic document, requested in the 2016 quadrennial review, should be submitted to the Economic and Social Council operational segment in May 2019. They urged the organizations to avoid delay in implementing the 1 per cent levy to fund the resident coordinator system and stressed the importance of including private sector contributions into the scope of the levy.

83. In response, the Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, highlighted that the UNDP integrator role was focused at country level to localize solutions for the Goals and strengthen local capacity in line with national needs. Through its integrator role, UNDP supported the resident coordinator system and partners in analysing data and identifying gaps as part of efforts to interlink organizational mandates and areas of development assistance, which helped UNDP realign its assistance and planning to national needs and challenges. Given its universal presence and trusted relationship with government, UNDP was ideal for that system-wide, partner-wide integrator role.

84. The Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, speaking on doubled cost-sharing contributions, said the UNDP share of \$10.3 million meant it was an important shareholder in the success of the new resident coordinator system. Efficiency gains were key to that success, and UNDP was on track to meet its commitment to reduce core resources allocated to administrative functions, shifting them to programme. UNDP viewed the UNDAF as the principal document, at all levels, governing the United Nations development system's relationship with government and country presence. UNDP fully espoused an empirical approach to operational services; as the only organization with universal operational presence and legal operational host country agreements, UNDP was the ideal agency to lead on common services. UNDP had signed a legal agreement with the United Nations Secretariat guaranteeing its provision of operational services and capacity to the resident coordinator.

85. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, stressed that the new UNDAF was premised on national ownership and national sustainable development to which United Nations system offered support and assistance. The UNDAF redesign was ongoing with the purpose of marshalling different mandates together to support the ambitious targets of the Goals and 2030 Agenda. It provided new ways of working together to fulfil national development

aspirations, including through non-resident agencies, and in response to evolving challenges, all embodied in the mutual recognition agreements. The organizations were ironing out the details of operationalizing the 1 per cent levy and establishing benchmarks to measure efficiency gains.

86. The General Counsel and Director, UNOPS New York Office, stated that UNOPS was determining with the United Nations Legal Office whether the mutual recognition agreement could require changes in UNOPS rules and regulations. UNOPS would update internal guidelines to reflect interactions on reporting, accountability framework and resident coordinator mechanisms. As an entity that worked in peace/security, humanitarian and development, UNOPS welcomed the inclusion of all three in the repositioning exercise and interagency coordination. Empirical data was key and UNOPS was prepared to provide its services where and when needed within its mandated areas.

87. The Executive Board adopted decision 2019/4 on the update on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on repositioning of the United Nations development system.

IX. Working methods of the Executive Board

88. In his statement, the Coordinator of the Core Group, citing the coherence principles of the 2016 quadrennial review and related decisions of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, presented the core group's activities to improve the methods of the Board.

89. Board members welcomed efforts made to improve working methods as part of 2016 quadrennial review follow-up to enhance the Board's oversight role. Delegations expected the core group to keep an eye on the rules of procedure for each Executive Board. They underscored that joint meetings of the Boards were a coordination forum; not a decision-making body. They expected the Boards to work consultatively to ensure coordinated decision-making and avoid overlaps. They underscored the need to follow up on decisions with concrete actions and ensure an ongoing consultative process. They asked for a timetable of meetings on working methods that included themes and topics. They stressed that improving working methods was an ongoing process that addressed issues as they arose.

90. In response, the Coordinator of the Core Group said the group would continue to discuss ways to improve working methods. Thematic core group discussions took up issues raised in the 2017 Board non-paper and other related documents. Each core group regional member was expected to share with and cull feedback from its respective regional group for consideration by the core group. The group was scheduled to share its outcomes at the annual session 2019.

91. The Secretary of the Executive Board affirmed the Secretariat's commitment to support the core group and implement decisions to improve working methods. Since the Board adopted decision 2018/22, the Secretariat had circulated to Board members the common items table and the text, table and template of decisions two weeks in advance of sessions; posted a joint online calendar on the websites of the different Executive Boards; and compiled a calendar of negotiations to ensure coordination. The Secretariat continued to work with decision facilitators to determine appropriate working hours for decision consultations.

92. The Executive Board adopted decision 2019/3 on the working methods of the Executive Board.