



United Nations

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

**Report of the Executive Board on its work
during 2022***

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* Reproduced as received; approved by the 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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Note

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Part one
First regular session 2022

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 31 January to 4 February 2022**

I. Organizational matters

1. The first regular session 2022 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held virtually for the seventh time, on an exceptional basis, owing to the continued COVID-19 pandemic, from 31 January to 4 February 2022. The newly elected President of the Board welcomed delegations and thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their leadership and commitment to the work of the Board in 2021. She 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 2022:

President:	H.E. Ms. Yoka Brandt	(The Netherlands)
Vice-President	H.E. Mr. Martin Kimani	(Kenya)
Vice-President:	H.E. Ms. Alya Al-Thani	(Qatar)
Vice-President:	H.E. Mr. José Manuel Rodríguez Cuadros	(Peru)
Vice-President:	H.E. Mr. Sergiy Kyslytsya	(Ukraine)

3. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its first regular session 2022 (DP/2022/L.1) and approved the report of the second regular session 2021 (DP/2022/1). The Board adopted the annual workplan for 2022 (DP/2022/CRP.1) and approved the tentative workplan for the annual session 2022.

4. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2021 appeared in document DP/2022/2, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).

5. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2022/6 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2022:

Annual session 2022	6 to 10 June 2022 (New York)
Second regular session 2022	29 August to 2 September 2022

Statement by the President of the Board

6. The President highlighted the importance of the 2021 adoption of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS strategic plans, 2022–2025. In 2022, the Bureau would engage the organizations to deliver even better and directly with staff at country and regional level through, for example, field visits in-person or virtually. Stressing the global stronghold of COVID-19, she commended United Nations staff for their work and resilience. With the launch of the new strategic plans in 2022, the Board would monitor their coordinated implementation for collective results to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, building on the pandemic’s lesson that country-level collaboration constituted the foundation for transformative results. The Bureau aimed to step up collaboration with the bureaux of the Boards of the other funds and programmes on cross-border harmonization and issues of mutual interest. She looked forward to working with colleagues to ensure the Board exercised its oversight responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

7. Following the President’s opening remarks, a delegation requested that future sessions of the Board, beginning with the annual session 2022, follow an “in-person format”.

Joint segment

II. Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

8. The Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, introduced the UNDP report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2020 (DP/2022/3). The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, introduced the UNFPA report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2019 (DP/FPA/2022/2). The Chief Financial Officer and Director of Administration, UNOPS, introduced the UNOPS report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2020 (DP/OPS/2022/1). Also tabled was the report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2020 for the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) (DP/2022/4).

UNDP

9. Delegations welcomed UNDP progress in its top seven audit-related priorities and recognized 2020 marked 16 consecutive years UNDP received unqualified audit opinions. They noted efforts to implement previous recommendations and encouraged UNDP to continue implementing outstanding recommendations. They commended UNDP strengthening of its digital procurement practices by rolling out its procurement planning platform, demonstrating its commitment to transparency and integrity. Though UNDP commitment to and progress in risk management was encouraging, delegations saw room for improvement, such as requiring regional bureaux to include risk management in performance tracking systems. They welcomed efforts to improve implementation of the harmonized approach to cash transfers (HACT) in country offices, and were pleased that UNDP used a strategic, risk-based approach in response to the Board of Auditors' report. Noting weaknesses in non-compliance with internal control requirements, procurement, management, and enterprise resource management, they encouraged UNDP to take a holistic approach to address weaknesses and include information in its reporting on actions.

UNCDF

10. Delegations welcomed UNCDF progress in its top seven audit-related priorities for 2018–2019 and its unqualified audit opinion for 2020. They encouraged management to continue to build on that achievement and prioritize transparency and accountability. Recognizing UNCDF had effectively addressed one of nine recommendations, had fully implemented all 23 outstanding audit recommendations from 2019 and previous years, and did not have any recurring audit issues, they expressed appreciation for leadership's and staff's dedication. They encouraged management to continue to fully address all pending current recommendations in a timely manner. Recognizing UNCDF did not benefit from UNDP dashboards or reports to monitor compliance with internal controls, they encouraged UNCDF to leverage UNDP systems and reporting mechanisms.

UNFPA

11. Delegations welcomed the continued UNFPA focus on implementing the Board of Auditors recommendations and encouraged their swift implementation. They noted the Fund's strong financial management despite recent challenges and declining revenue since 2019–2020. They appreciated the challenges UNFPA faced in strengthening the monitoring of its assurance activities but expressed concern that weakened monitoring could have a negative effect on programme delivery. Recognizing that – in response to a 2017 recommendation – UNFPA was developing an enterprise risk management (ERM) policy that included a revision of the risk

management framework, they urged UNFPA to complete the draft policy and implement the risk management package along with an implementation timetable. On long-term agreements, they sought assurances that UNFPA was on track in conducting its 2021 vendor assessment and would report to suppliers by 31 March 2022. They also asked if UNFPA had deployed its tool to monitor performance of long-term agreements for non-core commodities. Noting recurrent findings that some UNFPA implementing partners had limited organizational capacities, they sought clarity on how UNFPA ensured its engagement with implementing partners, contributed to strengthening capacities, and helped them carry out their work. Noting that the majority of audit recommendations related to procurement and inventory control and proposed actions for improvement related largely to the new ERP system, they asked about the status of UNFPA actions and when the ERP system would be ready.

UNOPS

12. Delegations welcomed UNOPS progress in its top audit-related priorities encouraged full implementation of all recommendations. They commended UNOPS positive Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) assessment and noted UNOPS total reserves more than doubled in five years. They appreciated UNOPS commitment to lower management fees, addressing an Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) recommendation, and asked when the reduction would be effective. Given the ACABQ assessment that UNOPS' overly conservative approach to budgeting had led to high unspent balances and a compounded accumulation of reserves, they asked if the reduction in management fees had led to a commensurate reduction in unspent balances and growing reserves. They also noted that ACABQ stressed the provision of rebates should extend to all United Nations entities. They expressed concern with the lack of investment diversification in S3i projects and S3i affiliation with a single private holding group. They asked if UNOPS was aware of any defaults, in addition to those mentioned, since the report's issuance. Noting the Board of Auditors report detailed cases of inadequate monitoring of S3i initiative investments, they asked how UNOPS had strengthened monitoring. They encouraged UNOPS to apply its high financial management standards to S3i projects. They also expressed concern with weaknesses reported in S3i projects' risk exposure and the expected credit loss of \$22.19 million, and encouraged UNOPS to improve how it measured and controlled risks and exposure.

13. In response, the Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, said that in late 2021 UNDP had rolled out enhanced guidance on conducting risk assessments to strengthen its overall risk posture. The UNDP regional offices also played a critical role in risk management and UNDP was working to strengthen its corporate accountability framework overall, together with improvements to its risk management framework, on which it would report in 2022.

14. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, underscored that UNFPA monitoring and assurance activities were extensive; although at 84 per cent UNFPA slightly missed its high coverage target, the remaining assurance activities were conducted in the following months with no material findings. UNFPA had intensified and advanced its assurance activities, including by introducing early audits for selected partners during the fourth quarter of 2021 and conducting selected spot checks ahead of their planned schedule. UNFPA was also on track and on time in conducting its vendor assessment. On implementing partners' capacity, he noted that UNFPA conducted in-depth micro-assessments at the outset of operations to identify weaknesses in controls and to set risk ratings.

15. The Chief Financial Officer and Director of Administration, UNOPS, said S3i is a bold, risk-oriented initiative endorsed by the Board to support the 2030 Agenda. S3i used a platform approach to increase UNOPS impact in different countries and for a wide geographical scope. UNOPS chose to partner with one entity to ensure quick implementation of the project. As such, UNOPS signed different agreements with a single partner linked to different projects and geographies where UNOPS sought to operate. She affirmed that UNOPS received payment in 2021 for the interest portion of the amounts under provision. The amounts referred to were not yet written off and UNOPS was actively working to obtain full reimbursement. Regarding other loans with the same partner, all payments due were received in 2021. UNOPS was committed to implementing the recommendations on monitoring. In 2021, the UNOPS Helsinki office, set up to spearhead S3i, recruited over 10 experts in different fields and appointed a new Chief Executive, ad interim, to implement S3i and monitor partners. Furthermore, different corporate offices were helping S3i to manage UNOPS relationship with the single partner. And in mid-2021, UNOPS set up an advisory group for investments to advise S3i on investment and monitoring of joint projects.

16. The Executive Director, UNCDF, highlighted that UNCDF had received an unqualified opinion from the Board of Auditors for 2020, the ninth consecutive year of unqualified opinions since UNCDF began presenting its own financial statements. He underscored the relationship with the German Supreme Auditing Institution and its constructive comments, including on improving operations, which UNCDF would implement in 2022.

17. The Board adopted decision 2022/1 on the reports of UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2020.

III. Follow-up to UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meeting

18. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, and the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) gave a presentation on the joint UNDP and UNFPA report on the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) (DP-FPA/2022/1), which was followed by remarks by the Deputy Executive Director, ad interim, UNAIDS.

19. A group of delegations welcomed UNAIDS attaining several milestones and establishing a solid programme of work. They commended UNDP and UNFPA for their joint work addressing the results areas in the Unified Budget Results and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) and focus on leaving no one behind. They encouraged them to continue working with the UNAIDS Secretariat and others to ensure an improved HIV coordination response. The group highlighted that UNDP and UNFPA should focus on scaling up combination HIV prevention, comprehensive sexuality education, and access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services. Fostering resilient high-quality health systems was needed that provided vital services, HIV immunization, sexual and reproductive health, antenatal care, and child and adolescent health, as was greater integration of HIV in universal health coverage and health system programmes at country level. In addition, tailored combination HIV prevention approaches were needed to meet the needs of key populations and ensure equitable access to services, using UNDP data collection to assess key population needs and improve access to prevention services. UNFPA and UNDP were

encouraged to strengthen this work while addressing barriers and promoting rights-based policies and responding to gender-based violence.

20. In individual interventions, delegations recognized the important UNDP and UNFPA roles in reaching the ambitious targets and societal enablers in the global UNAIDS strategy, 2021–2026, and the 2021 United Nations Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS. They recognized UNFPA and UNDP efforts to address laws and policies that perpetuate stigma and discrimination of vulnerable populations and supported UNFPA strengthening of HIV integration in comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights programming. They appreciated UNAIDS co-sponsors' contributions to UBRAF outputs and expected specificity in the milestones (including the indicator matrix) at the 50th Programme Coordinating Board meeting. It was noted that despite significant regional disparities, Sub-Saharan Africa remained most affected by HIV and the COVID-19 pandemic. They called for increased international cooperation and solidarity to fight HIV and COVID-19, address inequalities and ensure equal, equitable access to treatment. In addition, youth had to be involved in the response and recovery from HIV and COVID-19. Discriminatory laws and policies that affected the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer community and its access to health care would be addressed at the Safe To Be Me conference in summer 2022. The conference would bring together Governments, businesses, civil society, and international parliamentarians to secure new commitments.

21. In response, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) said feedback from the Board was crucial in helping UNFPA focus its assistance where needed. Regarding youth, women and girls, UNFPA was focused on its adolescent and youth strategy – My Body, My Life, My Work – to increase its level of assistance at country level. That strategy worked in parallel with the UNFPA comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights package for youth and adolescent in scaling up work and strengthening health systems, focused on the most vulnerable groups, including key populations. Crucial to those efforts was the Fund's joint work with UNDP on population data.

22. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, said UNDP and UNFPA work on HIV was part of eradicating poverty and achieving the Goals. UNDP and UNFPA advocacy aimed to increase investments to scale up and expand HIV combination prevention and help countries balance funding and programmes while strengthening legal and policy environments to ensure laws and policies reduced HIV risk. That included work to remove discrimination from legal frameworks and support HIV integration in national policies/planning and gender-based violence in national HIV strategies, policies and programmes. UNDP and UNFPA catalysed action across sectors to address the gender dimensions of the AIDS epidemic, including through the Spotlight Initiative and the Global Partnership for Action to Eliminate All Forms of HIV-related Stigma and Discrimination.

23. The UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director, ad interim, underscored the importance of tackling HIV via intersectionalities such as inequalities, structural barriers, sexual reproductive health and rights. UNDP and UNFPA were critical in those efforts addressing the needs of young adolescent girls, young people, and key populations, advocating for change of laws and policies and working to regain losses of the previous decade, including due to COVID-19, applying lessons from HIV to the current and future pandemics. The UBRAF indicator matrix was likewise critical in directing UNFPA and UNDP work to where it mattered most.

24. The Executive Board took note of the joint UNDP and UNFPA report on the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of UNAIDS ([DP-FPA/2022/1](#)).

IV. Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

25. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, the Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, and the Chief Financial Officer and Director of Administration, UNOPS, provided verbal updates on their organizations' protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, including within the COVID-19 pandemic context.

26. A group of delegations commended UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS leadership and commitment to protecting and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. They noted broad progress at all levels and welcomed efforts to address risk and cull lessons to create prevention and response systems and procedures in the spirit of zero tolerance. They drew attention to three core elements: the responsibility of implementing partners; transparent, safe, accountable reporting; and support to victims and survivors. Recognizing the importance of proactive, visible United Nations leadership, they commended the UNFPA Executive Director for her role as Inter-Agency Standing Committee Champion on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment. They highlighted the importance of strengthening interagency collaboration, particularly at country level and recommended close cooperation with the United Nations Office of the Special Coordinator on improving the United Nations response.

27. The group recognized the steps to operationalize the United Nations Protocol on the Provision of Assistance to Victims of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse with implementing partners and stressed that the capacity assessment for protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment for implementing partners was an important tool that assured partners' organizational capacities. They reiterated the importance of reporting all allegations through the Secretary-General's reporting mechanism and the annual protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment reporting mechanisms. They highlighted the need for timely, thorough victim/survivor-centred investigations. They recognized that UNDP had developed an internal standard operating procedure for victims and survivors and were keen for UNFPA and UNOPS to adopt similar tools. They welcomed the steps to operationalize improvements in risk analysis, mitigation, and community-based complaints mechanisms.

28. In individual interventions, delegations said Member States and the United Nations had a responsibility to strengthen policies that protect United Nations staff and the communities they serve through strategies that address underreporting and ensure effective review of allegations, including safe victim/survivor-centred investigations. Progress on the human rights front needed to be consolidated, focusing on punishing perpetrators and protecting victims. They supported the expanded application of clear checks to prevent rehiring of perpetrators, welcomed UNDP screening of broader categories of staff through the database, and encouraged the organizations to explore use of clear checks for implementing partners to ensure comprehensive screening in humanitarian and development sectors. They looked forward to working with UNFPA to make additional progress through effective prioritization of protection of sexual exploitation and abuse when implementing its Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. They were encouraged by the intention of UNOPS to integrate protection of sexual exploitation and abuse prevention in its project design implementation and site inspections. And they supported UNOPS offices' incorporation of protection of sexual exploitation and abuse in financial planning and contractual agreements with the private sector. They stressed that all stakeholders were responsible for meaningful progress in addressing the underlying drivers of

sexual exploitation and abuse, including gender inequality and discrimination, abuse of power, and other conditions that enable gender-based violence.

29. In response, the Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, said UNDP addressed sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment as a priority in its Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. UNDP supported Member States' call for long-term approaches that allowed it to ensure a consistent multi-year approach and make adjustments based on priorities. On its work with implementing partners, UNDP implementation of the United Nations protocol was ongoing; its project documents and other related agreements detailed its sexual exploitation and abuse standards, which were in line with the protocol. UNDP had set up a dedicated task team to support its country offices' engagement with implementing partners and was updating its guidelines to reflect the protocol in close partnership with United Nations organizations. UNDP conducted clear check verification for all implementing partners, which it was expanding to all recruitments and broadening to cover other contractual modalities. On underlying causes, UNDP worked actively on gender-based violence and gender equality issues as one of its key programmatic priorities.

30. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) said prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment was integral to the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. UNFPA used its leadership performance exercise to help ensure management met the required standards. To present the annual certifications to the Board, managers had to confirm they implemented their responsibilities at country level, in line with the UNFPA global action plan. Additional indicators would be included in 2022 to track oversight over implementing partners; and UNFPA continued to operationalize the United Nations protocol. To date, 60 per cent of implementing partners had been assessed. UNFPA was working with other United Nations organizations through the interagency implementing partners task force, which in 2022 would prioritize a joint approach to boost investigation capacities. Management guidance on preventing and responding to sexual harassment, including victims' assistance, included a resource packet for victims. At all levels, managers received mandatory training. UNFPA was the leader in addressing gender-based violence and the go-to place for victim's assistance at country level, in partnership with the United Nations Office of the Victims Rights Advocate.

31. The Chief Financial Officer and Director of Administration, UNOPS, said UNOPS enforced mandatory performance objectives for all managers as part of its gender parity priority. That included fostering an enabling, inclusive working environment promoting diversity and upholding zero tolerance, and a Speak-Up culture. UNOPS was implementing the United Nations protocol on implementing partners. UNOPS proactively addressed allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment by personnel and implementing partners, ensuring they were investigated and referred to the Vendor Review Committee if necessary; and victims received treatment. Senior UNOPS leaders were required to annually confirm their areas of responsibility were in full compliance with sexual exploitation and abuse protocols, and all personnel were screened through the clear checks process, regardless of contract type. The internal audit investigation report's standard operating procedures for handling sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment cases, including victim support, was currently being updated. Given the rise in domestic and gender-based violence, UNOPS developed guidance on supporting victims and ensuring access to expertise, including referrals to external resources.

32. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/2 on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

UNDP segment

Statement by the Administrator and interactive dialogue

33. In his opening remarks ([available on the UNDP website](#)), the UNDP Administrator highlighted the dichotomy of the global development situation where harsh realities cohabited with reason for hope. To bend the curve towards societies that flourish, the international community, including UNDP, needed to do three things well: (a) transition to a recovery from COVID-19 that made the world more equal, not less equal; (b) enable transformation to take root even in the midst of conflict, crisis and fragility; and (c) adapt/prepare more intentionally for a decarbonized, digital future. Those three challenges – reflected in the three directions of change of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, to leave no one behind, build resilience, and drive structural transformation – shaped the immediate next steps for UNDP. The #FutureSmartUNDP offered the benchmark for success.

34. In transitioning to recovery from COVID-19 and making the world more equal, UNDP and partners were engaging countries and communities to ensure access to vaccines and finance, while continuing a systemic push towards equality. That included realizing the World Health Organization (WHO) target to vaccinate at least 70 per cent of the global population in 2022. At global level, as part of the UNDP Data Futures Platform, UNDP, WHO and the University of Oxford created the Global Dashboard for Vaccine Equity, giving policymakers the tools to realize the vaccine's potential to drive socioeconomic recovery. On finance, UNDP helped Governments set up integrated financing strategies, using its technical lead of the United Nations COVID-19 socioeconomic response to find ways to finance countries' recovery plans. And UNDP was playing a catalytic role promoting public-private sector resource alignment for the Goals through tools such as investor maps and the new Insurance and Risk Finance Facility.

35. On the humanitarian front, UNDP sought to build a #FuturesSmartUNDP that was more anticipatory and preventive in crisis engagement and more agile and risk-informed in recovery response, focused on long-term rebuilding of social cohesion and sustaining peace. UNDP was working closely with United Nations organizations to complement humanitarian aid, as part of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and the Humanitarian Response Plan, creating stabilization programmes. Working at the humanitarian-development-peace intersection, UNDP programmes aimed to break the cycle of poverty and conflict by addressing the underlying causes of instability and unlocking the socioeconomic promise.

36. On climate, UNDP was working together with financing partners at country level through the UNDP Climate Promise, which supported 84 per cent of developing countries' nationally determined contributions (NDCs) ahead of the 2021 Climate Change Conference. Looking ahead, UNDP was focused on turning pledges into impact, using NDCs as sovereign investment plans for sustainable development and climate action. At home, the UNDP Greening Moonshot strategy aimed to reduce its carbon footprint by 50 per cent by 2050 while continuing its drive to be a digitally native organization, in line with its new digital strategy, 2022–2025. Through it, UNDP was helping countries develop inclusive, ethical, sustainable digital societies. At the heart of the strategy was the new UNDP enterprise resource planning platform, Quantum.

37. As the new Strategic Plan began in 2022, UNDP continued to focus on leaving no one behind, building resilience, and driving structural transformation. COVID-19 lessons showed UNDP responded rapidly and effectively, reaffirming its track record in supporting country capacities to manage crises and risks. Similarly, the mid-term

evaluation of the accelerator labs indicated UNDP had become more agile, as it continued to invest in thought leadership to drive development thinking and action through, for example, its gender social norms index and its Data Futures Platform. On reform, UNDP had successfully navigated the complexities of repositioning and devoted significant resources/expertise to the reinvigorated resident coordinator system. And it continued to service United Nations organizations through its Global Shared Services Centre, striving to optimize processes and systems for stability and efficiency of clustered services.

38. Looking ahead, UNDP sought deeper collaboration with its partners, including on development finance and digitalization – the Strategic Plan’s two enablers – through the commitment to multilateralism under Our Common Agenda. To realize its vision, UNDP together with its partners would focus on how it *programmed* – planning, aligning and managing groups of projects as portfolios and getting partners to invest differently; how it *partnered* – developing the processes, skills and legal instruments to become a catalytic organization for partners; and how it was *funded* – compelling partners to fund UNDP not on a project basis but at the integrated level of its country programmes.

39. A group of delegations underscored that UNDP was a trusted, reliable partner that played a crucial role driving forward the common endeavor to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring no one is left behind, especially in crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The new Strategic Plan would enable UNDP to continue to support countries in achieving the Goals and responding to COVID-19. UNDP investments in innovative approaches were strengthening its support to partners in responding to complex development challenges. They called on UNDP to implement the new Strategic Plan in the spirit of United Nations reform, strengthening collaboration between United Nations Sustainable Development Group organizations, and demonstrating joint United Nations impact through integrated resources and results frameworks. UNDP together with partners was well positioned to eradicate poverty and hunger in all its forms, reverse the consequences of climate change, ensure equal and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines, scale up investment in least developed countries (LDCs), and enhance its work through its six signature solutions and three enablers.

40. A second group of delegations underscored that the principal objective of the United Nations development system was to ensure effective support to national Governments in achieving the 2030 Agenda. United Nations development system entities should continue to support nationally determined priorities in achieving the Goals. The group encouraged UNDP to focus on: (a) realizing vaccine equity; (b) generating adequate financial resources to stimulate economic recovery in developing countries; (c) promoting universal access to social protection to save lives and livelihoods; (d) mobilizing adequate investment in quality, reliable, sustainable, resilient infrastructure in energy, communication, transport and technology; (e) implementing the Paris Agreement and Glasgow Climate Pact and adherence to the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and capabilities. They encouraged continued UNDP support to helping countries access Global Environment Fund and the Green Climate Fund resources.

41. A third group of delegations stressed that the strategic plans of UNDP, UNFPA, the United Nations Children’s Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) provided a blueprint for a stronger, more impactful United Nations development system positioned to lead collective efforts to deliver system-wide results for greater coherence, efficiency and effectiveness to realize the 2030 Agenda. They encouraged United Nations organizations to redouble joint planning, implementation, reporting and monitoring processes. The strategic plans should translate into operational and programmatic

documents in line with the Cooperation Frameworks, informed by the common country assessment, to strengthen the United Nations value proposition and joint impact, working through a coherent, coordinated United Nations country team under empowered resident coordinator leadership, including full adherence to a matrixed dual reporting model. They called on the United Nations system to share knowledge and best practices on partnerships to improve transparency, coherence, due diligence, accountability and impact, using the 2020 quadrennial review monitoring and reporting framework as guidance to deliver on commitments and report on common indicators. The organizations should report in a more harmonized manner on results jointly achieved based on the common and complementary indicators. Joint meetings of the Boards gave United Nations organizations the opportunity to share approaches for accelerated, system-wide, integrated, collective action on the 2030 Agenda; broad United Nations system participation was encouraged in upcoming joint meetings. They expected the organizations to develop programming based on collective outcomes informed by conflict-sensitive and gender and climate-responsive analyses.

42. A fourth group of delegations looked forward to the new UNDP gender equality strategy in 2022. The strategy should be bold, forward-looking, gender-transformative, and firmly based on interagency cooperation. It should identify and address the underlying causes of gender inequality and target the financing gap from which gender-related activities suffered. The strategy should be well-tuned to trends and the development landscape, and set out how UNDP would work with other United Nations organizations to contribute to a system-wide approach to achieve Goal 5. They called on UNDP to strengthen joint work with UN-Women and other stakeholders inside and outside the United Nations, systematically strengthen its gender architecture across regions, focused on crisis settings, position gender-responsive programming in peacebuilding and conflict prevention work, and ensure UNDP gender teams worked through the Climate Promise to reflect women's and girls' voices in programming. Adequate investments and resources were needed to match the strategy's ambition and reach the target of allocating 15 per cent of financial expenditures to initiatives that had gender equality and/or women's empowerment as their primary objective.

43. A fifth group of delegations said a tailored United Nations system response was needed to address the unique burdens of small island developing states (SIDS). In their workplans at global, regional and country levels, United Nations entities should align with the 2020 quadrennial review guidance on assessing the SIDS in light of full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Goals, with the understanding that the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway held the blueprint for the SIDS future. As such, United Nations entities' climate plans for SIDS were crucial given their particular vulnerability to the climate crisis. The SIDS were engaged actively in the multi-country office review process to ensure their needs were met through the repositioning of assets and personnel on the ground. SIDS also required better access to development financing. United Nations entities should therefore be prepared for the next SIDS "blueprint" to be adopted at the Fourth International Conference on SIDS in 2024.

44. In individual interventions, delegations welcomed the UNDP commitment to strengthening multilateralism and pursuing decarbonization and digitalization as innovative drivers of the 2030 Agenda and the Goals. UNDP technical expertise was also crucial in supporting countries climate response through the Climate Promise. Attention was drawn to the critical work of UNDP in supporting democratic institutions and strengthening rule of law programming. UNDP was encouraged to expand the use of digital platforms in its governance programming, focused on ever greater inclusivity. UNDP was also encouraged to continue developing its conflict

prevention offer and contribution to reinforcing system-wide efforts in that area through Cooperation Frameworks and country programmes.

45. In response, the Administrator assured the Board that eradication of poverty remained the bedrock of the UNDP development cooperation offer through multidimensional analyses and response strategies focused on inequality and vulnerability. Toward that end, UNDP was a principal enabler and facilitator helping countries access development finance. In that context, UNDP saw the urgent need to create an SDG stimulus that would drive development cooperation and achieve the 2030 Agenda. More broadly, UNDP saw the opportunity to play a more complementary role financing the 2030 Agenda more efficiently and effectively for the benefit of developing countries. That included helping provide regulatory frameworks and incentive systems that allowed private sector investments for inclusive socioeconomic recovery. UNDP always sought the Board's guidance and was staunchly committed to ensuring accountability, transparency and integrity in its work. Stressing the strains to the global financial system and importance of financing for an institution such as UNDP, he thanked Member States that chose to increase core contributions and multiyear finance agreements even during the pandemic.

46. UNDP supported and invested heavily in United Nations reform and the repositioned development system. UNDP joint engagements with United Nations organizations were based on the principles of comparative advantages and complementarities. He spoke for example of the unique UNDP role, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees, in regional humanitarian settings assisting refugees, an effort it sought to step up by replicating regional refugee resilience plans and using crises to invest in subregions and borderlands. He acknowledged the requests by Member States to invest heavily in gender equality but noted that donor contributions to support UNDP work in that areas had decreased over the years. UNDP would strengthen its work to embed gender perspectives in its mandated areas, including through better monitoring and reporting and dedicated financial investments. In that same spirit, UNDP was committed to fostering an inclusive organizational environment free from sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and all forms of discrimination, including racism. He underscored the commitment of UNDP staff who continued to serve and deliver throughout the pandemic. The new UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and #FutureSmartUNDP provided the pathway that UNDP together with its partners would pursue with determination to fulfil the promise of its new Strategic Plan and achieve the 2030 Agenda.

V. Human Development Report

47. The Director, Human Development Report Office, presented an oral report on the *Human Development Report 2021: Uncertain Times, Unsettled Lives: Shaping Our Future in a World in Transformation*, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [57/264](#).

48. A group of delegations said *Human Development Report* analysis and indicators were important tools for tracing sustainable, inclusive development and helped guide the United Nations system within the framework of Our Common Agenda, the 2030 Agenda, and the Goals. They welcomed the more intensive and inclusive consultations, dialogues and partnerships during the drafting process. They welcomed the dissemination of the report's knowledge and products by advancing online communications and data visualizations to reach and engage new groups, including youth. They looked forward to further exploration of metrics measuring planetary pressures to enhance understanding of countries' material consumption and carbon

footprints. They encouraged UNDP to continue to gather and analyse data and develop methods to track multidimensional human development through the gender equality and equal rights for all lenses. They looked forward to the work of the High-Level Panel on the Development of a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for SIDS and encouraged stakeholders to contribute to the panel's work. They called for even closer cooperation between UNDP and the Human Development Report Office.

49. In another intervention, a delegation sought details on the selection of groups that participated in the report's consultations and on whether new indices were added. The delegation also highlighted that the notion of "human security" addressed in the report was not a term agreed on by Member States.

50. In response, the Director, Human Development Report Office, said the adjustment to the human development index to reflect planetary pressures was developed in cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme and taken up by UNDP in its new Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. Globally, a number of countries and institutions, such as the World Bank and the international financial institutions, had shown interest in how the adjusted index could help advance development while easing planetary pressures. The office continued to support the evolution of the multidimensional vulnerability index under UNDP leadership to define vulnerability beyond income. Consultations for the report were undertaken in all UNDP regions where other United Nations organizations and experts also attended. Thematic consultations were organized to reach the greatest number of experts. "Human security", introduced in the 1994 report, was a notion the office continued to explore in the light of the United Nations Charter, though without seeking to define it. The office did not seek to add more formal indices though its work on metrics was always dynamically evolving.

51. The Executive Board took note of the presentation of the oral report on the *Human Development Report 2021*.

VI. Country programmes and related matters

52. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item and provided an overview of five regional programme documents, 15 country programme documents and 10 country programme extensions. In turn, the regional directors for Africa, the Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America and the Caribbean provided details from the regional perspectives.

53. Regarding the regional programme document for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP commitment to assisting the region's countries in their sustainable development work was welcome. The regional programme document, however, should more clearly reflect the UNDP mandate and commitment to support nationally defined development priorities in line with national plans and in consultation with the region's Governments. UNDP took note of those comments and committed to implement the regional programme in accordance with national priorities.

54. The Executive Board approved the regional programme documents, 2022–2025, for Africa (DP/RPD/RBA/4), Asia and the Pacific (DP/RPD/RAP/4), Arab States (DP/RPD/RAS/5), and Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (DP/RPD/REC/5). The Executive Board also approved the regional programme for Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/RPD/RLA/4), including the commitment to implement the regional programme in accordance with national priorities as orally agreed and recorded in the official record of the session.

55. The Executive Board, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, reviewed and approved the country programme document for Barbados (DP/DSP/CAR/4), Belize (DP/DCP/BLZ/4), El Salvador (DP/DCP/SLV/4), Guinea-Bissau (DP/DCP/GNB/3), Guyana (DP/DCP/GUY/4), Honduras (DP/DCP/HND/4), Jamaica (DP/DCP/JAM/4), Malaysia (DP/DCP/MYS/4), the Maldives (DP/DCP/MDV/4), Mozambique (DP/DCP/MOZ/4), Peru (DP/DCP/PER/4), Suriname (DP/DCP/SUR/4), Thailand (DP/DCP/THA/4), Trinidad and Tobago (DP/DCP/TTO/4), and Viet Nam (DP/DCP/VNM/3).

56. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, Haiti, Saudi Arabia and the first six-month extension of the country programme for Papua New Guinea, as approved by the Administrator and presented in document DP/2022/5.

57. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Algeria and Bahrain; the third one-year extensions of the country programmes for Afghanistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), and the sixth extension of the country programme for Yemen, as presented in document DP/2022/5, and the sixth extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic, as presented in documents DP/2022/5 and DP/2022/5/Add.1.

VII. Evaluation

58. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNDP, presented the IEO multiyear programme of work, 2022–2025 (DP/2022/6), the evaluation of UNDP support to youth economic empowerment (DP/2022/7), and the evaluation of UNDP support to energy access and transition (DP/2022/9). The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, provided the management response to the evaluation of UNDP support to youth economic empowerment (DP/2022/8), and the management response to the evaluation UNDP support to energy access and transition (DP/2022/10).

IEO multiyear programme of work, 2022–2025

59. Support was expressed for the IEO programme of work and its mapping of institutional, thematic and country programme evaluations, which provided useful information and insight to the Board on UNDP performance and helped it learn and improve. Despite management's steps to address the challenges country offices faced in conducting decentralized evaluations, a delegation emphasized that progress was slow and the quality of most decentralized evaluations remained low. The delegation stressed the importance of improving decentralized evaluations, particularly for vertical funds such as the Global Environment Facility and Green Climate Fund. IEO and management were requested to present a plan to the Board to improve decentralized evaluations. IEO was praised for its timely, relevant, high-quality evaluation work that allowed Member States to fulfil their oversight role and they commended UNDP management's readiness to actively use evaluation recommendations to strengthen development impact.

Evaluation of UNDP support to youth economic empowerment

60. Strong UNDP connections at the local level were seen as critical for a renewed focus on local youth engagement, mainstreaming at regional and country levels, and sustainable private sector partnerships to ensure alignment of skills and demand for youth employment. UNDP was encouraged to foster business enabling environments to incentivize private investment and private firm growth, reduce enterprise informality, and merge businesses into the formal economy, especially in vulnerable

country contexts. UNDP was commended for its tailored work with rural youth, particularly in technology and digital services, and should address differential socioeconomic needs and deep-rooted inequalities in future strategies and programming.

Evaluation of UNDP support to energy access and transition

61. UNDP was encouraged to play a stronger role incorporating adaptation in climate impacts and disaster resilience in its energy access and transition assistance. UNDP should incorporate and prioritize energy access for the most marginalized, using its gender equality strategy's framework for gender-responsive energy programming, and strengthen its understanding of energy access needs of persons with disabilities to inform policies and programming priorities. Given the short-term, project-based nature of UNDP work in the energy sector, UNDP was encouraged to rebalance its public sector engagement to ensure sustained private sector engagement and leverage private sector experiences of newly emerging economies as a way to ensure local, sustainable solutions. Given past allegations of irregularities in its portfolio, UNDP was urged to provide stronger oversight to projects and ensure they were administered in accordance with the highest transparency, accountability and ethical standards. A data-informed approach was recommended to assess impact and inform UNDP energy work in support of the 2030 Agenda.

62. In response, the Director, Independent Evaluation Office, stressed the office's commitment to UNDP in achieving its mandate through stronger learning and accountability. IEO and UNDP management would present a plan to the Board to improve the quality and coverage of decentralized evaluations, including for UNDP vertical funds. He expressed appreciation for UNDP efforts to address the IEO recommendation to differentiate the needs of youth and marginalized groups and commented that the short-term nature of UNDP energy access and transition work was a matter of concern raised in the evaluation. As for taking a more programmatic and portfolio approach, IEO welcomed the proposal to balance the participation of national actors under Governments' leadership to promote public-private partnerships. IEO welcomed calls for strengthened management oversight on this topic, especially given the size of investments in the energy portfolio.

63. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, said given the short-term nature of UNDP energy access and transition projects private sector partnerships were crucial for sustainable solutions. UNDP would build on results achieved in its energy access and transition portfolio to mobilize funding through the international financial institutions, the private sector, and vertical funds. UNDP was committed to accountability and transparency and would pursue an organization-wide approach to energy access and transition, building on its governance and other capacities to pinpoint interlinkages.

64. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/3 on UNDP evaluation.

VIII. United Nations Volunteers

65. The UNDP Associate Administrator introduced the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) strategic framework, 2022–2025 (DP/2022/11). The UNV Executive Coordinator presented the new strategic framework in detail, highlighting the three main outcome areas, the differences between the current (2018–2021) and the new framework (2022–2025), and the UNV integrated role within the United Nations development system.

66. Across the Board, delegations welcomed the new UNV strategic framework, 2022–2025, its three priority areas, the inclusive drafting process, and alignment with the 2020 quadrennial review. They commended UNV for its progress implementing the strategic framework, 2018–2021, and its digital transformation. UNV efforts led to over 10,000 volunteers serving the United Nations system worldwide. They welcomed UNV efforts to contribute to a people-centred United Nations that allowed UNV to respond effectively to the needs of the system through deployment of qualified international, national and online volunteers. They welcomed UNV focus on mainstreaming integration and representation of women, persons with disabilities, refugees and marginalized groups to ensure no one is left behind.

67. A group of delegations appreciated that the new strategic framework built on lessons from the independent evaluation of the previous framework, 2018–2021, which confirmed UNV contributed to United Nations system work by providing flexible, timely and effective volunteer solutions, including for COVID-19. They commended UNV for quickly adapting to the pandemic, mobilizing national and community-level volunteers as part of the United Nations system-wide response while enabling the system to benefit from online volunteering services. They highlighted that UN-Volunteers contributed to stepping up global vaccination efforts, including COVAX roll-out. They appreciated the new framework’s focus on how UNV could strengthen harmonization and coherence across the United Nations system and contribute to implementing the reform agenda. They applauded UNV plans to reach geographically representative staff and further invest in and empower a decentralized global UNV presence. They encouraged UNV to continue to promote gender equality, diversity and inclusion in its work and across the United Nations system.

68. Another group of delegations highlighted the UNV contribution to addressing the climate crisis. They welcomed the stronger focus in the new strategic framework on data, evidence and knowledge-sharing for better integration of volunteerism in United Nations collective action plans. They encouraged UNV to deepen multi-stakeholder partnerships with academia, volunteer organizations, civil society and the private sector to accelerate achievement of the 2030 Agenda. They strongly supported UNV efforts to mainstream volunteerism in the Cooperation Frameworks, enable youth engagement, and mainstream integration and representation of women, persons from the global South, and other marginalized groups. A delegation noted the reference to the Secretary-General’s report, *Our Common Agenda*, in the UNV strategic framework and stressed that the report was still undergoing intergovernmental negotiations and should only be referenced in line with resolution [76/6](#). They encouraged Member States to consider contributing unearmarked funding to the Special Voluntary Fund which allowed UNV to respond to crises in a timely manner.

69. In response, the UNV Executive Coordinator said UNV was committed to ensuring UN-Volunteers remained at the frontline of the COVID-19 response and to supporting the vaccination campaigns. Throughout the pandemic, the vast majority of UN-Volunteers were national and community volunteers. UNV would build on the many positive experiences of UN-Volunteers across the globe to take their support to the next level while deepening its multi-stakeholder partnerships at country level. He confirmed that *Our Common Agenda* was mentioned in the draft strategic framework in line with resolution [76/6](#). He welcomed Member States commitment to UNV and the Special Volunteer Fund, an indispensable source of funding for UNV.

70. The Executive Board took note of the UNV strategic framework, 2022–2025.

IX. United Nations Capital Development Fund

71. The UNDP Associate Administrator introduced the new United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) strategic framework, 2022–2025 (DP/2022/12) and the UNCDF Executive Secretary presented the new strategic framework in greater detail.

72. Across the board, delegations welcomed the new strategic framework and commended UNCDF for the informative, inclusive drafting process, including engagement in the 5th United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which built on existing work and past experiences, while developing new thematic priorities upon request from LDCs. They recognized the unique UNCDF role within the United Nations development system in mobilizing financing for LDCs, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, digital financial inclusion and local-level actions. Predictable, flexible, adequate funding, along with access to core funding, was highlighted as crucial to meeting the growing demands for UNCDF support. Delegations encouraged Member States to consider contributing to UNCDF core resources.

73. A group of delegations said the strategic framework, 2022–2025 would allow UNCDF to strengthen cohesiveness and partnerships with United Nations development system in line with the 2020 quadrennial review. They noted that the new framework's alignment with the Doha Programme of Action for LDCs was critical to ensuring LDCs successfully achieved sustainable development. They called on UNCDF to focus on: (a) risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) financing; (c) climate change; and (d) LDC graduation.

74. A second group of delegations expressed support for UNCDF work in LDCs where it had proven its important role in development efforts through innovative financing and unlocking resources to work for the most vulnerable communities. They called for adequate resources for UNCDF to continue to be fit-for-purpose at a time when countries were struggling to cope with COVID-19, climate change, biodiversity loss, food insecurity, debt and other challenges. They recognized that with its unique hybrid mandate within the United Nations system, UNCDF had a unique asset and delivery capacity for Member States. They stressed that UNCDF deserved the full support of the Board.

75. A third group of delegations welcomed UNCDF work in women's economic empowerment, its inclusion of biodiversity finance, and development of the Investment Platform. They called on UNCDF to continue to support Governments and other public authorities in LDCs to achieve the Goals, using a strong gender lens and filling the gap in development financing architecture. UNCDF was well positioned to support local actions through subnational finance that connected local actors to sources of capital, serving as the United Nations flagship entity for catalytic transformative financing in LDCs. They encouraged United Nations entities to seek partnerships with UNCDF and learn from its rich expertise in innovative finance. UNCDF should seek ways to incentivize private investors to contribute to non-core or flexible non-core resources on a larger scale. They encouraged UNCDF to continue to provide last-mile financing, deploy instruments where financing sources were scarce, support partners in strengthening national governance capacities for increased development financing, push forward gender mainstreaming and women's economic empowerment, and make use of its comparative advantages.

76. A fourth group of delegations welcomed the three game-changers (outcomes) in the new framework, which were aligned with LDC priorities. They welcomed UNCDF focus on serving the last mile as it filled an important gap in the development finance system. They expressed appreciation for UNCDF work in blended finance and counted on UNCDF to scale up blended finance mechanisms across more

countries. UNCDF was well positioned to support the new Doha Programme of Action for the LDCs calling for more innovative, catalytic blended financing for small businesses and investment projects in LDCs, in particular through the UNCDF BRIDGE Facility. They welcomed UNCDF support to mobilizing finance at the local level to channel climate finance to local authorities. They welcomed that UNCDF would further deepen its support for financing solutions in women's economic empowerment, climate, energy, biodiversity, and sustainable food systems.

77. In response, the UNDP Associate Administrator said UNCDF was a critical facilitator in scaling finance through its innovative and catalytic instruments and its blended finance approaches in areas such as climate, food security, women's empowerment and infrastructure. She conveyed that it was possible to persuade the private sector to be a partner at the table with LDCs, thanks to entities such as UNCDF which helped bring about development transformation through catalytic instruments.

78. The UNCDF Executive Secretary thanked the Board for its active engagement and support to the UNCDF new Strategic Framework, and shared that in its private sector funding portfolio UNCDF maintained strong partnerships with philanthropic foundations such as the Gates Foundation and the MasterCard Foundation. Private sector funding rose by 24 per cent in 2021 but more was needed. UNCDF planned to continue to develop and deploy innovative financing instruments that would channel more money to small and medium enterprises and investment projects in the LDCs, and it agreed to keep the Board updated on its progress in that regard.

79. The Executive Board took note of the UNCDF strategic framework, 2022–2025.

X. United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

80. The UNDP Associate Administrator introduced the new United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) strategic framework, 2022–2025 (DP/CF/SSC/7). The UNOSSC Director presented the new strategic framework in greater detail, highlighting UNOSSC work to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation.

81. Across the board, delegations welcomed the ambitious, timely UNOSSC strategic framework, 2022–2025, to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation by advancing policymaking and implementation, strengthening United Nations capacity to provide support, and promoting knowledge exchange, capacity and technology development and transfer. They highlighted the unique role of South-South and triangular cooperation in implementing the 2030 Agenda, eradicating poverty, addressing the COVID-19 crisis, and building back better and more inclusive. They recognized the pandemic's lessons underscored the central UNOSSC role in facilitating, supporting and enhancing South-South and triangular cooperation. They highlighted that transparency and accountability were essential for development cooperation effectiveness and should remain guiding principles for UNOSSC. They commended UNDP for providing UNOSSC with the institutional, financial and operational support to carry out its responsibilities.

82. A group of delegations affirmed that the new strategic framework would help UNOSSC strengthen its key role, and recognized the important role of the South Centre in enhancing South-South cooperation. They encouraged UNOSSC to contribute to United Nations development system reform by ensuring better harmonization and coherence on South-South cooperation in the United Nations system, with Member States, civil society and other partners, and by streamlining efforts to strengthen international cooperation to achieve the 2030 Agenda. They welcomed the new framework's focus on integrating women's empowerment and

gender equality in all work programmes, and they encouraged UNOSSC to mainstream integration and representation of women, persons with disabilities, refugees and marginalized groups to ensure no one is left behind.

83. Another group of delegations expressed strong support for the UNOSSC mandate as articulator of South-South cooperation in the United Nations system. They appreciated UNOSSC close interaction with the Group of 77 and China and its achievements under the strategic framework, 2018–2021. They welcomed that the new framework incorporated the principles and objectives of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the Nairobi outcome document, the BAPA+40 outcome document, and General Assembly resolutions. The new framework would help galvanize the United Nations system-wide strategy on South-South and triangular cooperation and a coordinated approach to United Nations South-South policy and programme of work. It was noted that UNOSSC should only use internationally agreed terminology in reports and decisions as agreed by Member States. They highlighted that middle income countries (MICs) had increased their role in South-South cooperation, contributing to a more inclusive global development agenda; they called on UNOSSC to continue to leverage its partnerships with MICs. They stressed the importance of sufficient, sustainable funding of UNOSSC, and encouraged Member States to contribute more generously to UNOSSC through the United Nations Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation and the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation.

84. In response, the UNDP Associate Administrator stressed that South-South and triangular cooperation were vital to helping less developed and vulnerable countries progress on their development pathways. The tools in the new UNOSSC strategic framework such as knowledge co-creation and the solution lab were would help accelerate cooperation among countries.

85. The UNOSSC Director assured the Board that UNOSSC would work with all United Nations development system organizations to mainstream South-South cooperation in development programming in light of United Nations reform. Close coordination and coherence among United Nations entities were key to fostering the benefits of South-South cooperation at regional and country levels. UNOSSC would continue to support the unique needs of MICs and only use internationally agreed terminology in its reports and decisions as agreed by Member States. He drew attention to the benefits of the Global South-South Development Expo as a platform for Member States to advance the potential of South-South cooperation.

86. The Executive Board took note of the UNOSSC strategic framework, 2022–2025.

UNFPA segment

Statement by the Executive Director

87. In her address ([available on the UNFPA website](#)), the Executive Director stressed that protecting against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment was a UNFPA priority. The Fund had commissioned an independent review on the humanitarian sector, which pointed to what was needed to collectively bring an end to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. That understanding was integral to the new Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 – an ambitious roadmap to transform UNFPA to better reach the world’s most vulnerable. It was a call to accelerate and step up efforts, transform programmes, motivate partners, and prioritize those left furthest behind. UNFPA would achieve that ambition through people, creativity and partnerships, she said.

88. The Strategic Plan contributes directly to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, offering pathways to tackle harmful gender norms and deep-seated inequalities, investing in youth, protecting the bodily autonomy of women and girls – as their “bodyright” – and prioritizes prevention and preparedness, including in humanitarian settings. As part of its leadership of the Generation Equality action coalition, UNFPA sought to redefine bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights as the game-changer it becomes when a girl understands her human rights and claims the respect that is her birthright.

89. The Strategic Plan seeks to enhance engagement with other United Nations organizations and leverage United Nations reforms to support the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in the spirit of the Secretary-General’s “Our Common Agenda” to eliminate inequalities. UNFPA was expanding its collaboration with traditional and new partners, including businesses, academia, women- and youth-led organizations, and international financial institutions.

90. Through its programmes, UNFPA was responding to the demands of programme countries for tailored assistance. The Fund was operationalizing all country programmes in alignment with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks. UNFPA remains committed to its normative role and to delivering what women and girls expressly demand: access to family planning reproductive health care, and protection from all forms of violence and abuse. UNFPA remains field-focused, with 88 per cent of its budget channelled to the field and 84 per cent on programmes.

91. Internally, UNFPA was working to make its structure, systems, processes and organizational culture “fit-for-purpose” to achieve transformative results and implement the internal changes required to react, adapt and innovate. That included the new Enterprise Resources Planning system, the new Supply Chain Management Unit, and the new Reproductive Health Bridging Fund. Through better orientation programmes, leadership training, professional development and succession planning, the People Strategy would help UNFPA recruit, nurture and retain a talented workforce.

92. To leave no one behind, UNFPA was leveraging data and evidence aimed at making the vulnerable visible. Following the recent COVID-19-related disruptions, the largest ever number of countries planning censuses – 56 countries in 2022 and 20 in 2023 – marked a new upward trend. In addition, initiatives such as the UNFPA Geospatial Dashboard on Intimate Partner Violence provided access to disaggregated data at local levels to help policymakers understand and pinpoint solutions. UNFPA was helping countries to harness the demographic dividend and tackle low fertility and ageing. The launch of the Decade of Demographic Resilience in December 2021 was set to help countries galvanize joint action to understand and fully harness these opportunities.

93. Total funding in 2021 rose to a record high of over \$1.4 billion. Co-financing contributions totalled \$994 million and core funding was at near-record levels. In 2021, government pledges increased by 10 per cent while programme country contributions rose more than 130 per cent. UNFPA mobilized nearly \$56 million in partnership funds with the World Bank and international financial institutions, and private-sector funding also saw an increase. The flexibility and stability of core funding remained crucial to ensure UNFPA delivered its mandate. The Strategic Plan supported a focus on financing the ICPD agenda. By leveraging UNFPA core resources, the new Strategic Investment Facility would help to bring projects to scale by mobilizing greater sums from domestic government resources, international

financial institutions' concessional loans, in-country donor contributions and private sector investments.

94. Humanitarian funding was at an all-time high – \$332 million – representing about one-third of total co-financing resources. For the first time, the Strategic Plan contained a specific outcome on humanitarian action, focused on strengthening UNFPA preparedness, response capacity and systems. UNFPA had recently launched its largest humanitarian appeal, calling for \$835 million to provide sexual and reproductive health and protection services to more than 54 million women, girls and young people in 61 countries in 2022. Total contributions to UNFPA Supplies for 2021 reached \$165 million. The Executive Director appealed for additional support so partner countries could address the growing reproductive health needs of youth populations.

95. Towards the end of the Executive Director's statement, the UNFPA Regional Director for the Asia and the Pacific delivered remarks on UNFPA work to address gender-based violence in both protracted and sudden onset humanitarian crises in the region, noting that was an area in which UNFPA led inter-agency coordination in humanitarian settings. In Afghanistan, UNFPA, building on existing interventions and its experience during the past decade, quickly repositioned its programme into humanitarian interventions to meet urgent needs. UNFPA work on pre-positioning humanitarian supplies helped to speed up humanitarian responses across the region. In the Philippines, following Super Typhoon Rai in December 2021, the timely distribution of supplies and coordination of survivor-centred medical and psychosocial services supported the response to gender-based violence survivors, including those with disabilities. In Tonga, UNFPA was working with the Government and Tongan organizations of persons with disabilities to prioritize the protection needs of women and girls affected by the recent volcanic eruption. Across the region, UNFPA was connecting emergency responses to its longer-term development work, to address root causes of gender-based violence and strengthen national prevention and response capacities.

96. A group of delegations commended the Executive Director's leadership and the dedication and contribution of UNFPA staff in response to the pandemic. UNFPA had been a fundamental ally of Governments in maintaining access to essential health services, especially for women and girls. UNFPA was a leader in addressing the "shadow pandemic" – the rise in sexual and gender-based violence and violence against women and girls – and eradicating all forms of violence and discrimination against all women and girls. Working under the Strategic Plan, UNFPA would pursue its human rights-based approach to reach the furthest behind and continue to adapt to new contexts and challenges, in close cooperation with United Nations system entities, to achieve the three transformative results. Oversight and accountability remained critical, grounded in the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system ([A/RES/75/233](#)) and the recommendations of the Board of Auditors. They commended UNFPA for its work in developing strategic public and private partnerships and innovative financing approaches to mobilize resources and further close funding gaps.

97. Another group of delegations stressed that the new strategic plans of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women provided a blueprint for a stronger, more impactful United Nations development system that positioned the system to lead collective efforts to deliver system-wide results for greater coherence, efficiency and effectiveness for the realization of the 2030 Agenda. The challenges of the Decade of Action underscored the need for joint United Nations action to achieve long-term development results and build capacities and enabling environments to accelerate implementation of the Goals, and mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment. The delegations encouraged United Nations organizations to redouble

joint planning, implementation, reporting and monitoring processes. They asked that strategic plans be translated into operational and programmatic documents, in line with Cooperation Frameworks and informed by common country assessments. This, along with the collective support of United Nations entities and the matrixed dual reporting model for mutual and collective performance appraisals, as defined in General Assembly resolutions [72/279](#) and [76/4](#), would strengthen the United Nations' value proposition and joint impact of country teams under the leadership of resident coordinators.

98. The delegations called on the United Nations development system to share knowledge and best practices on partnerships to improve transparency, coherence, due diligence, accountability and impact, using the quadrennial comprehensive policy review monitoring and reporting framework as guidance to deliver on commitments and report on common indicators. They asked the organizations to report in a more harmonized manner on results jointly achieved, based on the common and complementary indicators requested in Board decision 2021/14. Noting joint meetings of the Boards gave United Nations organizations the opportunity to share approaches for accelerated, system-wide, integrated, collective action for achieving the 2030 Agenda, they encouraged broad United Nations system participation in upcoming joint meetings. They expected organizations to develop programming based on collective outcomes and informed by conflict-sensitive and gender and climate-responsive analyses. They reiterated their commitment to United Nations reform, including full integration of the humanitarian and political pillars.

99. In individual interventions, delegations recognized the ambition of the Strategic Plan, grounded in the ICPD Programme of Action, and UNFPA work to translate that vision into results, including to overcome the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the most vulnerable. They welcomed the UNFPA role in the system-wide COVID-19 response as the lead agency for maternal health, youth and gender and the strengthened UNFPA humanitarian focus. They called on UNFPA to work at the women-climate change interface and set up regional and subregional hubs to ensure life-savings services were accessible to all. The delegations commended UNFPA for deftly navigating between countries experiencing growing populations and a young cohort while others face low fertility and aging populations. They expressed strong support for UNFPA work as the 2021 Inter-Agency Standing Committee Champion on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. They recognized UNFPA support to countries through South-South and triangular cooperation, meeting the challenges of COVID-19 and addressing sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. They highlighted the potential of digitalization to ensure rapid service delivery, raise awareness, disseminate information and put girls back on track in education and health. They encouraged UNFPA to focus foremost on the ICPD Programme of Action and be guided by national ownership and leadership and nationally defined priorities and goals.

100. In response, the Executive Director welcomed the Bureau's guidance that UNFPA focus on the three transformative results, building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing the "shadow pandemic" of gender-based violence, reaching the most vulnerable women and girls, and engaging the women-climate interface. She welcomed the emphasis on innovation and digitalization and the need for boldness and calculated risks to scale up results. The pandemic highlighted the need for universal health coverage as a key element of resilient health systems. She noted that the UNFPA People Strategy was important for enhancing its knowledge-based interventions. UNFPA was working to address misinformation and disinformation about the pandemic as well as issues such as contraception. The fund's ability to leverage data through censuses, surveys and system-wide metadata was

crucial for agile programming to leave no one behind. On peace and security, the protection and engagement of youth remains a prominent area of its expertise; UNFPA would continue to partner with the Peacebuilding Support Office on women, peace and security issues. In addition, UNFPA would also continue to support the “peace in the home” agenda.

101. UNFPA was fully committed to United Nations reform and to ensuring the principles of mutual accountability with resident coordinators, in line with the management accountability framework were practiced. All UNFPA country programmes were fully derived from Cooperation Frameworks and the UNFPA Strategic Plan contributed directly to the achievement of the Goals, in line with the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review and the common and complimentary output indicators shared with other organizations, including on effectiveness and efficiency. UNFPA sought to be a leader in data generation for the 2030 Agenda. The new UNFPA business model offered five modes of engagement – advocacy and policy; knowledge management; capacity development; service delivery; and coordination and partnerships and South-South and triangular cooperation – that maximized its ability to rapidly deliver results with agility on the ground through a tailored approach and customized solutions, not only in its mandated areas but also in emerging areas, such as ageing, low fertility, infertility, climate change and people on the move, including refugees.

XI. Country programmes and related matters

102. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) provided an overview of 12 country programme documents, one subregional programme, and seven country programme extensions. In turn, the UNFPA regional directors for Asia and the Pacific, East and Southern Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and West and Central Africa elaborated on their respective regional perspectives.

103. Several delegations provided supportive statements to the country programmes.

104. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Argentina ([DP/FPA/CPD/ARG/1](#)), Cameroon ([DP/FPA/CPD/CMR/8](#)), El Salvador ([DP/FPA/CPD/SLV/9](#)), Eritrea ([DP/FPA/CPD/ERI/6](#)), Guinea-Bissau ([DP/FPA/CPD/GNB/7](#)), Honduras ([DP/FPA/CPD/HND/9](#)), Malaysia ([DP/FPA/CPD/MYS/1](#)), Maldives ([DP/FPA/CPD/MDV/7](#)), Mozambique ([DP/FPA/CPD/MOZ/10](#)), Peru ([DP/FPA/CPD/PER/10](#)), Thailand ([DP/FPA/CPD/THA/12](#)) and Viet Nam ([DP/FPA/CPD/VNM/10](#)), as well as the subregional programme for the Dutch- and English-speaking Caribbean ([DP/FPA/CPD/CAR/7](#)).

105. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil and Haiti, and approved the second one-year extensions for Afghanistan and Algeria, the third one-year extension for the country programme for Venezuela, the sixth one-year extension for Yemen, and the sixth, six-month extension for the Syrian Arab Republic, as contained in document [DP/FPA/2022/3](#).

XII. Evaluation

106. The Director, Evaluation Office, presented the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan ([DP/FPA/2022/1](#)), prepared in line with the UNFPA evaluation policy ([DP/FPA/2019/1](#)), relevant Executive Board decisions and the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review.

107. A group of delegations commended the Evaluation Office for its flexibility in adapting the evaluation function to the COVID-19 context and expressed full support for measures taken to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on evaluations and enable them to function as an accelerator for recovery. They also commended the office's excellent performance in 2021, achieving almost all targets of the key performance indicators. They welcomed the comprehensive quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan aligned with the development and organizational effectiveness results set out in the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. They noted that evaluations would be key to informing the progress of implementation and the midterm review of the Strategic Plan and improving UNFPA organizational and United Nations system performance.

108. The group appreciated the fund's commitment to further strengthening the evaluation function, especially through additional investments in the Evaluation Office and continued engagement to address the challenge of timely delivery of high-quality decentralized evaluations. They called on UNFPA to continue investing in the quality and the methodological validity of decentralized evaluations and to ensuring country teams were equipped to manage and commission such evaluations. They valued the office's commitment and active support to United Nations reform and system-wide and joint evaluations and commended the office for harmonizing and aligning evaluations with United Nations system partners and for engaging with United Nations system-wide evaluation efforts, including the United Nations System-wide Evaluation Unit. They welcomed the positive trend regarding the UNFPA evaluation expenditure ratio.

109. A separate delegation expressed appreciation for the importance UNFPA accorded to the budget evaluation process and expected that throughout the process UNFPA would exercise careful control over evaluation quality to ensure objectivity and validity of the outcome. The delegation encouraged UNFPA to make better use of findings to effectively improve the science of decision-making and efficient use of funds.

110. In response, the Director, Evaluation Office, reassured the Board that the office had a robust system of quality assurance and control for all evaluations at all levels. This applied to both centralized and decentralized evaluations. He recognized the office had displayed flexibility throughout the evaluation function during the COVID-19 context, achieving almost all targets of the key performance indicators and actively supporting United Nations reform by harmonizing and aligning evaluation efforts with those of other United Nations partner organizations. The office continued to address the remaining challenges of decentralized evaluations, including by investing in their quality and methodological validity. The evaluations listed in the evaluation plan were fully funded and protected, both for centralized and decentralized evaluations. The Evaluation Office would provide the Board additional detailed information, as requested, on the projected evaluation expenditure ratio for 2020–2025.

111. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/4 on the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2022–2025.

UNOPS segment

XIII. United Nations Office for Project Services

Statement by the Executive Director

112. In her address ([available on the UNOPS website](#)), the UNOPS Executive Director framed UNOPS work within the larger global development and political context and efforts to accelerate progress towards the Goals. On the COVID-19 front, UNOPS had undertaken more than 110 projects in over 80 countries to support Member States and partners in their pandemic response. That work focused on improving national health systems, delivering medical supplies and equipment, refurbishing hospitals, expanding testing capacity, and procuring life-saving supplies and medical equipment.

113. Despite the challenges of 2020, UNOPS had delivered at an unprecedented scale. The previous two years had been the most successful in its history, a sign of Member States' trust. The Board's decision 2021/20 to approve the new level for the minimum operational reserve was a case in point. And because of its operating model – funded solely through project cost recovery – UNOPS was keen to gain the Board's guidance on a decision to further strengthen its reserves and allow for a review of UNOPS pricing for the benefit of partners and the peoples it served.

114. Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, activities began in 2022. UNOPS priorities remained quality infrastructure, improved public procurement, and the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation initiative (S3i). Throughout its work, UNOPS would continue to contribute to peace and security, humanitarian response, and global development efforts with other United Nations organizations, including in the most difficult settings where most of its delivery took place. The new plan, guided by partners' priorities, also addressed the climate emergency and public health systems.

115. UNOPS research collaboratives revealed that quality infrastructure was key to sustainable, inclusive and resilient health systems and to achieving the Goals. UNOPS continued to build partners' capacities to use public procurement to achieve the Goals, combat climate change, tackle corruption and reduce inequality, and drive greater efficiency, transparency, and effectiveness in public spending. That in turn helped to improve access to healthcare and better public health systems. S3i aimed to expand resources available beyond official development assistance (ODA) models to address critical national infrastructure needs such as affordable housing, renewable energy, and health. Half way through the S3i proof of concept period, UNOPS encountered difficulties and successes, as highlighted in the UNOPS report on the S3i reserve ([DP/OPS/2022/2](#)). UNOPS was committed to improving the initiative and in 2024 it would submit along with strategic plan mid-term review a comprehensive evaluation of S3i.

116. In other areas, in September 2021 UNOPS reached gender parity, and gender mainstreaming was mandatory for all relevant projects. UNOPS was committed to inclusiveness that went beyond gender equality, which it would present in its new gender, diversity, and inclusion strategy. UNOPS pursued the highest ethical standards in its work even as it carried ethics risks in how it operated and supported clients. In 2022, UNOPS was stepping up efforts on social and environmental safeguards, especially for health and safety, through its Goal Zero approach. That meant zero workplace incidents, injuries, and illness and included awareness activities, training, mandatory inspections, and reporting for all personnel. This went hand-in-hand with investing in digitization, improving practices, streamlining processes, and adopting new technologies and innovative practices.

117. A group of delegations stressed the need to support healthcare systems through the COVID-19 crisis using UNOPS comparative advantages and technical expertise in its mandated areas. They appreciated that despite breakdowns in supply chains and the global movement of people and goods, UNOPS continued to deliver critical services at an unprecedented scale, even in complex humanitarian settings. They encouraged UNOPS to continue to work with the United Nations system to jointly respond to drivers of conflicts, disaster risks, humanitarian crises, and complex emergencies to ensure no one is left behind. They commended UNOPS actions to conduct prudent fiscal management and adjust the level of its reserves to its risk profile. They welcomed UNOPS intent to further review its pricing model and continue to ensure greater value for money, providing assurances to its partners that commitments would be met. They commended UNOPS for prioritizing the S3i as part of its Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and its actions to structure its reserves to ensure stability for S3i, with Board approval. They looked forward to the comprehensive review of S3i in 2023 to consider the broader picture, lessons, successes and prospects. They commended UNOPS for achieving gender parity and appreciated its commitment to gender diversity and inclusion.

118. In other interventions, delegations expressed strong support for S3i and its focus on affordable housing, renewable energy, and health infrastructure, as well as for UNOPS continued pursuit of excellence and innovation in its work, in particular through digitalization of operations. New digital technologies aimed at greater efficiency and streamlining should continue to underpin UNOPS quest to improve its operational capabilities. UNOPS was encouraged to join the Global Development Initiative focused on accelerating implementing of the Goals at the local level. It was noted that UNOPS should avoid referencing the Our Common Agenda report as Member States had not yet adopted a consolidated position. Delegations from the SIDS welcomed UNOPS valued engagement in their push to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the Goals, the SAMOA Pathway, and in response to COVID-19. They underscored their concern that lack of scalable projects meant SIDS might be overlooked and stressed that in addressing SIDS unique vulnerabilities UNOPS should pursue more tailored approaches, including through S3i.

119. In response, the Executive Director said that with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda UNOPS understood the need to pursue bold initiatives to achieve it and mobilize financing that went beyond ODA, an approach well suited to its business model. UNOPS was ready to work with the Board to better define the risks involved and build a stronger approach, addressing the needs of the UNOPS reserves and the risks in its portfolio. Because UNOPS functioned on low margins despite challenging market dynamics, its operational reserves added a level of security. Fees to maintain those reserves were earned through professional asset management and not extracted from project funding. Transparency of its operational reserves such as S3i was a top UNOPS priority. UNOPS sought to step up its partnerships both within the United Nations, with the Board, and with external partners to ensure it fulfilled its mandate.

120. The Director, Regional Portfolios said that as a client-oriented organization UNOPS pursued an agile, flexible approach, assisting Governments to implement their own solutions to crises such as COVID-19. In addition, through its global COVID response task force and fast-track approval process for COVID projects, 85 per cent of UNOPS COVID-19 response projects were undertaken with existing partners and Governments, building on already established trust and common work, as well as its flexible emergency procurement procedures.

121. The Director, Implementation Practices and Standards said UNOPS proven expertise in transactional procurement allowed it to rapidly respond to urgent needs during the pandemic and build national response capacity to help design policy, structural and process improvements through national systems and resilient supply

chains, accruing savings and impact. UNOPS supported Governments in de-risking investments for climate resilient and inclusive infrastructure through planning and finance decisions, buttressed by high quality data and analysis. UNOPS planned to scale up that approach to inform Governments' evidence-based decision-making.

122. The General Counsel and Director, New York Liaison Office said UNOPS had undertaken its first equity arrangement and partnered with the Danish International Fund for Development and a private sector firm in India. In this arrangement, UNOPS would provide operational support in handling environmental, social and governance monitoring to attract private sector resources and work toward social and economic goals. UNOPS sought to align with existing United Nations equity arrangements to allay risks related to equity. UNOPS expected to exit the project in three to four years once the intended goals were on track.

123. The Chief Financial Officer and Director of Administration said that in setting up the S3i reserve UNOPS would be able to provide greater transparency to the Board on S3i activities. UNOPS sought to set the reserve at \$105 million, with changes subject to Board approval. The growth and innovation reserve set up in 2019 to invest in UNOPS future revenue generation ability, of which S3i was one pillar, allowed UNOPS to further invest in its future growth, critical given its self-financing model. The S3i reserve would reduce the size of the growth and innovation reserve significantly. In addition, UNOPS would apply the guidance on the minimum and maximum levels for operational reserves. Among its provisions to offset risks to S3i, UNOPS had taken several steps such as setting up the Helsinki S3i office, creating the Advisory Group on Investments, and strengthening links between S3i and UNOPS internal legal and finance units.

124. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/5 on the UNOPS S3i reserve.

XIV. Other matters

Address by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council

125. The Chairperson of the Staff Council updated the Board on the work of the Staff Council in 2021 to build a healthy workforce in a healthy workplace while recognizing the challenges organizations faced in redesigning roles, maintaining staff status and relevance, and identifying priorities in a constantly changing landscape, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

126. In the sole intervention, a delegation expressed strong appreciation for the Staff Council's work under difficult circumstances, and management's commitment to working with the Staff Council. It called for sustainability in all operations, including all points raised by the Staff Council: (a) active and diversified work against racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination, central to creating a safe, creative, sustainable work environment, promoting diversity of thought, and a commitment to continuous, self-scrutiny; and (b) clarity around job security and contracts. That included a work-life balance, allowing staff to plan their work in a flexible way. Predictable, clear leadership was key for a sustainable approach.

127. In response, the Chairperson welcomed the common understanding on the need to address staff concerns jointly with management and Member States as a corporate priority.

128. The Executive Board heard the address by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council.

Part two
Annual session 2022

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 6 to 10 June 2022**

I. Organizational matters

1. The annual session 2022 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held in person, following two successive years of virtual sessions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from 6 to 10 June 2022.

2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its annual session 2022 (DP/2022/L.2) and approved the report of the first regular session 2022 (DP/2022/13).

3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the annual session 2022 appeared in document DP/2022/27, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).

4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2022/17 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2022:

Second regular session 2022: 29 August to 1 September 2022.

Statement by the President of the Board

5. The President of the Board highlighted progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while drawing attention to the ongoing socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 and the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution. Inequality was increasing, foremost affecting the most vulnerable, and the number of refugees and internally displaced was higher than ever. The international community was called to act to address multifaceted challenges. Amid this, the Board had to evaluate recent financial mismanagement in UNOPS and identify appropriate actions. The situation was a stark reminder of the importance of the Board's oversight role. UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS needed the Board's guidance to ensure they were fit-for-purpose to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Working together was the only way to ensure transformative change. Board discussions should lead to greater impact for people across the globe, grounded in joint responsibility and efforts.

Joint segment

II. Update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

6. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management), the Director, Bureau for External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, and the Executive Board and External Relations Office, UNOPS, updated the Board on collective efforts to implement General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system.

7. A group of delegations acknowledged UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS progress delivering a more effective, efficient One United Nations. Current development and humanitarian challenges however required greater attention to system-wide coherence. The group stressed the need to: (a) integrate responses to prevent, respond and recover from crises and strengthen the collaborative approach to common country analysis (CCA) and programming; (b) assess country presence to ensure the right skills were in place; (c) continue to consolidate common business operations; (d) align entity-specific country programmes with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF); (e) support programme country efforts to fulfil human rights obligations; and (f) strengthen adherence to the

management and accountability framework, including performance management of agency heads at country level.

8. A cross-regional group said the United Nations development pillar had to be strengthened and the quadrennial review mandate fully implemented. The Boards had to ensure the organizations complied with their mandates, and Board decisions had to re-emphasize the quadrennial review mandate. National ownership and leadership were critical for delivery and each country programme should reflect national priorities. The balance in the quadrennial review was being jeopardized by focusing on internal institutional matters; poverty eradication remained the overarching goal of the United Nations development system. They cautioned against pushing for a vision of operational activities exclusively in terms of efficiencies without regard to global development and the SDGs. They drew attention to funding gaps for the development pillar, unfulfilled Funding Compact commitments, and the need to invest more in integrated solutions.

9. There was a strong response to the call to draw down United Nations presence at the country level, especially among countries serviced by multi-country office setups. They appealed to maintain or step-up organizations' country-level presence aligned with proper needs assessments.

10. In response, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) said UNFPA remained committed to reform and strengthening the joint character of the CCA; UNFPA country programmes derived from national development strategies aligned with UNSDCFs. UNFPA worked with country teams for greater efficiency and joint programming and took a strong human rights-based approach to programming and interagency work. Grounded in the management and accountability framework and mutual accountability, UNFPA ensured resident coordinators appraised UNFPA country representatives' performance and their contribution to UNSDCFs.

11. The Director, Bureau for External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, said UNDP was committed to the CCA and its country programme outcomes derived from collective outcomes. UNDP worked with development and humanitarian country teams to protect development gains and address root causes; its programming was grounded in a human rights-based approach. UNDP had expanded its operational footprint to 170 countries, though its presence depended on core funding. The UNDP business operations strategy platform helped reduce business processing times. UNDP also engaged in the global shared services task team and worked with United Nations entities to leverage finance, including through integrated national funding frameworks.

12. The Executive Board and External Relations Office, UNOPS, said UNOPS provided issues-based coalitions a platform to function and had a light footprint at country level. It had learned to build a multi-country model to better support regions, scale up faster and share services. That model allowed UNOPS to develop as a non-resident agency. UNOPS followed human rights due-diligence policies in procurement, infrastructure and design, and promoted United Nations business and human rights principles. UNOPS always aligned with national ownership.

13. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/14 on the update on implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system.

III. Internal audit and investigation

14. The Director, Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), UNDP, presented the annual report of OAI on internal audit and investigations activities in 2021

(DP/2022/15); the Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, the management response. The Director, Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS), UNFPA, presented the report of OAIS on internal audit and investigation activities in 2021 (DP/FPA/2022/6), the annual report of the Oversight Advisory Committee (DP/FPA/2022/6/Add.1), and the terms of reference of the Oversight Advisory Committee. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) presented the management response. The Director, Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), UNOPS, presented the annual report on internal audit and investigations activities in 2021 (DP/OPS/2022/3); the Executive Director, ad interim, UNOPS, the management response.

15. Delegations welcomed UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS progress addressing audit-related management issues and were pleased that many recommendations from previous audit reports had been implemented fully or were under implementation. They encouraged the organizations to implement outstanding recommendations and were pleased to see the organizations were in good financial health and using sound financial management practices.

UNDP

16. A group of delegations were pleased the overall OAI opinion on governance, risk management and internal controls for UNDP was, in aggregate, “satisfactory/some improvement needed” and 95 per cent of OAI recommendations for 2020 and 2021 had been implemented. Addressing audit and investigation issues, delegations requested: (a) information on the impact of staffing shortages, increase in planned assignments, and nature/length of complex investigation cases; (b) details on whether UNDP planned to undertake a combined review of OAI, Ethics Office, and Office of Human Resources to ensure investigations involving individuals claiming whistle-blower status were managed fairly; and (c) more management-related reporting shared independently and simultaneously with the Board.

17. Other delegations encouraged UNDP to address the findings of inadequate global-level support to country offices and, given the third-party review of UNDP fiduciary standards, to improve OAI independence. UNDP should address weaknesses in reporting gender equality results. Concern was expressed at the increase in cases of sexual misconduct; and details sought on lessons from the pilot programme to centralize protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment investigation functions.

UNFPA

18. Delegations acknowledged that in 2021 UNFPA governance, risk management and control processes were rated “partially satisfactory with some improvements needed” and expressed appreciation for UNFPA focus on closing audit recommendations. UNFPA was encouraged to continue to strengthen programme management, financial management, procurement and inventory control. Delegations expressed concern with the increased investigation caseload in 2022, while welcoming the increase in cases processed by OAIS in 2021 compared to previous years. They requested information on UNFPA plans to increase resources to OAIS. UNFPA was commended for improving its country supply chain management in the context of COVID-19.

UNOPS

19. Delegations said irregularities in the UNOPS sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative would have United Nations system-wide consequences; measures were needed to ensure the financial and risk management of

the United Nations system. Delegations requested that UNDP and UNFPA provide information on workloads, office capacities, and Board actions needed on independence and to help strengthen systems. They sought analysis and long-term trends on internal audit and investigation findings in annual reports. The organizations should ensure accurate, direct, balanced reporting to enable the Board to exercise oversight. They were urged to take action to strengthen risk management and compliance through their rules and regulations. They emphasized the importance of finding ways to share information early, timely and transparently with the Board on misconduct and investigations.

20. In response, the Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, said UNDP had updated its internal control framework and was enhancing internal controls through a new enterprise resource planning system. In 2021, UNDP adopted an anti-fraud strategy and action plan; as of May 2022, 68 per cent of actions had been completed. UNDP had fully funded the OAI 2022 request and continued to implement GEF-related recommendations; UNDP was committed to ensuring consistency and full application of upgraded UNDP policies and procedures across business units. As for OAI caseloads, management fully supported the completion of all recommendations.

21. The Director, OAI, UNDP, said OAI under-resourcing affected its ability to process cases and meet key performance indicators for investigation cases – a situation concerning, in particular, medium-priority cases. The increased volume of investigation cases in 2021 was due to multiple factors, including resources-caseload imbalance and COVID-19. The increasing caseload impacted staff welfare, though the capacity issue concerned investigations only, not audit. OAI was committed to engaging with the Board and, regarding investigations, was ready to discuss practicalities and confidentiality requirements.

22. The Director, ad interim, OAI, UNFPA, said OAI had restructured the investigations branch: (a) splitting it in two units with two chiefs each responsible for three regions to disperse responsibilities for supervision of investigators and review investigation reports; and (b) establishing the Intake, Policy and Reporting Unit with staff hired for three Board-approved posts in the new integrated budget for investigation. The unit assessed all cases that came to OAI to determine if they fell within its mandate, should be referred to relevant offices, or be reviewed for closure or progress to full, formal investigation. Once the unit was restructured, OAI would assess results, ascertain needs, and report to the Board, respecting confidentiality requirements and reporting to donors. OAI had hired external quality assurance experts to perform quality control of investigation reports.

23. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) said the UNFPA zero tolerance policy was reflected in the new ERM policy and hiring of a risk officer in 2022. The ERM policy and internal control framework were compliant with the Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission standards and aligned with Joint Inspection Unit recommendations and the High-level Committee on Management risk reference maturity model. UNFPA had a policy against fraudulent and proscribed practices. On resources-caseload for investigation, UNFPA had increased resources under the integrated budget to the OAI investigation branch. UNFPA fully supported OAI restructuring, closely monitored audit trends, and had undertaken root cause analysis through the Audit Monitoring Committee.

24. The Director, IAIG, UNOPS, said senior management fully supported the need for adequate IAIG capacity. The independence of IAIG and audit and investigation functions were a top priority; going forward IAIG would focus on strengthening its independence and report to the Board. On long-term trends, in 2021 IAIG had conducted a detailed root cause analysis of key issues, which was publicly available.

Regarding the resources-caseload imbalance, the four fulltime IAIG investigators addressed on average over 200 cases per year, well over the industry standard. IAIG would submit a business case on required resources to the Board.

25. The Executive Director, ad interim, UNOPS, said UNOPS was committed to collaborating with the Board to address S3i initiative irregularities and put UNOPS back on track. He looked forward to receiving the IAIG business case on the resources-caseload imbalance and to working toward a more balanced setup.

26. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/15 on the reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit and investigation, and management responses.

IV. Ethics

27. The Director, UNDP Ethics Office, the Director, UNFPA Ethics Office, and the Director, UNOPS Ethics and Compliance Office presented their respective reports: the activities of the UNDP Ethics Office in 2021 (DP/2022/16), the UNFPA report of the Ethics Office 2021 (DP/FPA/2022/7), and the activities of the UNOPS Ethics and Compliance Office in 2021 (DP/OPS/2022/4). The management responses were given by the Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, and the Executive Director, ad interim, UNOPS.

28. Delegations said an independent, adequately resourced, transparent ethic function well-known among staff was essential for a healthy, fit-for-purpose organization. UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS should continue to cultivate a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability. In future reports, the ethics offices should explain how activities contributed to nurturing a speak-up culture. UNFPA Ethics Office guidance and reporting mechanisms were working in handling and reporting on cases; the UNDP Ethics Office was commended for participating the UNDP task force on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. COVID-19 had curtailed the organizations' ability to work, strained efforts to create a safe working environment, and made visibility of ethics services challenging. They commended the organizations for their efforts and encouraged them to step up ethics work and, while welcoming the record high caseload, stressed that independent ethics officers needed sufficient resources, capacity and access to execute their mandates.

29. The Director, UNDP Ethics Office took note of, and expressed appreciation for, the reflections regarding the need to ensure adequate resources for ethics office activities. The Ethics Office would explore ways to address the increased caseload and measure the impact of its activities to better inform the Board and facilitate its oversight role.

30. The Director, Bureau for Management Services, UNDP, said UNDP would continue to fully resource the Ethics Office resource allocation requests.

31. The Director, UNFPA Ethics Office welcomed the Board's approval of a P4-level post under the new integrated budget, 2022–2025. She said the sharing of resources in the United Nations ethics community was underutilized. The United Nations Ethics Panel was seeking to achieve greater resources-sharing to expand the reach of the ethics offices. The office would continue to build on its successful reporting mechanism and seek opportunities to inform the Board. The office would also work with the United Nations Ethics Panel to identify speak-up culture advocacy impact measures to better inform the Board.

32. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, said UNFPA had increased resources to the Ethics Office under the new integrated budget. UNFPA had also set up an "integrity family" approach that facilitated information sharing among

the Ethics Office, the Office for Audit and Investigation Services, the Legal Office, the Office for Human Resources, and protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment focal points.

33. The Executive Director, ad interim, UNOPS, said UNOPS decided to remove the “compliance” element from the Ethics Office function to align it with United Nations ethics standards. It was important for the UNOPS Ethics Office to fully function in line with the United Nations Ethics Panel and the inter-agency ethics network to benefit and learn from them.

34. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/16 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS.

V. Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

35. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, the Director, Office of Human Resources, UNDP, and the Director, Executive Board and External Relations Office, UNOPS, provided oral updates on their organizations’ protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, in line with Executive Board decision 2020/11.

36. A group of delegations recognized the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS commitment to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. Zero tolerance for inaction was paramount. Despite progress, significant challenges remained. They commended the organizations for responding to global and humanitarian crises with sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment risks and urged them to mitigate risks through a coordinated response. They stressed the need for: (a) strong, proactive, visible leadership preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment; (b) effective interagency collaboration; (c) awareness and implementation of protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment policies; (d) building capacity; (e) training implementing partners; (f) accessible, safe, accountable reporting and follow-up; (g) effective, transparent screening of staff; and (h) a stronger human rights-based, gender-responsive, victim/survivor-centred approach. To achieve a much-needed system-wide approach, the organizations should work with the Special Coordinator and the Victim Rights Advocate to achieve a more consistent, comprehensive approach.

37. In response, the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, highlighted the interagency integrated response in emergencies, which UNFPA coordinated and monitored and for which it determined the most pressing needs: assessing/training implementing partners, using clear-checks to prevent rehiring of perpetrators, merging agencies’ resources and strengthening country-level resources. UNFPA led interagency efforts to harmonize the approach to implementing partners. UNFPA adhered to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) recommendation on ending sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment in development co-operation and humanitarian assistance and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee minimum operating standards

38. The Director, Office of Human Resources, UNDP, said UNDP reported to the Board using a set of integrated results and resources indicators to track sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment. UNDP country offices would report how they implemented their action plans and collaborated with United Nations entities on monitoring and reporting. UNDP was engaged with implementing partners to set standards, integrate sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment language in agreements, and build capacities. UNDP pursued a victim-centred

approach that provided protection from retaliation. The UNDP strategy was aligned to the OECD DAC recommendation and Interagency Standing Committee minimum operating standards.

39. The Director, Executive Board and External Relations Office, UNOPS, said UNOPS had hired a fully dedicated professional to support headquarters coordination efforts and provide technical inputs. Additional coordination and technical support were being considered at country level on a risk assessment basis. UNOPS engaged with interagency protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment networks, benefitting from knowledge-sharing, coordination and best practices from the humanitarian and development community. Based on a 2021 gaps analysis, UNOPS developed a workplan and implemented clear-checks since April 2019.

40. The Executive Board took note of the update on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment.

UNDP segment

VI. Interactive dialogue with the Administrator and annual report

41. In his statement ([available on Executive Board website](#)), the UNDP Administrator presented his annual report for 2021 ([DP/2022/17](#) and [DP/2022/17/Add.2](#)) and highlighted the multiple crises setting back years of hard earned development gains across the globe. That included the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, devastated economies, famine and debt accumulation, not to mention a crisis of faith in the international system. Against this backdrop, he spoke to three main issues: (a) the need to invest in development systematically and at scale, recognizing that no country could walk away from the Goals; (b) the impossibility of separating development from crisis because emerging from crisis depended on development; and (c) how well-placed UNDP was to meet those challenges as a development organization that delivered in a world in crisis.

42. To address those challenges, UNDP viewed far-reaching, quality development as the way forward. The Administrator drew attention to UNDP development work in a crisis-torn world and its unique agility and effectiveness as a transformational organization responding to change and emerging challenges. He highlighted how UNDP was: (a) redefining how it achieved development that linked the local and global by managing risks and constraints, mobilizing and promoting financing for development, leveraging digitalization and technology innovation, and fostering green economies through its Climate Promise; (b) helping close persistent, systemic development gaps that left people vulnerable, building on COVID-19 lessons, and setting up social protection systems; and (c) remaining strong internally and driving results-based United Nations reform that delivered at country level, with new skills, service offers, digital capacities, knowledge resources and effective risk management.

43. The Administrator highlighted UNDP progress against the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, in its first six months of implementation. This included the launch of phase 2 of the People for 2030 strategy, consolidation of its digital architecture, launch of its new knowledge and learning strategy, and streamlining of its policy services to countries. Its new strengths allowed UNDP to navigate and steer the repositioning of the United Nations development system, as recognized by the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN), as it continued to leverage capacities and services to work for country teams spearheading operational and efficiency

innovations. But while UNDP was equipped to address systemic change, financing needed to follow so UNDP could deliver on its promises to countries. The Administrator closed with an appeal to reinvigorate multilateralism, with the United Nations at its centre.

44. Members of the Bureau of the Board commended the Administrator for his leadership and UNDP staff for results achieved against the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. The group recognized the growing UNDP capacity to trigger transformative results and encouraged it to move towards bigger, coherent portfolios and programmes. UNDP was redefining how to achieve far-reaching sustainable development through innovations in finance, digitalization and climate action, and its new service to assist countries negotiating fossil fuel reforms. UNDP should strengthen its focus on sustainable and renewable energy to ensure countries' energy security and transition. The group commended UNDP for reaching its highest level of programme delivery in over a decade and its work on social protection, conflict/crisis, especially in Ukraine, and gender. They welcomed that the new UNDP gender strategy, 2022–2025, prioritized tackling root causes of discrimination. UNDP was a driver of United Nations reform, as evidenced in MOPAN and UNDP independent evaluation findings.

45. A group of delegations drew attention to the devastating impacts of COVID-19, climate change, and geopolitical tension on achieving the 2030 Agenda. Bold, immediate actions were needed, including addressing unsustainable debt burden, rising commodity prices, and inflation. UNDP efforts were welcomed as was Board guidance ensuring United Nations entities were fit-for-purpose. UNDP should: (a) ensure poverty eradication remained its core focus; (b) expand its work in developing countries; (c) complement countries' access to liquidity with other immediate measure, including encouraging countries to allocate 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) to official development assistance (ODA) and \$100 billion in climate finance; (d) undertake consistent, concerted efforts to ensure universal access to social protection; and (e) mobilize investment in quality, reliable, sustainable, resilient infrastructure, energy, agriculture, communications, transport, and technology as part of COVID-19 recovery, sustainable development and climate action. The group said funding cuts to UNDP core resources threatened the viability of the United Nations development pillar and put the most vulnerable at greater risk.

46. Delegations from the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) said multiple crises were threatening and turning back development gains amid increasing debt and food and energy prices as small island developing States (SIDS) retrofitted infrastructure to resist climate disasters. The United Nations development system needed to do more to achieve the SAMOA Pathway, Paris Climate Agreement, and 2030 Agenda. UNDP was a vital AOSIS development partner that assisted with concessional financing and intervened for SIDS to address debt and climate finance issues. UNDP should assist AOSIS by promoting the \$100 billion climate finance and facilitating access to special drawing rights. They welcomed the UNDP role in developing the multidimensional vulnerability index. UNDP should continue to advocate for SIDS in Global Crisis Response Group and G20 discussions, and Board decisions addressing financial irregularities in UNOPS should not hamper other organizations' work. UNDP should maintain its checks and balances.

47. Delegations from the regional group for Africa highlighted the successes of development in addressing poverty and disease, even in least developed countries (LDCs), and expressed staunch objection to increasing inequalities between and within countries. UNDP was an important actor in that collective effort. The group expressed concern with cuts in core resources when countries were recovering from a pandemic and struggling with high debt. The group called for cross-regional collaboration to stay the 2030 Agenda course and invest in development to prevent conflict, maintain peace and leave no one behind. UNDP should work with

Governments to build national capacities for accelerated development through renewable energy, digitalization, industrialization and trade, and investments in LDCs.

48. In other interventions, delegations said multilateralism was more important than ever and UNDP was key in implementing Our Common Agenda through a coordinated, coherent United Nations system. They welcomed UNDP work in conflict and multidimensional crisis contexts, human security, and the humanitarian-development-peace continuum. UNDP should continue to promote digitalization and innovative technologies and solutions, ensure energy security and sustainable, renewable energy. Delegations called on UNDP to integrate lessons from its socioeconomic response to COVID-19 when implementing the Strategic Plan. UNDP support to countries should be development-driven; the downward trend in core funding should not compromise development plans. UNDP and the United Nations development system were asked to address the negative effects of unilateral coercive measures against certain countries. Delegations welcomed UNDP focus on gender equality and women's empowerment and strengthening governance systems/institutions, safeguarding human rights and upholding the rule of law. Given its broad country presence, UNDP was well-positioned to reduce inequalities between and within countries and accelerate SDG progress. UNDP and the United Nations system should always act with integrity and principled leadership and strengthen risk management and compliance. UNDP should motivate donors to increase flexible, predictable core funding.

49. In response, the UNDP Administrator underscored UNDP efforts to reposition its partnerships with United Nations organizations and regularize and intensify those with non-United Nations partners. UNDP was at its best when embedded in an ecosystem of partnerships and was more than ever committed to its development mandate. Quality development depended on investments and priorities, and UNDP was able to help countries articulate country-tailored poverty reduction and digitalization strategies that ensured no one is left behind. Leveraging financing was a central focus of its partnerships and a top corporate priority. The impact of the global economic crisis and funding cuts would affect 10 to 15 per cent of UNDP core funding. Such cuts would have consequences for the ability of UNDP and the United Nations development system to deliver. In addition, the current 0.33 per cent average in GNI allocations to ODA was far below the 0.7 per cent promise and inadequate, especially in a time of crisis, to meeting Member States' expectations. For the reform agenda to succeed, core funding as envisioned in the Funding Compact was crucial. It was unrealistic to ask more of developing countries without mobilizing the minimum of co-financing and investment promised. Major international agreements, such as the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Climate Agreement, were being jeopardized. The situation was creating disappointment among the public and forcing the Common Agenda to be undermined.

50. The Administrator said, during the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, UNDP investments in upgrading institutional efficiencies and systems enabled it to spend three more cents of every dollar on development programming compared to the previous Strategic Plan cycle – the equivalent of over \$500 million more for development programming over four years. UNDP was one of the largest providers of services and funds to the Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund, Peacebuilding Fund, and others. Considering the positive MOPAN assessment, UNDP continued to invest in results-based management. By international standards, UNDP had best practice systems in place in governance, accountability evaluation, audit, ethics and oversight mechanisms. UNDP was rated the third most transparent development organization on the international transparency index. The Administrator said reported S3i irregularities in UNOPS was an organization-specific issue.

Punishing the United Nations system for the governance and accountability irregularities of one organization – and of one project within that organization – was not appropriate. Immediate action was needed to contain the S3i crisis and respond in a way commensurate with what had occurred.

51. On the topic of United Nations system inadequacies in delivering the SAMOA Pathway and Paris Climate Agreement, the Administrator said UNDP was one of the most focused United Nations entities on not leaving behind the SIDS. UNDP had developed a new SIDS offer and was a major protagonist accelerating the development of a multidimensional vulnerability index. United Nations system adaptation and risk mitigation in SIDS was more important than ever. UNDP was extremely concerned with the looming debt burden disaster on developing countries. The international community had to work through the United Nations and partners to address the issue. Similarly, as part of its contribution to the international \$100 billion climate pledge, UNDP was helping developing countries optimize how they invested resources to support the Paris Climate Agreement. In responding to the global climate crisis, UNDP helped Governments act in the absence of adequate international responses and, at global level, informed the priorities of climate change global responses. The Administrator appealed to Member States to work with the United Nations to revitalize trust and the promise in multilateralism and development.

52. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/7 on the annual report of the Administrator for 2021.

VII. Gender equality at UNDP

53. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item and the Director, UNDP Bureau for Programme and Policy Support presented the new UNDP gender equality strategy, 2022–2025, (DP/2022/18) and the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018–2021, (DP/2022/19).

54. A group of delegations welcomed the new strategy's ambition, focus on addressing structural barriers and root causes, and grounding in experience. They commended the priorities set for signature solution six and others. They asked how the focus on multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination would be put into practice. Country offices should develop engagement strategies for each of the strategy's programme portfolios; UNDP should develop guidance on integrating gender equality in country programming and serve as United Nations system convenor/integrator for gender equality. The goal of allocating at least 15 per cent of the UNDP regular budget to gender was strongly supported. The new strategy should help change corporate culture and strengthen leadership for gender equality.

55. Other delegations stressed the need to engage men, enhance women's leadership capacity, establish institutional foundations and enabling environments for gender equality, secure quality gender-responsive, sex-disaggregated data, and build data collection, monitoring, evaluation and accountability practices, based on the COVID-19 gender-response tracker. They were pleased the strategy addressed gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, care and unpaid work. Delegations welcomed the partnerships and whole-of-society approach and the three enablers: mobilizing financing through gender-sensitive fiscal policies, extending women's access to digital technology, and using a transformational lens to address gender inequalities.

56. In response, the Associate Administrator, UNDP, said the new gender strategy used meta-analyses, evaluations and assessments to determine why gender equality had not seen more progress. UNDP learned the strategy needed to: (a) go beyond

gender parity to empowerment and changing the power balance; (b) strengthen capacities to analyse complexities and interconnectedness with development challenges; (c) connect country-level actions to upstream policy; (d) expand United Nations and non-United Nations partnerships for gender equality; and (e) redirect funding toward gender equality through innovative programming tools.

57. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, said UNDP had made good progress against the previous strategy's indicators, though fighting structural barriers and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse suffered setbacks. This was due to a complex operational environment and backlashes against gender equality, which UNDP addressed in the new strategy. UNDP was committed to its system-wide integrator role on gender. UNDP strived to meet the 15 per cent of the regular budget for gender while working to leverage financing. UNDP was committed to zero tolerance and had a strong gender accountability framework at the global, regional and country levels.

58. The Director, Gender Team, UNDP, said 80 per cent of country offices had developed gender strategies; regional bureaux were developing their own. Data gaps were a persistent challenge to gender strategy development and action, especially on the impact of policies and measures to address unpaid care work. Online violence emerged as a priority in the strategy's gender-based violence approach; UNDP was prototyping an early warning system to track online misogyny and hate. The previous strategy offered two major lessons: integrating thematic gender expertise in each portfolio and strengthening gender-focused data and analysis capacities.

59. The Executive Board took note of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2022–2025, and the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018–2021.

VIII. Country programmes and related matters

60. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, provided an overview of the country programme documents (CPDs) for Kenya, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania, as well as the first one-year extension of the country programme for Angola. In turn, the regional directors for the Regional Bureau for Africa and Regional Bureau for the Arab States provided details from their regional perspectives.

61. Following adoption of the CPD for the Syrian Arab Republic, a group of delegations expressed serious concern with certain aspects of the United Nations Strategic Framework for the Syrian Arab Republic, including the absence of language around armed conflict. They said United Nations operations had to adhere to the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence. Other delegations said the country programme was formulated in line with national priorities in consultation with the Government and underscored the need to preserve the principles of national sovereignty and ownership. It was stressed that the primary focus of Executive Board proceedings was operational activities for development.

62. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Kenya ([DP/DCP/KEN/4](#)), the United Republic of Tanzania ([DP/DCP/TZA/3](#)), and the Syrian Arab Republic ([DP/DCP/SYR/4](#)).

63. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Angola, as presented in document [DP/2022/20](#).

IX. Evaluation

64. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) introduced the annual report on evaluation for 2021 (DP/2022/21) and financing for recovery: formative evaluation of the UNDP response to the COVID-19 pandemic and SDGs financing (DP/2022/22). The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, provided the management commentaries to the annual report on evaluation for 2021, and the management response to the financing for recovery: formative evaluation of the UNDP response to the COVID-19 pandemic and SDGs financing (DP/2022/23).

Annual report on evaluation, 2021

65. Delegations stressed the importance of evaluation and IEO work ensuring Board oversight. They welcomed IEO efforts to improve its capacities and help UNDP management and country offices improve capacities to conduct decentralized evaluations. They stressed the importance of improving decentralized evaluations and urged UNDP management to approve the satisfactory rating from 47 to above 50 per cent. They appreciated efforts to improve the quality of evaluations, as articulated in the roadmap for strengthening decentralized evaluations. They said IEO was an example of how United Nations evaluation offices should work and communicate with the Board. They asked how UNDP management would increase the IEO budget and how Member States could contribute. IEO should improve the report's quality and allow better understanding of areas UNDP work adequately covered. UNDP should allocate adequate resources to the evaluation function (as per the evaluation policy target) and address the finding that gender equality programmes remained underfunded. UNDP should continue to step up interagency coordination on evaluation.

66. In response, the Director, IEO, said IEO was committed to supporting the Board's oversight function and improve the quality of decentralized evaluations. Despite difficulties during the pandemic, IEO continued to ensure full coverage of independent country programme evaluations. IEO was adjusting its data architecture and external data sources to facilitate evaluations. It would continue improving the quality of annual reports and coordinate with United Nations evaluation offices to streamline interagency working arrangements. By 2025, partnering with the United Nations Evaluation Group, UNDP planned to deliver synthesis reports on the five SDG pillars.

67. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, said UNDP was working with IEO to continue to improve decentralized evaluations and further allocate funding for IEO. UNDP was committed to moving from project-focused to portfolio-focused evaluations and to reaching its target to fund gender equality programmes.

68. The Chief, Effectiveness Group, UNDP, said UNDP had improved results-based management practices, policies and procedures by: (a) strengthening the integrated results and resources framework to track the theory of change so programmes were rooted in evaluative evidence; (b) rolling out the new programme finance architecture – Quantum – linking results to resources; and (c) upgrading the risk management architecture linking project to programme-level risks and establishing links between risks and results. On programme quality, the framework contained a new indicator tracking how much country programmes integrated evaluation lessons.

Financing for recovery: formative evaluation of the UNDP response to the COVID-19 pandemic and SDGs financing

69. Delegations welcomed the UNDP approach to financing for development built on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. They welcomed plans to develop a more strategic approach to SDG financing but sought details on its capacity to do so. They encouraged UNDP, through the integrated national financing frameworks, to work with international financial institutions and multilateral development banks at country level. UNDP should work to create a meaningful division of labour built on mutually reinforcing comparative advantages. Delegations welcomed the analysis and value-added of UNDP socioeconomic impact assessments in the system-wide response to COVID-19. They welcomed the positive impacts of the Tax Inspectors Without Borders programme, and UNDP climate finance leadership, including as implementing partner for the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility. UNDP was encouraged to outline a strategy and metrics to mobilize public and private resources for sustainable development.

70. In response, the Director, IEO, said UNDP was already a player in SDG financing through its work with countries to align national planning systems. The current crisis however required innovative approaches; the formative evaluation could help UNDP adjust. IEO was encouraged by UNDP management's effort to spell out a road map to align the strategy. The integrated national financing frameworks had a significant role making this alignment happen by imbedding investment platforms in national systems to rally support. In financing for development, UNDP had the comparative advantage of advocating for leaving no one behind.

71. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, said its role in SDG financing was two-fold: leveraging financing and promoting SDG impact standards. In 2018, UNDP set up a centralized financing for development function and in 2019 established its sustainable development financing hub. UNDP aimed to complement the work of international financial institutions to achieve development effectiveness and impact.

72. The Director, Sustainable Finance Hub, UNDP, said international financial institutions were increasingly involved in the integrated national financing framework process at country level. Well over 50 per cent of countries engaged in 2022 had finalized a financing strategy creating tangible platforms for country-level investments. More were expected in subsequent years, requiring policy reforms for which UNDP, through its integrator role, could rally Member States' technical and financing capacities to help countries implement financial instruments, building on financing platforms and expertise of the international financial institutions and capacity-building mechanisms such as the UNDP SDG Financing Academy.

73. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/8 on UNDP evaluation.

X. United Nations Volunteers

74. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item and the Executive Coordinator, United Nations Volunteers (UNV), presented UNV: Report of the Administrator ([DP/2022/24](#)).

75. A group of delegations welcomed implementation of the UNV strategic framework, 2018–2021, and UNV response to COVID-19 in supporting development and humanitarian coordination, demonstrating the importance of volunteerism in the United Nations system. They highlighted the role of UN-Volunteers in crises and encouraged UNV to focus on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. They welcomed the UNV digital transformation and looked forward to seeing how it

enhanced organizational efficiency, volunteer services, transparency and accountability. UNV should continue to advocate for and include persons with disabilities in the United Nations workforce, in line with leaving no one behind. They recognized the ambitious results matrix that contributed to UNV success and its relevance in the United Nations system. They underscored the special role of the Special Voluntary Fund which enabled UNV to respond to crises, foster research and innovation, and implement digital transformation. Member States were encouraged to consider funding the Special Voluntary Fund.

76. Other delegations highlighted UNV as a system-wide service provider responding to country needs and promoting an inclusive cadre of UN-Volunteers and volunteer solutions. With many UN-Volunteers from the South, their unique role in sustainable development in developing countries and in South-South cooperation was highlighted. UNV and UN-Volunteers had a special role to play bridging the digital divide. They commended the rapid deployment of UN-Volunteers in Ukraine and in countries hosting refugees. They drew attention to the UNV full-funding programme providing professionals and youth a chance to gain on-the-ground experience in peace and development, and potential of the UNV knowledge platform. They highlighted UN-Volunteers' work contributing to the voluntary national reviews.

77. The Executive Coordinator, UNV, said COVID-19 underscored the need for data and evidence to inform policy discussions. UN-Volunteers' contribution to national voluntary reviews was a case in point; UNV would work with national partners to ensure priorities in the reviews were reflected in policies and programmes. UNV digital transformation remained a top priority and offered a granular view of organizational challenges and gaps that UNV was actively addressing, including implementation of safeguards and preventive actions. The UNV knowledge platform launched in 2021 offered development data that would help improve the impact of volunteerism at country level. That included diversity and inclusivity in the UN-Volunteer cadre, including refugees, persons with disabilities, and a new category of "community volunteers".

78. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/9 on United Nations Volunteers: Report of the Administrator.

XI. United Nations Capital Development Fund

79. The UNDP Associate Administrator introduced the item and the Executive Secretary, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), presented the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2021 ([DP/2022/25](#)).

80. Members of the Bureau of the Board called on UNCDF to continue to support LDCs in achieving the goals of the Doha Programme of Action for sustainable development. UNCDF should continue to offer innovative financial solutions and support green inclusive growth to help LDCs recover from the pandemic and reverse the effects of climate change, including by expanding access to technologies and resources to build LDC capacities. They welcomed UNCDF work to improve markets and comprehensive financial systems to help LDCs address the debt crisis and provide economic empowerment opportunities for women and girls.

81. A group of delegations welcomed UNCDF financing solutions for last-mile populations and support for financial inclusion. They welcomed UNCDF expansion of digital financial services so LDCs could seize digital finance opportunities and digital transformation that allow economies to grow and increase productivity. UNCDF should continue to support SDG financing for local governments and actors for local government financing, including through the Local Climate Adaptive Living

Facility. They encouraged expansion of the UNCDF loan and guarantee portfolio focused on small and medium-size (SME) enterprises in LDCs to mobilize SDG financing, and the Bridge Facility to deliver catalytic investment capital for SMEs and small investment projects.

82. A second group of delegations welcomed the rise in United Nations entities' requests to access UNCDF capital investment tools. UNCDF had an important role to play within the United Nations system as the competent entry point for work with financial instruments and innovations with public and private partners. They encouraged United Nations organizations, the World Bank and development banks to seek partnerships with UNCDF and learn from its wealth of expertise in innovative finance. UNCDF should intensify its cooperation with private investors to access their growing potential for SDG-related investments.

83. A third group of delegations commended UNCDF for providing catalytic capital to mobilize public/private resources for SDG-aligned investments, strengthening market systems and financing mechanisms, and accelerating inclusive, diversified, green economic transformation. They encouraged partners to support UNCDF scaling of the Bridge Facility and Member States capitalizing the facility so it could deploy flexible concessional financing and de-risk capital to attract resources for private sector SDG-aligned investments. UNCDF should continue to expand cooperation with the United Nations system providing innovative and blended finance solutions.

84. In response, the UNCDF Executive Secretary said UNCDF would continue to unlock public and private capital to support developing countries, especially LDCs. UNCDF was working to strengthen its climate-focused work expanding the scope and funding of its Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility to assist municipal climate programmes in local climate adaptation. UNCDF was stepping up investments to support LDCs by creating bankable projects for SDG-positive SMEs. She appealed to Member States to consider contributing to the UNCDF Bridge Facility, aligned with the Doha Programme of Action call for an LDC catalytic financing facility. UNCDF actively engaged with multilateral development banks and development finance institutions given its capacity to support early-stage SMEs and small investment projects. UNCDF was a strong supporter of financial inclusion in domestic capital markets and partnered with private sector companies on digital financing, local infrastructure, and SME investment.

85. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/10 on the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2021.

UNFPA segment

XII. Statement by the Executive Director and annual report

86. In her opening remarks ([available on the UNFPA website](#)), the UNFPA Executive Director focused on the impacts on women and girls of COVID-19 and other crises related to conflict, food insecurity and climate-related disasters. UNFPA remained committed more than ever to achieving the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action and the SDGs, a commitment built on accountability. She highlighted UNFPA successes during the previous Strategic Plan across the humanitarian-development-peace continuum. UNFPA was building results and sharpening its normative work to leave no one behind, including by developing its first-ever disability inclusion strategy and programming for people of African descent, indigenous peoples and other marginalized populations. UNFPA continued to engage with all partners to garner commitment and adequate, sustained investments for predictable, long-term funding

and financing for UNFPA and the ICPD. At the centre of those efforts was the UNFPA drive to be more innovative and strengthen its data and evidence-gathering capacities. She noted that UNFPA continued to reinforce zero tolerance for all forms of wrongdoing and had deepened investments in audit and investigation, evaluation and ethics offices. The Executive Director drew attention to UNFPA work in humanitarian settings, especially in the Ukraine crisis to provide essential sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence prevention services to local populations, refugees and internally displaced persons.

87. The Director, UNFPA Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean drew attention to UNFPA country-level assistance, highlighting: (a) its commitment to United Nations reform, through for example the joint programme to ensure indigenous women's access in the Amazon to sexual and reproductive health and protection services; (b) efforts to strengthen disaster response and preparedness, notably in SIDS, ensuring access to sexual reproductive health and gender-based violence services and distributing dignity kits; and (c) using data to position adolescent pregnancy as a priority national policy agenda and establishing adolescent-friendly health services, raising awareness, and providing expert technical assistance.

88. Across the board, delegations acknowledged UNFPA frontline work to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health and rights services for all. Sustainable development could not be achieved without gender parity and attention to the entire population. They stressed the importance of taking stock of experiences and lessons from the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, and COVID-19 response. They appreciated UNFPA leveraging United Nations reform and Our Common Agenda to contribute to achieving the Goals and its synergistic actions with other United Nations organizations and partners based on comparative advantages tailored to national priorities and the quadrennial review. They called on UNFPA to further improve partnerships and participate in development-themed initiatives led by Member States to form synergies to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

89. Members of the Bureau of the Board commended UNFPA for tailoring its work to countries' self-defined priorities in implementing the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. They welcomed UNFPA collaboration with partners to accelerate progress towards the three transformative results, close gaps at national and subnational levels, and achieve inclusion of women and girls. Institutional capacity-building was key to ensuring access to quality information and packages of essential services to eliminate avoidable maternal deaths, unsatisfied family planning needs, gender-based violence and harmful practices. Private sector participation in implementing UNFPA programmes was key. They stressed the importance of evaluation and results monitoring through multilateral and multisectoral approaches focused on long-term national impact and a set of SDG-compliant indicators to quantify progress and gaps in achieving the three transformative results. UNFPA should continue to pursue results-based programming through the integrated results and resources framework. They recognized its record resource mobilization in 2021 and encouraged UNFPA to continue to provide support and greater resources to transparency, accountability and monitoring.

90. A group of delegations welcomed UNFPA progress against the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and focus of the new plan on accelerating achievement of the three transformative results. UNFPA should continue to: (a) advance women and girls' human rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, skills, knowledge and education through comprehensive sexuality education, and strengthen its normative work; (b) expand its humanitarian response capacity to safeguard the lives and rights of women, adolescents and youth and combat gender-based violence through a holistic humanitarian-development-peace continuum approach; and

(c) pursue data for evidence-based programming and monitoring to reach those furthest behind. They welcomed UNFPA work on innovative solutions and partnerships with United Nations actors, Governments, civil society, development partners, international financial institutions and private sector to achieve the three transformative results and the Goals.

91. In individual interventions, delegations welcomed the launch of the Secretary-General's Global Crisis Response Group and asked how UNFPA planned to contribute to fulfilling its vision. They called on UNFPA to be more efficient and leverage innovations and digital tools to advance leaving no one behind. They highlighted UNFPA work at country level to address COVID-19 and gender-based violence in crisis settings and among refugees and internally displaced persons. They welcomed UNFPA humanitarian leadership and prioritization of its normative role, given growing opposition to gender equality.

92. Delegations encouraged UNFPA at country level to boldly advocate for the full sexual and reproductive health and rights agenda and to work with resident coordinators as important advocates for its mandate. They commended UNFPA work and policies to address the needs and rights of women and girls of African descent, indigenous peoples and young people, among others, empowering them to be agents of change. They expressed strong support for UNFPA work on bodily autonomy and comprehensive sexuality education and encouraged UNFPA to continue to tackle the structural causes of gender-based violence and change social norms that perpetuated patriarchal systemic discrimination and prejudice, gender inequality, and stigmatization of victims and survivors. UNFPA should review its expenditures and ensure country offices and implementing partners had the capacities to implement transformative programmes. UNFPA should ensure its governance and internal controls were sufficiently robust, strengthen fraud prevention measures, and increase transparency and accountability to the Board.

93. Delegations emphasized that country programmes should be prepared in line with national development priorities and ownership. They said the pandemic had jeopardized progress, particularly in LDCs, and led to increased gender-based violence. They sought UNFPA expertise, thematic studies and exchanges of useful experiences and practices in addressing low fertility and ageing. UNFPA was requested to consider the negative impacts of unilateral coercive measures when reporting on Strategic Plan implementation in its annual reports.

94. Delegations welcomed UNFPA support to conducting national censuses through improved data collection to ensure no one was invisible. They commended UNFPA for exceeding targets in several of its output indicators and welcomed its development of a population data set for humanitarian assistance. UNFPA should improve its capacity for population data collection and analysis, expand investment in big data collection, and increase data availability and timeliness on key indicators to provide data for research. They expressed concern with the reported drop in core resources and urged UNFPA to continue to motivate donors to increase levels of flexible, predictable core funding. They underscored the need for UNFPA to have a long-term vision and funding streams to achieve sustainable, transformative impact through the three transformative results and implement its role in the humanitarian-development-peace continuum.

95. In response, the UNFPA Executive Director said there was growing demand for upstream, high-level, high-quality technical assistance implementing the Strategic Plan on the ground. UNFPA focus on innovation and integrating policy and data to achieve the ICPD Programme of Action was central to accelerate action and to a whole-of-United Nations approach. The aim was to build inclusive, accountable institutions at national and subnational levels and create the enabling and policy

environment to achieve the three transformative results, grounded in leaving no one behind. She said some 60 per cent of Strategic Plan outcome indicators were in common with other United Nations entities. Joined up action was key to UNFPA presence throughout the humanitarian-development-peace continuum and work to build resilience and ensure sustainable results. LDCs were a priority; UNFPA supported LDCs to develop cost-effective solutions and was working to disaggregate data to make its value proposition more applicable to LDCs.

96. UNFPA worked to apply lessons in its operations at all stages while using its experience in accelerated action to mobilize resources. Building on COVID-19 lessons and collaboration with United Nations organizations, UNFPA was strengthening its innovation and digitalization architecture and normative role, working to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights to address the needs and protect the rights of women and girls. UNFPA data work gave Governments a basis on which to ground development planning and brought to light gaps and exclusions populations such as indigenous peoples and those of African descent experienced. To integrate such perspectives, UNFPA had fielded its first cohort of young professionals of African descent. An exclusive, civil workplace grounded in zero tolerance was at the heart of its people strategy and its engagement with vendors and implementing partners. UNFPA pursued zero tolerance against fraud and was committed to transparency and corrective measures.

97. On the pushback against the ICPD mandate, UNFPA worked to ensure its advocacy for women and girls was grounded in evidence. Bodily autonomy was a fundamental, protected human right. UNFPA work to address underlying systemic structural issues and promote comprehensive sexuality education were crucial to achieving the three transformative results. That included efforts, under new WHO guidelines on abortion care, to ensure access to comprehensive post-abortion care in all situations. In all its work, including on gender, climate change and transforming attitudes, UNFPA aligned with nationally determined priorities. UNFPA continued to implement its gender equality strategy in programming and corporately with the understanding that gender equality meant equality for all: UNFPA recognized diversity in demography and the need to adapt to ageing societies to prepare them accordingly.

98. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) said UNFPA was committed to a whole-of-United Nations approach as underscored in Our Common Agenda and its 12 commitments. UNFPA worked through the Chief Executives Board to ensure a coherent approach to implementing the three transformative results and the Strategic Plan at country level and through the system-wide issues-based coalitions at regional level. UNFPA always showed the same commitment to delivering its mandate whether in development or humanitarian settings.

99. The Director, UNFPA Humanitarian Office, said in its crisis work UNFPA made an impactful contribution to data provision on sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence, promoting a multisectoral approach, and prevention and preparedness for future crisis by building national and local-level partnerships.

100. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) said UNFPA was working to ensure a faster, more integrated and efficient approach in its humanitarian response that encompassed the entire organization's expertise. This was required to meet Member States' high demands for the UNFPA humanitarian mandate. UNFPA mainstreamed its humanitarian actions in all programming and budget areas. Since the Ukraine conflict began, UNFPA had moved from development to humanitarian action and reached over a million people with information on access to sexual and reproductive health services, protection from gender-based violence, and

psychosocial services. On food insecurity, UNFPA was collaborating with other United Nations organizations within its mandated areas.

101. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/11 on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018–2021: Report of the Executive Director.

XIII. Evaluation

102. The Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, presented his annual report on the evaluation function, 2021 ([DP/FPA/2022/5](#)) and the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) presented the management response to the report (DP/FPA/2022/CRP.1).

Annual report on the evaluation function, 2021: Report of the Director, Evaluation Office

103. In the sole intervention, a group of delegations commended the Evaluation Office for its flexibility adapting the evaluation function to the COVID-19 context and enabling evaluations to function as accelerators for COVID-19 recovery. The office was commended for developing the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2022–2025, evaluation strategy, 2022–2025, and strategy to enhance evaluation through communications and knowledge management. They appreciated the achievement of almost all key performance indicator targets and recognized the decentralized evaluation system had been strengthened, with a high implementation rate of evaluations of good quality. They highlighted the need to ensure timely, high quality, decentralized evaluations and appreciated the office's efforts to address it. They recognized the progress using decentralized evaluations for programme development and centralized evaluations for strategic planning and welcomed the push to involve youth in evaluations. They commended the office for the first-ever developmental evaluation that led to the development of more adaptive management with results-based management principles. They welcomed UNFPA efforts to strengthen national evaluation capacities and systems to accelerate the Goals and evidence-based decision-making and learning. They appreciated management's continued commitment to provide financial and human resources to support the evaluation function and encouraged UNFPA to increase investments for evaluation. They also welcomed the office's commitment to United Nations reform and joint evaluations at the central, regional and country levels.

104. In response, Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, welcomed the Board's expression of appreciation for progress on centralized and decentralized evaluations, and efforts to enhance United Nations coherence around evaluation and national evaluation capacity development. The office would maintain its current high performance by remaining flexible and adaptive and by addressing remaining challenges under Board guidance.

105. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/12 on UNFPA evaluation.

XIV. Country programmes and related matters

106. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) provided an overview of the CPDs for Kenya, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania. In turn, the regional directors for the East and Southern Africa region and for the Arab States region provided details from their regional perspectives.

107. Following adoption of the CPD for the Syrian Arab Republic, a group of delegations expressed serious concern with certain aspects of the United Nations

Strategic Framework for the Syrian Arab Republic, including the absence of language around armed conflict. They said United Nations operations had to adhere to the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence. Other delegations said the country programme was formulated in line with national priorities in consultation with the Government and underscored the need to preserve the principles of national sovereignty and ownership. It was stressed that the primary focus of Executive Board proceedings was operational activities for development.

108. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Kenya ([DP/FPA/CPD/KEN/10](#)), the Syrian Arab Republic ([DP/FPA/CPD/SYR/9](#)), and the United Republic of Tanzania ([DP/FPA/CPD/TZA/9](#)).

UNOPS segment

XV. Statement by the Executive Director and annual report

109. In his opening address ([available on the UNOPS website](#)), the UNOPS Executive Director, ad interim, drew attention to UNOPS failures managing the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative. He said the results of a thorough investigation by the Internal Audit and Investigations Group was shared with the UNOPS Office for Human Resources and the United Nations Office for Legal Affairs for potential disciplinary and legal action. UNOPS would carry the costs and potential losses and keep the Board abreast of progress to guarantee such situations never recurred. To address this situation, UNOPS would: (a) organize an independent review of UNOPS internal controls and governance; (b) conduct an immediate evaluation of S3i; (c) strengthen communication between internal audit and investigation, the ethics function, and the Board; (d) accelerate implementation of oversight body recommendations; (e) create a definition of “maximum reserve” and move surplus into development action; and (f) ensure access to more transaction data to give confidence to partners. The Executive Director, ad interim, sought the Board’s guidance on these priorities.

110. Members of the Bureau of the Board said the UNOPS situation constituted a political crisis of trust in the ability of the intergovernmental system to respond to global challenges. They urged the Board and Member States to enact controls and mechanisms to prevent reoccurrence of the situation and ensure accountability, based on clear understanding of underlying causes so the Board could exercise its oversight function. Bureau members called for UNOPS to: (a) fully cooperate with the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs and One Human Resources; (b) freeze all S3i projects and withdraw funding for new S3i-related projects; (c) initiate an independent evaluation of UNOPS internal controls and management model; (d) provide assurances of whistler-blower protection across the three organizations to counter the reported “culture of impunity” in UNOPS; and (e) devise a media communication strategy to ensure uniform communication from the Boards, Member States and organizations to the public on ongoing processes. They urged Board members to act collectively to ensure swift resolution and remediation of damages from S3i and revitalize trust in UNOPS and the United Nations.

111. A group of delegations expressed deep concern that UNOPS leadership allowed the handling of the S3i to jeopardize UNOPS and the United Nations reputation. They welcomed the expertise and reform-mindedness of the Executive Director, ad interim, to facilitate Board efforts and move forward in mutual respect and partnership with full transparency and accountability. They called for UNOPS to: (a) suspend new S3i investments pending further Board instruction; (b) ensure clear accounting of current

S3i investments and robust efforts to recover lost funds; (b) ensure S3i failings did not corrupt the integrity of the rest of UNOPS portfolio and project delivery; (c) create an expert working group to provide recommendations to the Board and to increase transparency around UNOPS management fees and costing structure; (d) initiate a third-party assessment of the use of portfolio and internal controls, including those related to S3i; (e) strengthen ethics and internal audit and investigation functions, including independence; (f) design a plan to address outstanding recommendations; (g) pursue full transparency and accessibility on whistle-blower protections; (h) ensure staff had space to raise concerns and engage leadership; and (i) release the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services investigative report as soon as possible.

112. Other delegations expressed serious concern that reported irregularities related to S3i were not transparently reflected in Board documents presented by UNOPS. They expressed extreme concern with the issues raised in the forensic audit reports by the Internal Audit and Investigation Group on sustainable housing solutions holdings and We are the Oceans. They welcomed the independent assessment of the UNOPS business model and internal control structures and independent audit of S3i investments. They stressed the importance of establishing a transparent, accountable, healthy organizational culture and an effective, accessible whistle-blower system. They called for full independence and capacity-building of UNOPS Independent Audit and Investigation Group and the Ethics and Compliance Office.

113. In response, the UNOPS Executive Director, ad interim, welcomed the Board's guidance and said UNOPS would step up efforts in the areas highlighted by the Board for the organization to address the S3i crisis. This included implementing a strict policy of zero tolerance for mismanagement, irregularities and fraud and ramped up transparency and accountability measures, including through clear communication with the Board, partners and stakeholders. UNOPS was developing real-time monitoring instruments so the Board would have unhindered access to progress. UNOPS would adhere to United Nations standards as an integral part of the reform agenda and to the highest international standards in monitoring and reporting. He stressed that UNOPS needed the strong support of all Member States and partners to succeed in getting back on track. The UNOPS Executive Director, ad interim, would regularly keep the Board informed of its efforts in formal and informal sessions going forward.

114. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/13 on the annual report of the Executive Director and the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) reserve.

Part three
Second regular session 2022

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 29 August to 1 September 2022**

I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session 2021 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS continued to be held virtually, on an exceptional basis, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, from 30 August to 2 September 2021.

2. The second regular session 2022 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held in person at United Nations Headquarters from 29 August to 1 September 2022.

3. The Executive Board adopted the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2022 (DP/2022/L.3), as orally amended, and approved the report of the annual session 2022 (DP/2022/26). The Board took note of the draft annual workplan for 2023 (DP/2022/CRP.2) and approved the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2023.

4. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the second regular session 2022 appeared in document DP/2023/3, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).

5. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2022/23 to the following schedule for sessions of the Executive Board in 2023:

First regular session:	30 January to 3 February 2023
Annual session:	5 to 9 June 2023
Second regular session:	28 August to 2 September 2023

Statement by the President of the Board

6. In her opening remarks, the President of the Board said the second regular session offered an opportunity for Board members to navigate out of the difficult issues discussed during the annual session 2022. The world continued to see the damaging effects of climate change and the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic while conflicts continued to drive up the price of food and fuel, disrupting global supply chains. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 seemed ever more difficult. The international community and the United Nations system had to show their resolve and determination through greater collaboration and coordination at all levels, building on their comparative advantages to ensure the greatest impact with limited resources. There was no time to waste on fragmented interventions and competitions. Investments in innovation had to go hand-in-hand with proper risk management and due diligence. Bold actions and ideas were urgently needed. The President drew attention to the main issues to be discussed at the session, including: (a) financing and funding the United Nations development system, commitments to the United Nations funding compact, the importance of the structured funding dialogues, and how to stimulate innovative partnerships to achieve the Goals; (b) continuing to address the failures of UNOPS raised at the annual session, building on the discussions of the working group mandated at the annual session 2022, which required continuous, swift and decisive action, to rebuild the crumbled trust; and (c) strengthening the oversight mechanisms of all New York-based organizations to ensure they were able to deliver on their mandates.

UNDP segment

Interactive dialogue with the Administrator

7. In his opening remarks ([available on the UNDP website](#)), the UNDP Administrator unpacked the unprecedented multiple, complex crises that were

impacting and setting back years of hard earned development gains across the globe. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, numerous conflicts, devastated economies, famine and starvation, debt accumulation, and the continuing crisis of faith in multilateralism. All of these defined the global “uncertainty complex”. Against that backdrop, he stressed that decisions made today would determine the lives of current and future generations – and those decisions related to finance would be among the most significant. Sufficient, well-aligned public and private finance, steered by the right international and national policies, he asserted, would largely determine whether humanity lived in peace and prosperity or insecurity and constant want. He underscored, in that vein, how all UNDP efforts to advance human development and security depended on the right international and national financing decisions. He in turn described how UNDP was propelling major shifts in those financing choices across the broader landscape of development finance, both public and private. Despite the menace of multiple crises, he stressed that the international community could – through the right financing and policy choices – meet the daunting challenges and succeed. Money per se was not the issue but rather where money was spent and by whom, and who benefitted or not. Otherwise, a focus on short-term gains and simply resolving crises – without investing in development – would continue to undercut multilateral commitments and imperil trust and goodwill on a global scale. Finance had to work towards inclusive and sustainable development that minimized uncertainty and risks. UNDP, he stated, was already demonstrating practical solutions to rethink and reorient billions of dollars and put development back on the right track.

8. Members of the Bureau of the Board underscored that ongoing global crises were a reminder of how crucial the United Nations development system and UNDP were for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. They called for a renewed commitment by all Member States to multilateralism and to the United Nations development system in accordance with respect for national ownership and nationally defined priorities. They encouraged all Member States to double their efforts to support the United Nations development system at the political, financial and programmatic levels to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of United Nations interventions. They also strongly encouraged UNDP to continue to innovate, build partnerships, and find new opportunities for joint approaches with other United Nations organizations. They stressed that international development was not only a comprehensive part of a common approach to supporting countries in crisis but was also the right path to address root causes, undertake structural transformation, and prevent additional crises. They called on Member States to jointly work towards improving the quality and quantity of development funding, especially flexible regular (core) resources, to ensure UNDP was able to fulfil its mandate, respond to programme countries priorities, and support the achievement of the Goals.

9. A cross-regional group of developing countries stressed that while current geopolitical challenges were daunting, there were opportunities to unite in international solidarity. They reiterated the call made at the annual session 2022 for Member States not to turn their backs on collective action in the United Nations development system, which played a key role in supporting countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. They said there was a dire need for the United Nations development system to have predictable, adequate and sustainable funding and, in that regard, they reiterated their concern with the trend of cuts in regular resources. They stressed that prioritization of emergency responses should not come at the expense of immediate and long-term development investments, which would undermine the ability to address the root causes of crisis. Furthermore, humanitarian responses should not be financed by defunding development. They reemphasized that the mandate set by the General Assembly in the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (resolution [75/233](#)) had to be fully implemented by the United Nations system and

the Executive Board had to play its oversight and guidance role to ensure full compliance. The group welcomed the assessment by the independent Office of Audit and Investigation on its independence and noted the high international standards of transparency of UNDP. In closing, they underscored that: (a) poverty eradication had to remain the overarching focus of the United Nations development system; (b) basic principles such as national ownership and leadership were critically important for the delivery of effective results; and (c) there should be no one-size-fits-all approach, and each programme had to reflect the realities and needs of programme countries.

10. A regional group of countries reiterated the central role UNDP and the United Nations development system played in efforts to achieve the Goals and made a strong appeal for appropriate and predictable levels of funding in line with commitments made by Member States, including the urgent need to balance regular and other (non-core) resources. They stressed that financing had to be the top priority of development and multilateral cooperation discussions, focused on making the world sustainable, equitable, just, peaceful and secure. They expressed grave concern with trends to cut development financing and stressed that joint action was necessary to ensure the quantity and quality of funding for development. This was especially true for flexible regular resources funding, which allowed UNDP and the United Nations development system to address the self-identified priorities of programme countries focused on the interconnected priorities of people and planet.

11. Another regional group of countries also expressed concern with the trends in cuts to regular funding and the continued failure to meet funding commitments. They stressed that divergence of funding to specific issues directly impacted the resources available for countries in Africa and the broader development system. They underscored that developed countries had a responsibility to provide sufficient and predictable funding to the United Nations development system and UNDP. They also stressed that UNDP and other United Nations system organizations should ensure funds were not diverted in a reactionary manner to audit and oversight functions and activities, but rather they should find the optimal balance between oversight and development.

12. In other interventions, delegations drew attention to the catalytic impact of UNDP interventions across sectors, including the humanitarian-development-peace continuum and in areas such as digitalization. They reiterated their appreciation for UNDP support to the United Nations system-wide response to the COVID-19 pandemic and called on UNDP to continue to invest in prevention and resilience and in human security-focused development assessments. Delegations called on UNDP to ensure its engagement with private sector industries met with the highest transparency, accountability and oversight standards.

13. In response, the Administrator began by underscoring that UNDP was deeply committed to working with Governments as part of their national development processes through a partnership grounded in decades-long trust, assisting national policymaking to address vulnerabilities and investment priorities. This included working with a host of United Nations and other partners to support some 80 countries in designing integrated national financing frameworks, thereby aiming at influencing around \$500 billion in public finance related to the Sustainable Development Goals and other related international agreements, over the course of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025. He stated that UNDP was one of the most present institutions globally able to connect development decision-making at the country level – through the national sovereignty lens – with national commitments at the global level. In this spirit, he appealed to Member States to convey to their capitals the political, economic and diplomatic significance of development finance and the urgent measures needed to address the world's multiple intersecting crises. Likewise, he appealed to Member States, under the agreed principles of United Nations reform, to adhere to their

commitments under the United Nations funding compact, while underscoring that UNDP had delivered on the majority of its funding compact-related commitments, despite the major impact of the reform on UNDP.

14. The Administrator highlighted the close engagement of UNDP, as a major partner to Governments, with the private sector, as a multilateral, publicly financed institution that invests in local and global public goods. He stressed that while UNDP engagement with the private sector was necessary, any move in the direction of direct funding from the private sector would require careful interpretation and interrogation. UNDP, he highlighted, actively sought to engage with the Board in a fully transparent manner and had proven its commitment to approach oversight issues – including evaluation, ethics, and environmental and social compliance – with the utmost seriousness, regularly reviewing its policies and making amendments as needed, in response to recommendations, while reducing overhead costs as much as possible for greater gains and efficiencies. The Administrator also spoke of the UNDP “portfolio logic” that had grown out of its climate promise and that made it possible to interconnect individual climate projects at the national level, bring about closer communication among countries, and elevate the nationally determined contributions to guide national development investments. He drew attention to the local-level nature and capacity of much of UNDP work, from the least developed countries to the small island developing States, where innovative approaches were being implemented. The UNDP accelerator labs played a central role in those efforts in some 92 countries, supporting the creation of start-up businesses. Similarly, in 2022 UNDP had established a sustainable energy hub to leverage those assets and help millions of people gain access to clean and affordable electricity – an aspirational goal of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2022–2025.

II. Structured funding dialogue

15. The Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, presented the report on the structured dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (DP/2022/28) and the Executive Secretary, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) presented the annual review of the financial situation of UNCDF, 2021 (DP/2022/29).

16. A group of delegations said global crises were placing severe pressure on the UNDP ability to implement its normative and programmatic work. Adequate resourcing, with flexible and predictable multi-year funding, was key to supporting the effectiveness of the United Nations development system, as were commitments made by Member States under the United Nations funding compact and the allocation and promotion of flexible regular (core) resources. The group: (a) underscored that expanding and diversifying the regular resources contributor base had to be an important UNDP objective, including by further engaging partners such as the private sector, the international financial institutions, and government partners not members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and by improving the visibility and accountability of regular resources funding; (b) expressed concern that the downward trend in regular resources could jeopardize the ability of UNDP to deliver on its mandate; (c) stressed that pooled and thematic funding allowed for better instrumentalization of comparative advantages and could serve as an accelerator for the implementation of United Nations reform and, in that light, expressed concern at the recent decline in pooled funds and joint programmes; (d) recognized UNDP work in South-South and triangular cooperation and encouraged UNDP to continue cooperate with other United Nations organizations, especially the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation; and (e) expressed appreciation for UNDP efforts

in collaborating with UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to improve the structured funding dialogues by strengthening reporting and engaging the executive boards.

17. In other interventions, UNDP efforts to develop its financing structure and unlock resources to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals were welcome, especially its portfolio approach at the country level and its work on the integrated national financing frameworks. That said, there was continuing concern with the drop in regular resources, which it was noted could jeopardize the ability of UNDP to deliver its mandate, both in crisis and long-term development settings. A more balanced approach to managing the multilateral system and multilateral institutions such as UNDP was urgent. UNDP was urged to broaden its regular resources donor base and Member States to adhere to their shared commitments and responsibilities in that regard.

18. On the UNCDF front, delegations underscored the Fund's catalytic investment model focused on least developed countries and potential key role in achieving the Goals. They commended UNCDF for substantially increasing its resources, proof of its success and relevance in addressing development challenges across the globe and at the local level. They regretted however that a large portion of UNCDF resources consisted of earmarked funding while its regular resources base remained below the agreed objective. They strongly encouraged Member States to increase their regular resources contributions to UNCDF and for UNCDF to continue to broaden its donor base for regular resources.

19. In response, the Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, said that to broaden its regular resources donor base UNDP had to be able to showcase that Member States funding of UNDP was an effective and efficient way to invest in the United Nations. UNDP was closely engaged with a broad range of DAC and non-DAC members and seeking ways to leverage funding at the country level through government cost-sharing for its global and portfolio work. UNDP was also engaged with the international financial institutions to bring partners together in a strategic effort through the integrated national financing frameworks. Similarly, UNDP continued to work with the private sector and had proven successful in leveraging public investments for development and climate finance – an approach, she suggested, that UNDP should explore further in lieu of exerting its energy seeking private funding for UNDP, which came with risks and liabilities. While recognizing concern expressed over the decline in pooled funding, she highlighted that though it continued to use the modality in humanitarian settings UNDP had handed over their management in many cases but continued to work with partners when pooled funding was a good option.

20. The Executive Secretary, UNCDF, said UNCDF was working across the globe to broaden its regular resources donor base, including through outreach to new and emerging partner Governments and by communicating about the value of investing in UNCDF and its unique value proposition as a catalytic financing entity in the United Nations development system. More broadly, the Executive Secretary highlighted UNCDF approaches to mobilizing other (non-core) resources from the private sector and its continued efforts to focus on innovative finance approaches to mobilize financing for the Sustainable Development Goals in least developed countries, including from local and global capital markets and through, for example, the use of guarantees and bond structures. The Blue Peace Bond was mentioned as one example under development to raise capital for sustainable infrastructure investments. UNCDF also engaged with the international financial institutions and other partners to support development and de-risking of pipelines of bankable sustainable development investments. In terms of its direct loans, it was clarified that UNCDF traditionally

focused on the last mile, with loan sizes generally below \$500,000, a good size investment for local-level development, prepping the terrain for local banks and the international financial institutions. UNCDF also aimed to expand its capital markets work to explore more sizable transactions in countries.

21. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/18 on the UNDP structured funding dialogue.

III. Country programmes and related matters

22. In her statement to the Board, the Associate Administrator, UNDP, provided an overview of the country programme documents for Ghana, Niger, South Sudan, Zambia, India, Mongolia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kyrgyzstan, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova and Tajikistan; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Guinea, Myanmar and Ukraine; and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and the Sudan.

23. In turn, the regional directors for Africa, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Arab States, and Asia and the Pacific provided details from the regional perspective.

24. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme document for Ghana (DP/DCP/GHA/4), Niger (DP/DCP/NER/4), South Sudan (DP/DCP/SSD/4), Zambia (DP/DCP/ZMB/4), India (DP/DCP/IND/4), Mongolia (DP/DCP/MNG/4), Pakistan (DP/DCP/PAK/4), Sri Lanka (DP/DCP/LKA/4), Egypt (DP/DCP/EGY/3), Jordan (DP/DCP/JOR/4), Libya (DP/DCP/LBY/4), Saudi Arabia (DP/DCP/SAU/4), Yemen (DP/DCP/YEM/3), Kyrgyzstan (DP/DCP/KGZ/4), Montenegro (DP/DCP/MNE/3), Republic of Moldova (DP/DCP/MDA/4) and Tajikistan (DP/DCP/TAJ/4).

25. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Guinea, Myanmar and Ukraine, as approved by the Administrator, as presented in document [DP/2022/30](#).

26. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and the Sudan, as presented in document [DP/2022/30](#).

UNFPA segment

Statement by the Executive Director

27. In her opening remarks ([on the UNFPA website](#)), the UNFPA Executive Director highlighted that the world population set to reach 8 billion in 2022 was a call to action to come together to tackle multiple intersecting challenges – through people-centred population policies with sexual and reproductive health and rights at their core. Guided by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, UNFPA would continue to help countries address demographic challenges by enhancing rights and choices and investing in the capacity of all people. In that spirit, UNFPA would continue to push to achieve the three transformative results and stay true to its promise to provide hope to the “10-year-old girl”. The 30-year review of the ICPD, coming up in 2024, offers opportunities to raise awareness and to accelerate progress. In its work to achieve those goals, in the small island developing States (SIDS), for instance, UNFPA aimed to increase resilience to

present and future challenges. More broadly, UNFPA urges countries to recognize the importance of age-appropriate life skills and comprehensive sexuality education, helping to prevent gender inequalities, reduce HIV, early and unintended pregnancies and harmful practices, and seize the demographic dividend.

28. The Executive Director stressed UNFPA was operating extensively in humanitarian settings, working in cooperation with other United Nations organizations in over 60 countries, including in Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Ukraine and Somalia, expanding its capacity to deliver integrated sexual and reproductive health and gender-based violence services. UNFPA was committed to the highest standards of accountability and transparency, as well as zero tolerance for wrongdoing, while deepening its investment in oversight functions (notably audit and investigation, evaluation and ethics), with full respect for their independence. UNFPA also takes seriously its accountability to the women, girls and communities it serves, to deliver on the promise of Cairo and on the Sustainable Development Goals.

29. UNFPA had its strongest financial performance to date in 2021, reaching \$1.464 billion, well above the strategic plan targets. The funding situation, however, remained mixed: while other (non-core) resources had seen steady growth, core funding did not increase. The imbalance between regular (core) and other resources was of growing concern and could jeopardize the ability of UNFPA to deliver on the three transformative results and the ICPD Programme of Action. She appealed to Member States to step up contributions to regular resources and to meet their commitments under the United Nations funding compact.

30. The Regional Director, West and Central Africa, noted in that region high fertility rates were continuing to drive rapid population growth. Girls' empowerment programmes, supported by UNFPA and Governments, contributed to reductions in the prevalence of child marriage. Such investments in women and young people remained critical in helping countries reap the demographic dividend. She spoke of numerous overlapping crises in the Sahel and how the climate crisis was threatening progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Appealing to partners to step up support for the Sahel to safeguard development gains and empower young people, she underlined the importance of UNFPA work in the region on female genital mutilation on reintegrating former combatants into their communities, and on innovative financing.

31. Members of the Bureau of the Board commended UNFPA for its efforts to accelerate the three transformative results. They welcomed the healthy financial situation, with contributions to regular and other resources reaching above the strategic plan 2022–2025 targets, as well as the scaling up of innovations and partnerships with other United Nations organizations, international financial institutions, the European Commission and private-sector contributors. They recognized the organization's progress, achieving or surpassing most output targets in the strategic plan, while maintaining the positive trend in ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment. They commended UNFPA activities through its thematic funds and joint programmes and for increasing humanitarian action. They welcomed its successful strategic outreach and mobilization efforts that has increased the number of donors to regular resources. They concurred that the decline in regular funding was a challenge, along with the ever-growing humanitarian needs. They encouraged UNFPA to continue to expand its donor base and agreed to support austerity measures, if needed, to ensure financial sustainability. They encouraged Member States to continue to support UNFPA, including through flexible funding.

32. A group of delegations said countries required reliable data to meet the needs of diverse populations, ensure individuals realized their full potential, leave no woman or girl behind, and said that access to comprehensive sexuality education,

contraception and safe abortion are key to save and improve millions of lives. The group expressed support for an integration of a climate lens into UNFPA programming to make women and girls adaptable and resilient to future threats and uncertainties. A strong gender focus was needed in climate adaptation and advocacy strategies, as well as for reducing the negative impacts on the climate and environment of UNFPA programmatic activities. The group sought clarity on the capacity of UNFPA in climate and the environment efforts and how these were mainstreamed into programming.

33. In individual interventions, delegations welcomed UNFPA leveraging of United Nations development system reform in contributing to the achievement of the Goals, and UNFPA recognition that synergistic action was needed among United Nations organizations and partners, based on their respective comparative advantages, and tailored to self-defined national priorities and the 2020 quadrennial comprehensive policy review. UNFPA had demonstrated exemplary cooperation with other United Nations organizations through joint analysis, joint planning and joint work – a model that should lead the way forward, including in the humanitarian-development-peace continuum.

34. Delegations drew attention to the importance of UNFPA work at the country level – amid the pandemic, rising global poverty and the climate crisis – in improving health care systems, ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health and family planning services, and addressing gender-based violence, including in humanitarian settings and among refugee and displaced populations. They applauded UNFPA work in fragile settings to uplift and empower women and girls, advocate for bodily autonomy, improve access to quality contraception and ensure safe delivery.

35. While the robust financial performance of UNFPA was welcomed, a concern in the decline in regular resources led some delegations to urge UNFPA to continue to motivate donors to increase flexible, predictable regular funding levels and Member States to fulfil their commitments under the United Nations funding compact. They welcomed UNFPA work to further expand and diversify the donor base, including by working with the international financial institutions, the private sector and individual donors, as well as through South-South and triangular cooperation. They highlighted the twofold increase in contributions by developing countries and called on UNFPA, given the funding landscape, to strengthen and differentiate its comparative advantage, including in the humanitarian area, in its discussions with donors. They commended UNFPA promotion of domestic resource mobilization and called for greater efforts to raise the visibility and recognition of Member States' contributions, especially to regular resources and the thematic funds.

36. Delegations expressed support for UNFPA prevention and response to sexual abuse, exploitation and harassment, and encouraged the organization to continue strengthening its culture of “zero tolerance”. UNFPA should continue to work with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to promote comprehensive sexuality education based on scientific evidence. They recognized UNFPA advocacy work to counter hate speech and disinformation on the rights of women and other populations, including racism and other forms of discrimination. They commended UNFPA work and policies to promote and ensure the rights of women and girls of African descent, Indigenous peoples and young people. They commended UNFPA work in Africa overall, including on the youth bulge and the demographic dividend, and stressed the need for increased partnerships in training and capacity development to leverage local expertise and accelerate achievement of the three transformative results.

37. Delegations welcomed the continued support of UNFPA to national censuses through improved data collection to ensure no one is invisible, and its development of reliable demographic statistics. The organization was encouraged to improve its capacity for population data collection and analysis, expand investment in big data collection through innovative means, and increase availability and timeliness of data on key indicators. They encouraged UNFPA to continue to develop its professional expertise, thematic studies and exchanges of useful experiences and practices in addressing low fertility and ageing societies. Transparency and accountability of UNFPA audit, investigation and oversight functions were key, and UNFPA was asked to provide the Board with assurances on its governance risk management and control processes in a timely manner.

38. In response, the Executive Director stressed the UNFPA focus on the three transformative results, and particularly gender-based violence and harmful practices, was grounded in data, including geo-referenced data. That data allowed it to tailor its work to local contexts and support government leadership while engaging with partners skilled to help achieve the three transformative results and work with country-level statistical departments. Global demographics was evolving to become ever more diverse, prompting UNFPA to address the issues of longevity, low fertility, ageing and population decline. In that effort, UNFPA supported centres of excellence for civil registration and vital statistics to help countries promote universal health coverage through a life-course approach that was inclusive and gender-responsive. UNFPA would continue to leverage its thematic funds to achieve those goals while strategically reaching out to new partners and maintaining its strong relationship with existing donors. A strong, flexible regular resources base was nevertheless crucial for the achievement of the three transformative results and for enabling UNFPA to respond to gender-based violence and crisis situations. Meanwhile, UNFPA focused on training staff to respond to the constantly changing, complex development landscape and ensuring the highest international standards of accountability and transparency, including through its independent oversight functions; that included “zero tolerance” and a strong speak-up culture. UNFPA is committed to working on climate change and had created an interdivisional technical working group to help apply a climate lens to the strategic plan, 2022–2025. At the country level, UNFPA was focused on community-level resilience and planning to face the impacts of climate change, in collaboration with other United Nations organizations; this community-level focus was also central to its humanitarian mandate to create safe spaces for women, girls, youth and the most vulnerable in crisis settings.

39. On its work in comprehensive sexuality education, the Executive Director underscored the importance of giving young people life skills grounded in the principle of bodily autonomy. Preparing young people for present and future challenges and making them agents of change and peacebuilders was central to that effort. Regarding UNFPA work with vulnerable groups, this included supporting people of African descent and Indigenous peoples. Regardless of a country’s situation, UNFPA promotes the principle that women have the right to determine their choices and exercise their rights over their sexual and reproductive health.

40. The Deputy Executive Director (Management) noted UNFPA had developed a climate strategy, in line with the United Nations Secretary-General’s reform efforts, to reduce its carbon footprint globally. That effort included UNFPA exploring, at the country level, new “green” premises and shared premises, for example.

41. The Director, Division of Communication and Strategic Partnerships, emphasized that broadening partnerships and diversifying the resource base was central to UNFPA efforts to achieve the three transformative results. Noting that the revenue in the UNFPA thematic funds had increased by 9 per cent during 2020–2021, he stressed the diverse set of thematic funds allowed UNFPA to receive funding,

manage them efficiently and deliver results effectively. The thematic funds were valuable because they complemented and strengthened the regular resources base, allowing UNFPA to do more on the ground. UNFPA was exploring how the private sector could contribute to the thematic funds while it sought to increase individual giving to regular resources.

42. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted the 30th anniversary of the ICPD Programme of Action in 2024 presented an opportunity for Member States to reflect on achievements and to envision the way forward. She called on Member States to work with UNFPA to accelerate progress against its strategic plan, 2022–2025, focusing on its important normative role. She underscored the need for UNFPA to effectively address gender-based violence across in all country settings, an effort that required the participation of all sectors of government.

IV. Structured funding dialogue

43. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management), followed by the Director, Division of Communication and Strategic Partnerships, presented the report on the structured funding dialogue, 2021–2022 ([DP/FPA/2022/10](#)) in response to General Assembly resolution [75/233](#) to further improve the functioning and effectiveness of structured dialogues on how to fund the development results agreed in the strategic plans, including through the implementation of the United Nations funding compact commitments.

44. A group of delegations encouraged UNFPA to expand and diversify its regular resources contributor base and pursue a broader, more diversified donor base overall, noting it should focus on further engaging partners such as the private sector, international financial institutions, and government partners that were not members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) – while strengthening strategic dialogue with potential and present regular resources funders and improving the visibility and accountability of regular resources funding, including at the country level. The group expressed concern that further reductions in regular resources risked weakening the ability of UNFPA to deliver on its mandate and its commitment to transparency and accountability. They underscored that delivery of programmes through joint initiatives and pooled and thematic funding allowed for better instrumentalization of the respective comparative advantages and served as an accelerator for the implementation of United Nations development system reform. In that regard, they expressed concern with the decline in funding for pooled funds and joint programmes. They recognized the potential of South-South and triangular cooperation in accelerating inclusive and effective implementation of the strategic plan, 2022–2025, and the organization’s work to accelerate implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action. UNFPA was encouraged to continue its work in that regard, especially in cooperation with other United Nations development system entities. They commended UNFPA efforts to continuously improve the structured funding dialogue through strengthened reporting and engagement with the Executive Board.

45. In a separate intervention, a delegation commended UNFPA for exceeding its 2018–2021 revenue targets for regular and other resources and welcomed UNFPA efforts to sustain and diversify its funding base through its strategic resource mobilization campaign. UNFPA was encouraged to provide a more complete picture of resource mobilization for its humanitarian interventions for 2021 as well as details on who was contributing and under what mechanisms. UNFPA was also encouraged to utilize the Executive Board, including through the structured funding dialogues, to set out the comparative advantages of the various flexible funding instruments to

support humanitarian delivery, including the emergency fund. Clarity was sought on the specific benefits and added value of each funding mechanism.

46. In response, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) appealed to Member States to step up contributions to regular resources, which allowed UNFPA to respond to crises as needed and in a timely manner. UNFPA also sought to expand and diversify its donor base, including through the private sector and individual giving. UNFPA was working to reverse the decline in contributions to pooled funds in collaboration with other United Nations organizations and appealed to Member States to adhere to their commitments in the United Nations funding compact.

47. The Director, Division of Communication and Strategic Partnerships, welcomed the suggestion to continue the strategic dialogue with key donors and highlighted that UNFPA had developed a strong package of media resources for country offices to use to foster contributions to regular resources. He highlighted that the UNFPA emergency fund was funded through regular resources, which allowed UNFPA to bridge the gap in crisis situations, while the humanitarian trust fund received voluntary contributions as other resources.

48. The Director, Humanitarian Office, noted that because most maternal mortality and gender-based violence cases occurred in humanitarian settings, it was critical that UNFPA enhance its humanitarian intervention capacities. Furthermore, despite the urgent need for care for millions of women affected by gender-based violence, only 20 percent of these needs are funded. The emergency fund and the humanitarian trust fund gave UNFPA the high-quality funding and flexibility to respond to this urgent need. UNFPA uses the emergency fund (funded from regular resources) and the humanitarian trust fund (funded from other resources, and which has the advantage of lower indirect cost recovery compared to bilateral other resources funding). She appealed to Member States to step up contributions to the humanitarian trust fund.

49. The Director, Technical Division, underscored UNFPA had long supported South-South and triangular cooperation at the country level. South-South cooperation was ideal in that it built on existing national expertise, initiatives and solutions and was cost effective. In its strategic plan, 2022–2025, UNFPA posited South-South and triangular cooperation as an accelerator of development progress. UNFPA actively shared its South-South and triangular cooperation lessons and solutions across the United Nations development system, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

50. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/19 on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue.

V. Country programmes and related matters

51. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) presented an overview of the UNFPA country programme documents for Ghana, India, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Republic of Moldova, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Yemen and Zambia; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Angola, Guinea, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Ukraine; the two-year extension of the country programme for Djibouti; and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and Sudan. In turn, the regional directors for Asia and the Pacific; Eastern Europe and Central Asia; East and Southern Africa; West and Central Africa; and the Arab States provided details from their regional perspectives.

52. The Executive Board approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the UNFPA country programme documents for Ghana ([DP/FPA/CPD/GHA/8](#)); India

(DP/FPA/CPD/IND/10); Jordan (DP/FPA/CPD/JOR/10); Kyrgyzstan (DP/FPA/CPD/KGZ/5); Mongolia (DP/FPA/CPD/MNG/7); Morocco (DP/FPA/CPD/MAR/10); Niger (DP/FPA/CPD/NER/10); Pakistan (DP/FPA/CPD/PAK/10); Republic of Moldova (DP/FPA/CPD/MDA/4); South Sudan (DP/FPA/CPD/SSD/4); Sri Lanka (DP/FPA/CPD/LKA/10); Tajikistan (DP/FPA/CPD/TJK/5); Yemen (DP/FPA/CPD/YEM/6); and Zambia (DP/FPA/CPD/ZMB/9).

53. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions, approved by the UNFPA Executive Director, of the country programmes for Angola, Guinea, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Ukraine, and it approved the two-year extension of the country programme for Djibouti and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Sudan, as contained in document [DP/FPA/2022/11](#).

UNOPS segment

VI. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Statement by the Acting Executive Director

54. In his opening remarks ([available on the UNOPS website](#)), the UNOPS Acting Executive Director drew attention to UNOPS progress in implementing the 10-point action plan presented at the annual session of the Board in June 2022 and designed to address the reported failures associated with the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative. The aim of the action plan was to restore trust and ensure such failures never recurred. He indicated that UNOPS had already implemented three of the 10 points. UNOPS had: (a) suspended all S3i investments, consolidated and frozen the operational reserves, and rebalanced its underlying investment portfolio; (b) completed an internal assessment of the independence of its audit and investigation functions, the findings of which were reported to the Board at the present session; (c) developed a timeline to implement all outstanding recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), and the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU); and (d) issued requests for proposals for two third-party reviews in response to the Board request that UNOPS provide reviews on oversight for S3i and its internal control systems. He indicated that the multinational audit firm KPMG had been selected to carry out the reviews and had already begun its work. He looked forward to continuing to work with the working group established by the Board at the annual session 2022 to guide UNOPS in its endeavour to address the S3i failures.

55. The Acting Executive Director said that while the third-party reviews were underway UNOPS was acting internally to change its governance and control environment, focused on accountability mechanisms, internal audit and investigation, the ethics function, UNOPS reserves, pricing policy, communication with its partners, its Client Board, and Sustainable Development Goals impact. He stressed that UNOPS continued to take the failures of the S3i initiative extremely seriously and, while doing so, it also continued to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. Likewise, UNOPS staff on the ground continued to deliver on the principle of leaving no one behind with staunch commitment and a willingness to go the last mile. In that light, the time was right to restate the UNOPS value proposition within the context of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

56. Across the board, delegations welcomed the 10-point action plan, the proposed timeline to implement outstanding recommendations, and steps UNOPS was taking

under the leadership of the Acting Executive Director to address the reported failures associated with S3i. But they reiterated their deep concern with the reported misconduct within UNOPS in managing the initiative and in interfering with its internal oversight function. They welcomed the work of the working group established by the Board at the annual session 2022 and encouraged UNOPS to continue to work closely with the working group to set things straight and rebuild trust.

57. Members of the Bureau of the Executive Board stressed the importance of the third-party reviews and the progress UNOPS was making in addressing the issue and implementing Board decision 2022/13. They underscored the complexity of the task, including the long road toward rebuilding trust and accountability – not only in UNOPS but the whole United Nations system. They urged the timely completion of the 10-point action plan, including but not limited to the recovery of funds as guided by the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs, the implementation of all outstanding recommendations by the United Nations Board of Auditors, the ACABQ and the JIU, and the completion of the third party-assessments by KPMG so they could feed into the work of the working group set up by the Board at the annual session 2022. They stressed the need for parallel processes to address structural and cultural inefficiencies within UNOPS, ensuring accountability for perpetrators as a top priority.

58. A group of delegations stressed the role of the Board in guiding UNOPS towards a better future with renewed global credibility and trust and a focus on improving the lives of the world's most vulnerable populations. They would continue to support UNOPS and its staff in their work in continuing to deliver for beneficiaries under very challenging circumstances. They reassured UNOPS staff they were a top priority for the Board and they looked forward to renewing staff motivation and enthusiasm to deliver a new UNOPS mandate worldwide. The delegations were committed to seeking full accountability for what transpired within UNOPS, crucial to restoring its global credibility. UNOPS needed to establish a more transparent business model that left no doubt about its mandate, motivations and commitment to delivering results for its intended beneficiaries. They underscored that future Board decisions regarding UNOPS reserves could only come after full accountability was achieved; the Board would continue to restrict UNOPS reserves to the operational reserve for daily operations only. They called on the Acting Executive Director to ensure the third-party reviews conducted by KPMG were thorough, independent and provided the analysis the Board needed to take future action that would support the best interests of UNOPS. They expected the results of those reviews to be presented to the Board at the earliest possible time to allow for immediate discussion and follow up.

59. Another group of delegations welcomed the new format for the UNOPS annual report and efforts to clarify its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals. They also welcomed the third-party reviews by KPMG. They reiterated the importance of ensuring that any wrongdoing and corruption was fully investigated, and that all involved were held fully accountable regardless of their status in the organization. They emphasized the need to establish a transparent, accountable and healthy organizational culture where staff felt safe to raise issues of concern. It was important for the internal audit and investigation functions to have full independence and for the ethics and compliance office to have adequate human and financial resources and capacity and be given full access to information and data to carry out their work in an independent manner. Protecting whistle-blower rights and accountability in the United Nations system as a whole was crucial.

60. Other delegations said that in a time of triple crises – finance, environment, and food – UNOPS had a pivotal role to play in providing quality infrastructure and innovative procurement and management and in building national and local capacities. They welcomed the concrete measures UNOPS was taking to restore trust

through the time-bound implementation of the 10-point action plan. The key to overcoming the UNOPS crisis was openness and transparency. They therefore welcomed UNOPS steps to remedy the shortcomings in the governance, management and internal control systems. Regret was nevertheless expressed that UNOPS had not yet made greater progress and taken more decisive action to address the S3i failures. A sign of more explicit and in-depth changes within UNOPS was urgently needed, including more comprehensive structural revisions of its business model. The United Nations Secretariat was urged to share the independent investigative report on UNOPS with Member States and the Executive Board.

61. One delegation, on behalf of the working group established by the Board to address the S3i failures, presented the working group's report and a detailed account of its progress to date. The working group had agreed on the terms of reference for the third-party reviews for UNOPS internal control systems, risk management and overall governance structure, as well as the terms of reference for UNOPS oversight mechanisms for the S3i initiative. The report explored UNOPS history as well as Board decisions and UNOPS reports that dealt with the progressively growing financial irregularities. The delegation said UNOPS was highly cooperative and responded rapidly to the working group's requests. As part of its report, the working group provided the Board options for the use of UNOPS reserves. Going forward, the working group sought continued Board guidance to ensure a more focused report at the first regular session 2023.

62. On the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system ([DP/OPS/2022/6](#)), also presented during the UNOPS segment, one delegation noted that large volumes of United Nations organizations' budgets were used for procurement of goods and services and welcomed that the United Nations had played a major role in the procurement and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines and medical equipment. The delegation welcomed capacity-building efforts to strengthen the sustainable procurement systems of Governments and partners and urged UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to strengthen the capacity of partner countries to ensure they comply with procurement rules and systems, especially given that procurement was a risk area for irregularities, mismanagement and corrupt practices.

63. In response, the Acting Executive Director assured the Board that UNOPS would: (a) follow the 10-point action plan with the highest transparency; (b) accelerate the work of the independent reviews of the S3i failures ensuring their timeliness and quality; and (c) continue to manage UNOPS so that it delivered on and maintained the integrity of its existing portfolio. He stressed the importance of reviewing and re-establishing as soon as possible UNOPS strategic position, business model and value proposition. On the procurement front, he said the present crisis within UNOPS offered the opportunity for it to reengage more closely with other United Nations organizations to strengthen common procurement and common capacity development, and to strengthen its own procurement practices in greater transparency. He reiterated that UNOPS would be fully transparent in progress reporting to ensure the Board was able to hold management at all levels accountable for the change needed in the organization.

64. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/20 on the annual statistical report on United Nations procurement, 2021.

65. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/21 on UNOPS: progress on actions addressing the situation of the sustainable investment in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative.

Joint segment

VII. Update on oversight matters

66. The UNFPA Director ad interim, Office for Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS), the UNDP Director, Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), and the UNOPS Director, Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), provided assessments on the independence of their offices, as requested in Board decision 2022/15; this was followed by the management responses from the UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) and the UNOPS Acting Executive Director.

67. Members of the Bureau said the Board had requested the organizations' self-assessments as part of efforts to strengthen their internal governance systems, identify risks and address possible systemic issues. They recognized that, according to the self-assessments, the independence of the UNDP and UNFPA oversight bodies conformed to their charters and to international standards in audit and principles and guidelines on investigations. They expressed alarm, however, at the assessment of the independence of the UNOPS IAIG and the reported interference from senior management in IAIG audit and investigation functions, which had led to its reform. That, the Bureau said, was an unacceptable transgression of the integrity of UNOPS governance. Strong reforms were therefore needed to address what seemed to have become normal practice. The Bureau welcomed initial steps taken by UNOPS and called on the Board to provide further guidance and action. They were pleased to see similar discussions taking place at the executive boards of UNICEF and UN-Women and encouraged the organizations' oversight bodies to continue exchanging experiences and practices and to harmonize practices to the highest standards whenever possible. It was the joint responsibility of United Nations organizations and their executive boards to establish mechanisms that ensured similar irregularities never recurred.

68. A cross-regional group of countries said the Board needed to critically examine whether it was sufficiently executing its oversight responsibilities and functions. Oversight had to be an ongoing conversation between organizations and their governing bodies. They expressed their commitment to engaging with management and internal oversight functions to strengthen oversight, accountability and transparency throughout the organizations and the chain of programme delivery to ensure joint efforts to strengthen governance were based on international best practices and standards. The Board, they stressed, needed to execute its oversight function in a more proactive, thorough manner and ensure it served the best interests and expectations of programme beneficiaries, organizational staff and taxpayers. They welcomed management efforts to facilitate direct channels of communication between the audit and investigation offices and the Board, and they expressed gratitude for the quick response to Board decision 2022/13 requesting a self-assessment of internal audit and investigative functions. The group recognized the following common trends from the assessments: (a) some audit and investigation services of the New York-based organizations were structurally underfunded and overworked; (b) offices had full access to the documents and individuals required to conduct their work, though in certain instances access had been limited; and (c) the reported interference by UNOPS management in audit and investigation activities and in IAIG management jeopardized IAIG independence. The delegations stressed that serious reforms and a change in organizational culture were urgently needed, along with continuous discussion with and within the Board on how it could strengthen the oversight function. They called on UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and the Board to establish a sustainable and independent channel of communication between the Board

and key oversight stakeholders and entities to supplement management engagement and ensure that the annual calendar regularly included robust and appropriate discussion on oversight matters.

69. In other interventions, delegations expressed grave concern with the fiscal irregularities and reported interference of UNOPS management in audit and investigation activities. They welcomed the results of the organizations' self-assessments and the transparent leadership and actions of the UNOPS Acting Executive Director to address the issue. The situation pointed to the need for fully resourcing audit and investigation functions and investing in additional mitigation measures. It also showed the need for the Board to strengthen its governance and oversight role. They stressed that all steps to address the situation had to be done in a responsible manner, focused on preventive actions that avoided more expenditure than needed. It was underscored that the strengthening of internal control systems should not be pursued at the detriment of adequate funding of the implementation of the organizations' strategic plans and the Goals. They looked forward to a rehabilitated UNOPS that would work for efficient and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

70. In response, the UNDP Director, OAI, said the UNOPS crisis had given the United Nations development system an opportunity to more broadly reflect on how oversight could be managed. The global development challenges required more than ever a United Nations development system that had a well-resourced and competent oversight function. The need to strengthen the oversight function of the Board was central to that effort. While recognizing the need for the Board to have a more operational role in the organizations' oversight and governance functions, the OAI Director said the Board had insufficient technical capacity to explore complex oversight issues. He encouraged the Board to reflect on how it could better fulfil a comprehensive oversight role. The audit and investigation units in the organizations were ready to support the Board in that endeavour, and in addressing future crises in a measured and proportionate manner. He also appealed to the Board to reflect on the consequences of and potential solutions to the issues of structural underfunding and overworked staff and asked for the support of the Board in resourcing the investigation function sufficiently. In closing, he said it would be beneficial for the OAI Director to attend, as an observer, UNDP Executive Group management meetings; this would allow OAI to remain independent while gaining a better understanding of issues on which it was to provide oversight.

71. The UNDP Director, Bureau for Management Services, said management was ready to engage with the Board in its discussions on a more operational oversight role of the organizations' audit and investigation functions. On the resources front, UNDP had always responded favourably to OAI funding requests. UNDP allocations to OAI had in fact outgrown regular resource contributions by more than 72 per cent. Given the joint interest in ensuring good stewardship of the funds entrusted to UNDP, she said entities within UNDP had to take optimal advantage of the resources made available to them. She pointed out that any increase in resources to OAI had to include a parallel increase in resources to services that worked with OAI, such as legal and human resources. UNDP would continue to ensure OAI had access to all the documentation it needed and was ready to discuss including OAI in UNDP management meetings on oversight.

72. The UNFPA OAI Director ad interim agreed the Board should reflect on how to strengthen its oversight responsibilities and pursue more proactive engagement with the organization's audit and investigation function and management. She commented that risk management was not only about mitigating risk but also about seizing the opportunity to better achieve corporate objectives – a point that should be reflected in Board decisions. On the issue of resources, OAI would undertake a

comprehensive analysis of cases to stratify their nature and thereby make a better business case for the budgetary and staffing resources needed. As OAS Director, she participates in meetings of the Executive Committee as an observer and provides advice as she determines.

73. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Management) underlined the strong commitment of UNFPA management to continue to strengthen and work with OAS, including by ensuring its full independence. UNFPA looked forward to a continuous conversation and engagement with the Board on audit and investigation functions and on strengthening the oversight role of the Board. UNFPA had increased resources to OAS in the Integrated Budget, 2022–2025, and prior to that too, and would review allocations to OAS during the midterm budget review. He stressed that there was complementarity between strengthening oversight functions and strengthening operational delivery. UNFPA would also continue to strengthen its enterprise risk management policy.

74. The UNOPS Director, IAIG, said the IAIG budget had increased by 87 per cent in 2022 based, one, on the ratio of the number of cases to the number of investigators and, two, on “process”, by determining if a case in question fell under IAIG jurisdiction or another office. He informed the Board that the Acting Executive Director had already approved the recommendations to strengthen IAIG independence. As a consequence, the revised audit charter had been approved and promulgated. He confirmed that, as agreed with management, IAIG was an ex officio member able to participate in management meetings as it deemed necessary. IAIG was actively working with the UNOPS legal office to determine how to update its policy on sanction with the aim of resorbing the gap between the severity of the issues and the level of sanctions. Furthermore, the Director, IAIG informed the Board that he would work with the Legal Group in setting up a rebuttal mechanism. IAIG was also working with UNOPS management to bring about the cultural change needed in response to the financial irregularities.

75. The UNOPS Acting Executive Director welcomed the frank exchange between the organizations and the Board on audit and investigation functions and looked forward to broader discussions on how oversight could develop within the United Nations system. He said the United Nations had made significant investments in digitalization, and he pointed to the potential role of artificial intelligence and other such mechanisms in helping to automate certain controls and begin shifting the audit and investigation function in the direction of performance auditing on progress in delivering the Sustainable Development Goals.

76. The Executive Board adopted decision 2022/22 on the update on oversight services.

VIII. Field visits

77. The Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations introduced the report of the Executive Board field visit to Bangladesh (DP/FPA/OPS/2022/CRP.1) that took place from 26 to 30 June 2022. The delegation was led by the President of the Executive Board and visited the cities of Dhaka and Cox’s Bazar. The objective of the field visit was to help Board members better understand how the United Nations was working with the Government to deliver on national development priorities. The delegation met with government representatives, the United Nations country team and a diverse range of partners and gained a good overview of achievements on the ground.

78. The delegation of the host Government said the field visit demonstrated how excellent outcomes were possible if national development initiatives were prioritized and complemented by the United Nations system and other development partners. Bangladesh was able to withstand the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with active collaboration of the United Nations development system, though recent spikes in food and fuel prices and the dwindling flow of international finance were an important cause of concern. He requested that the international community undertake a stronger, more coordinated response to ensure the safe and voluntary return of Rohingya to their homes in Myanmar. He also requested that all development partners complement the country's initiatives to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and conflict. Bangladesh sought targeted market support and assistance with its economy's structural transformation through South-South and triangular cooperation to avoid backsliding and to prepare for least developed country graduation in 2026.

79. In another intervention, a delegation welcomed the outcome of the field visit but said the report did not fully explain coordination dynamics between United Nations system entities on the ground. The delegation said it would like to find more information on how the United Nations Resident Coordinator was able to enhance United Nations development system effectiveness and coordination, indicating that this analysis be done retrospectively to give a better understanding of United Nations coordination at the country level. It said there was a lack of transparency in field visit preparations and pointed out that its delegation had not been informed of the trip – in violation of the principle of equitable access to the field visit – and sought clarity on how to avoid such situations in the future. The delegation also expressed concerns about diversification in regional representation and requested that in future visits the Bureau seek to ensure greater balance in the composition of delegations in field visits.

80. In response, the Secretary of the Executive Board said the Secretariat would investigate the comments related to communication during the preparations for the field visit and respond to the concerned delegation accordingly.

81. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Executive Board field visit to Bangladesh (DP/FPA/OPS/2022/CRP.1).

Annex I

Decisions adopted by the Executive Board during 2022

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2022/1

Reports of UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2020

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the unqualified audit opinions on UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS issued by the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2020;
2. *Recalls* its decision 2021/1 and calls upon UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS to harmonize further their reporting formats on the implementation of the Board of Auditors recommendations, as appropriate, including, where possible, the time frames for their detailed reporting and the thematic categorization of recommendations into those that are priority, and any other priorities, and requests to work with UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP in that regard, as appropriate;
3. *Acknowledges* the progress made by UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS in implementing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, and supports the ongoing efforts of UNDP, UNCDF, UNFPA and UNOPS management to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors;
4. *Notes* paragraphs 33–59 and Note 11 in the Board of Auditors report for 2020 ([A/76/5/Add.11](#)) relating to the UNOPS sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) initiative, and encourages UNOPS to continue to strengthen its risk assessments and risk management.

4 February 2022

2022/2

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the updates by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on actions to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment;
2. *Notes* the progress made and the need for continued effort to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, including ensuring that the required actions implemented at country, regional and global levels are properly resourced and deliver impact;
3. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to take action to ensure a victim/survivor-centred, system-wide and coherent approach at the country, regional and global levels to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, while leveraging their respective mandates, including addressing, as needed, the increased risk of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment during the COVID-19 response and recovery;
4. *Further requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to undertake timely and thorough victim/survivor-centred investigations, and to ensure prompt reporting on allegations to Member States through existing mechanisms/channels, as well as dedicated resources to investigations of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and requests an update on how each organization is improving its organizational culture to address all forms of sexual harassment, and its actions to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment in its policies, procedures, operations, and through improvement of organizational culture at headquarters, regional and country levels, at the annual session, starting in 2022, and asks that this includes analysis of their implementation of system-wide initiatives, including the Implementing Partners Protocol, the Implementing Partner Capacity Assessment and ClearCheck;

5. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue taking a long-term approach to preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, in line with their respective strategic plans;
6. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to ensure that leadership at all levels continue to be aware of their responsibilities in protecting against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment, and that staff with specific protection of sexual exploitation and abuse duties participate in inter-agency coordination mechanisms, as appropriate, and that all relevant staff are provided with appropriate role-specific training to support culture change;
7. *Commends* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS for the development of their respective strategies and annual submission to the United Nations Secretary-General of action plans on preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse that are implemented at headquarters, regional and country levels, and requests UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to share headquarters-level action plans with the Executive Board annually;
8. *Requests* an update from UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, at the first regular session of the Executive Board 2023, on metrics used to measure progress on tackling sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment and how integrated results and resources framework indicators on sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment have aligned with relevant quadrennial comprehensive policy review indicators and those of other United Nations development system agencies and ensure that data obtained, including on allegations, using these metrics and indicators and subsequent analysis, systematically inform strategies, policies and procedures.

4 February 2022

2022/3

UNDP evaluation

The Executive Board

With regard to the Independent Evaluation Office multi-year programme of work, 2022–2025 (DP/2022/6):

1. *Takes note* of the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office multi-year programme of work 2022–2025 (DP/2022/6);
2. *Reaffirms* the importance of evaluation as an essential tool for learning and accountability, and urges UNDP to ensure that adequate resources are provided for evaluation, in compliance with the evaluation policy as endorsed in decision 2019/19 approving the UNDP evaluation policy (DP/2019/29), and in keeping with expectations set out in the UNDP integrated resources plan and integrated budget estimates, 2022–2025 (DP/2021/29);
3. *Acknowledges* the corporate/thematic evaluations and other activities that the Independent Evaluation Office has proposed to carry out during this four-year period, and views them to be relevant to UNDP objectives and programming under the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;
4. *Requests* UNDP to extend the importance attributed to inter-agency collaboration in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025 (DP/2021/28) to all evaluations of programmes and projects that include partnerships with other United Nations entities;
5. *Welcomes* the Independent Evaluation Office's plans to take a systems approach to strengthen both the quality and impartiality of decentralized evaluations and requests the Independent Evaluation Office and UNDP management to formulate a

plan to improve the independence, reliability and quality of decentralized evaluations and to present it to the Executive Board at its annual session 2022;

6. *Decides* to approve the multi-year programme of work of the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office for 2022–2025;

With regard to the evaluation of UNDP support to youth economic empowerment (DP/2022/7) and the management response thereto (DP/2022/8):

7. *Takes note* of the evaluation of UNDP support to youth economic empowerment and the management response thereto;

8. *Takes note* with appreciation of the evaluation's findings, conclusions and recommendations, encourages UNDP to address interconnections and synergies between employability, job creation and enabling environment in support to youth economic empowerment, and requests UNDP to seek sustainable results and impact in addressing structural barriers for youth employment, through, inter alia, meaningful engagements and partnerships with youth in early stages of project design and strategic partnerships with other United Nations organizations and stakeholders;

With regard to the evaluation of UNDP support to energy access and transition (DP/2022/9) and the management response thereto (DP/2022/10):

9. *Takes note* of the evaluation of UNDP support to energy access and transition and the management response thereto, noting the multifaceted energy support by UNDP;

10. *Takes note of* the evaluation's findings, conclusions and recommendations and requests UNDP to ensure long-term sustainable results and impact and project and programme sustainability through, inter alia, early engagement of relevant national actors and partners in project and programme formulation, implementation, financing and funding processes, as appropriate, and to ensure the independence and improve the quality of energy project evaluations;

11. *Notes* the commitment of UNDP to further develop its energy offer, in line with its ambitions in the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025.

4 February 2022

2022/4

UNFPA evaluation

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the relevance and utility of the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2022–2025;

2. *Reaffirms* the importance of evaluation as an essential tool for learning and accountability, and requests UNFPA to continue to ensure that adequate resources are provided for evaluation, in compliance with the evaluation policy, as endorsed in decision 2019/1 approving the UNFPA evaluation policy (DP/FPA/2019/1), and in keeping with expectations set out in the UNFPA integrated budget, 2022–2025 (DP/FPA/2021/9);

3. *Acknowledges* the transparent and participatory process undertaken in developing the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2022–2025;

4. *Requests* UNFPA to continue to extend the importance attributed to inter-agency collaboration in the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2022–2025 (DP/FPA/2021/8) to all evaluations of programmes and projects that include partnerships with other United Nations entities;

5. *Approves* the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2022–2025.

4 February 2022

2022/5

United Nations Office for Project Services sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) reserve

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on the UNOPS sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) reserve (DP/OPS/2022/2);
2. *Recalls* the UNOPS budget estimates 2022–2023 (DP/OPS/2021/6) and annexes that first requested the establishment of the designated sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) reserve, as well as the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (DP/OPS/2021/7);
3. *Takes note* of the additional assessment and rationale provided by UNOPS, pursuant to paragraph 7 of decision 2021/21, for the proposal to create a separate sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) reserve at a level of \$105 million;
4. *Approves* the establishment and initial level of the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) reserve to be set at \$105 million with future changes subject to Executive Board approval;
5. *Reaffirms* the request that UNOPS commission an independent comprehensive evaluation of the sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) initiative after the end of the pilot phase in December 2023, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in line with paragraph 7 of decision 2021/21, and present the findings, including an itemization of all investments to include detailed project description, investment amount, project status and project end date, to the Executive Board at the annual session 2024;
6. *Urges* UNOPS to undertake all possible measures to recover the overdue repayments from disinvestments in sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) initiative projects and further requests UNOPS to provide the Executive Board with an update in particular on further risk diversification measures regarding future investments at the annual session 2022.

4 February 2022

2022/6

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 2022

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its first regular session 2022, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Elected on 6 December 2021 the following members of the Bureau for 2022:

President: H.E. Ms. Yoka Brandt (The Netherlands)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Martin Kimani (Kenya)
 Vice-President: H.E. Ms. Alya Al-Thani (Qatar)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. José Manuel Rodríguez Cuadros (Peru)

Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Sergiy Kyslytsya (Ukraine)*

Adopted the agenda (DP/2022/L.1) and approved the workplan for its first regular session 2022;

Approved the report of the second regular session 2021 (DP/2022/1);

Adopted the annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2022 (DP/2022/CRP.1);

Approved the tentative workplan for the annual session 2022;

Agreed to the following schedule for the remaining sessions of the Executive Board in 2022:

Annual session:	6 to 10 June 2022
Second regular session:	29 August to 2 September 2022.

Joint segment

Item 2

Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

Adopted decision 2022/1 on the recommendations of the Board of Auditors reports of UNDP (DP/2022/3), UNCDF (DP/2022/4), UNFPA (DP/FPA/2021/1) and UNOPS (DP/OPS/2021/1) on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2020;

Item 3

Follow-up to the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meeting

Took note of the joint UNDP/UNFPA report on the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (DP-FPA/2022/1);

Item 4

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

Adopted decision 2022/2 on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment;

UNDP segment

Item 5

Human Development Report

Took note of an update by the secretariat on consultations on the Human Development Report;

Item 6

UNDP country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNDP country programmes in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Africa: Guinea-Bissau (DP/DCP/GNB/3); Mozambique (DP/DCP/MOZ/4);

Asia-Pacific: Malaysia (DP/DCP/MYS/4); Maldives (DP/DCP/MDV/4); Thailand (DP/DCP/THA/4); Viet Nam (DP/DCP/VNM/3);

* Elected 31 January 2022.

Latin America and the Caribbean: country programmes for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean (DP/DSP/CAR/4); Belize (DP/DCP/BLZ/4); El Salvador (DP/DCP/SLV/4); Guyana (DP/DCP/GUY/4); Honduras (DP/DCP/HND/4); Jamaica (DP/DCP/JAM/4); Peru (DP/DCP/PER/4); Suriname (DP/DCP/SUR/4); Trinidad and Tobago (DP/DCP/TTO/4);

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, Haiti and Saudi Arabia and the first six-month extension of the country programme for Papua New Guinea (DP/2022/5);

Approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Algeria and Bahrain from 1 January to 31 December 2022; the third one-year extensions of the country programmes for Afghanistan and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) from 1 January to 31 December 2022; the sixth extension of the country programme for Yemen from 1 January to 31 December 2022 (DP/2022/5); and the sixth six-month extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic from 1 January to 30 June 2022 (DP/2022/5/Add.1);

Approved the regional programmes for Africa (DP/RPD/RBA/4); Asia and the Pacific (DP/RPD/RAP/4); the Arab States (DP/RPD/RAS/5); Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (DP/RPD/REC/5); and Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/RPD/RLA/4);

Item 7

UNDP evaluation

Adopted decision 2022/3 on the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office multi-year programme of work 2022–2025 (DP/2022/6); the evaluation of UNDP support to youth economic empowerment (DP/2022/7) and the management response thereto (DP/2022/8); and the evaluation of UNDP support to energy access and transition (DP/2022/9) and the management response thereto (DP/2022/10);

Item 8

United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme

Took note of the UNV strategic framework, 2022–2025 (DP/2022/11);

Item 9

United Nations Capital Development Fund

Took note of the UNCDF strategic framework, 2022–2025 (DP/2022/12);

Item 12

United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation

Took note of the UNOSSCs strategic framework, 2022–2025 (DP/CF/SSC/7);

UNFPA segment

Item 10

Country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNFPA country programmes in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Argentina (DP/FPA/CPD/ARG/1), Cameroon (DP/FPA/CPD/CMR/8), the Caribbean subregional programme (DP/FPA/CPD/CAR/7), El Salvador (DP/FPA/CPD/SLV/9), Eritrea (DP/FPA/CPD/ERI/6), Guinea-Bissau (DP/FPA/CPD/GNB/7), Honduras (DP/FPA/CPD/HND/9), Malaysia (DP/FPA/CPD/MYS/1), Maldives

([DP/FPA/CPD/MDV/7](#)), Mozambique ([DP/FPA/CPD/MOZ/10](#)), Peru ([DP/FPA/CPD/PER/10](#)), Thailand ([DP/FPA/CPD/THA/12](#)) and Viet Nam ([DP/FPA/CPD/VNM/10](#)).

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil and Haiti ([DP/FPA/2022/3](#));

Approved the second one-year extensions for Afghanistan and Algeria; the third one-year extension for Venezuela; the sixth one-year extension for Yemen; and the sixth, six-month extension for the Syrian Arab Republic (from 1 January to 30 June 2022) ([DP/FPA/2022/3](#)).

Item 11

UNFPA evaluation

Adopted decision 2022/4 approving the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2022–2025;

UNOPS segment

Item 13

United Nations Office for Project Services

Adopted decision 2022/5 on the UNOPS sustainable investments in infrastructure and innovation (“S3i”) reserve;

Item 14

Other matters

Heard an address by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council.

4 February 2022

2022/7

Annual report of the Administrator for 2021

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Administrator for 2021 ([DP/2022/17](#)) and its annexes, the report of UNDP on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2021 ([DP/2022/17/Add.1](#)) and the statistical annex ([DP/2022/17/Add.2](#));
2. *Commends* the progress made by UNDP, over the period of the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, towards becoming an agile, innovative and resilient organization capable of providing effective local and global integrated solutions that advance sustainable development, particularly in the face of multiple complex and rapidly evolving challenges;
3. *Takes note* of the programmatic and institutional results achieved in 2021, including on poverty and inequality, innovative development financing, digitalization, climate action, social protection, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;
4. *Recognizes* the overarching role of UNDP in poverty eradication, encourages UNDP to further its efforts in this regard and to strengthen the capacities of countries at all levels, including institutions and people, to accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development and to prevent, mitigate and respond to risks including crisis, conflict, natural disasters, climate and social and economic shocks, in line with the Strategic Plan, 2022–2025;

5. *Recognizes* that in 2021 UNDP achieved its highest level of programme delivery in over a decade and encourages discussion between UNDP, programme countries, donors, the private sector, international financial institutions and civil society organizations to realize the Sustainable Development Goals and address the financing and funding gaps;
6. *Recognizes* the ongoing technical leadership of UNDP in the socioeconomic response to COVID-19, which has helped countries to prepare, respond and recover in the face of the pandemic and to integrate pandemic responses into long-term development plans;
7. *Welcomes* the continued strong commitment of UNDP to the United Nations development system repositioning and encourages UNDP to continue to work closely with other United Nations organizations, under the leadership of the Resident Coordinators in country, to support countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
8. *Welcomes* the ambitious milestones set out in the UNDP Strategic Plan 2022–2025 and urges continued commitment to results-driven programmes, agile, effective and efficient operations and multi-stakeholder partnerships that can help to unlock systemic transformation towards realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
9. *Recalls* its decisions 2021/5, paragraph 12, and 2021/14, paragraph 7, regarding the reporting on results jointly achieved with United Nations development system entities identified through common and complementary indicators;
10. *Welcomes* the commitment of UNDP to strengthen its management, oversight and fiduciary systems and reaffirms this requires both UNDP management and the Board to undertake continuous and sustained effort to achieve desired outcomes;
11. *Requests* UNDP to provide the Executive Board with all future reporting and statements at the same time it delivers these to other/external governance bodies, if they have a systemic governance significance for UNDP.

10 June 2022

2022/8

UNDP evaluation

The Executive Board

With regard to the annual report on evaluation, 2021 (DP/2022/21) and management commentaries thereto:

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on evaluation (DP/2022/21) and the management commentaries thereon, *welcomes* the additional analysis provided on key findings and lessons learned from evaluations carried out in 2021, and requests that UNDP address the issues raised;
2. *Takes note* of the expanded efforts of UNDP management and the Independent Evaluation Office to improve the quality and coverage of decentralized evaluations, as indicated in the document, “Information note: a road map for strengthening decentralized evaluations in UNDP”, and requests that UNDP management allocate sufficient resources and work with the Independent Evaluation Office to continue to improve evaluation capacities as outlined in the road map and to provide periodic progress updates to the Board;
3. *Takes note* of the good quality of management responses to evaluations, encourages UNDP to take further actions to address the quality of action plans for decentralized evaluations and overdue recommendations, and requests the Independent

Evaluation Office to work with UNDP to better record evidence of implementation and track the results of actions implemented in response to evaluation recommendations;

4. *Recalls* decision 2022/3, in particular paragraph 2 on adequate resourcing of the evaluation function of UNDP and paragraph 4 on inter-agency collaboration in evaluations;

With regard to the report, financing the recovery: a formative evaluation of the UNDP response to the COVID-19 pandemic and Sustainable Development Goal financing (DP/2022/22) and the management response thereto (DP/2022/23)

5. *Takes note* of the evaluation of the UNDP response to the COVID-19 pandemic and Sustainable Development Goal financing and welcomes the formative nature of the evaluation;

6. *Welcomes* the evaluation findings and conclusions acknowledging the important role and contribution of UNDP in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the work of UNDP to strengthen access to financing for the Sustainable Development Goals;

7. *Welcomes* the commitment of UNDP to develop a road map for its Moonshot of promoting the alignment of \$1 trillion of public and private capital to the Sustainable Development Goals, as the evaluation recommends, working with partners to leverage additional financing for and realigning existing resources with the Sustainable Development Goals;

8. *Notes* the commitment of UNDP, in response to the evaluation, to continue to broaden its support to domestic resource mobilization and to strengthen support for Sustainable Development Goal-related sovereign bond financing support;

9. *Takes note* of the UNDP commitments to climate financing and de-risking investments and the Moonshot ambition to connect 500 million people to energy systems, and encourages UNDP to work with government partners to align public and private financing towards this end.

10 June 2022

2022/9

United Nations Volunteers programme: Report of the Administrator

The Executive Board

1. *Reaffirms* General Assembly resolution 76/131 of 16 December 2021 on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations Volunteers programme (UNV) and twentieth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers, in which the Assembly recalled the importance of integrating volunteerism, as appropriate, into the planning for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2. *Welcomes* the results achieved by UNV in 2021 as reflected in the report of the Administrator (DP/2022/24);

3. *Takes note* of the results matrix, including baselines and targets, of the Strategic Framework, 2022–2025 (DP/2022/11), in line with the strategic guidance of General Assembly resolution 75/233, of 21 December 2020, on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system and based on the findings and recommendations of the independent evaluation of the previous Strategic Framework;

4. *Commends* UNV for being well embedded in the United Nations system as exemplified by its cooperation with 56 United Nations organizations;

5. *Reaffirms* the continued crucial role of the Special Voluntary Fund in delivering the UNV Strategic Framework, 2022–2025, and calls upon all development partners in a position to do so to contribute to the Fund;
6. *Commends* UNV on its successful implementation of its digital transformation project and encourages UNV to continue its efforts in this regard as appropriate;
7. *Requests* UNV to continue being a strong advocate for the inclusion of persons with disabilities;
8. *Expresses appreciation* to all United Nations Volunteers for their outstanding contributions to the pandemic response and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development during 2021.

10 June 2022

2022/10

Report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2021

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) in 2021 ([DP/2022/25](#));
2. *Commends* the progress made by UNCDF in implementing its Strategic Framework, 2018–2021;
3. *Emphasizes* its critical role in delivering innovative and blended financing approaches, including in support of wider United Nations development system activities, to support least developed countries in recovering and “building forward better” from the COVID-19 crisis;
4. *Recommits* to supporting UNCDF in achieving its base growth resource requirements in accordance with the Strategic Framework.

10 June 2022

2022/11

Implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2018–2021: Report of the Executive Director

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the documents that make up the report of the Executive Director for 2021: [DP/FPA/2022/4 \(Part I, Part I/Add.1 and Part II\)](#);
2. *Notes with appreciation* the progress made by UNFPA in achieving the results and the end-of-plan targets of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2018–2021;
3. *Notes* the baselines and targets set out in the Integrated Results and Resources Framework, 2022–2025, and encourages continued commitment to results-driven programmes, agile and effective operations, and multistakeholder partnerships that can accelerate progress towards realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
4. *Recalls* its decisions 2021/9, paragraph 4, and 2021/17, paragraph 6, and requests UNFPA to continue to include in the annual reports of the Executive Director on the implementation of the strategic plan, 2022–2025, including in its midterm review, information on results jointly achieved with United Nations development system entities, identified through common and complementary indicators.

10 June 2022

2022/12

UNFPA evaluation

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on the evaluation function (DP/FPA/2022/5), and of the programme of work and budget of the Evaluation Office in 2022;
2. *Welcomes* the achievements across the evaluation performance indicators and the continued adaptability and responsiveness of the evaluation function in the face of the COVID-19 crisis;
3. *Also welcomes* the achievements in contributing to United Nations system-wide evaluation efforts, and in fostering national evaluation capacity development;
4. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue to increase investments in the evaluation function.

10 June 2022

2022/13

Annual report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Project Services and the Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation (S3i) reserve

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Executive Director (DP/OPS/2022/5) and expresses serious concerns about the reported irregularities, including weaknesses in oversight and loss of funds in some S3i projects;
2. *Recognizes* the contributions of UNOPS in 2021 to the operational results of governments, the United Nations, and other partners, through management support services and specialized technical expertise, expanding the implementation capacity for sustainable development;
3. *Takes note* of the implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, and requests that future UNOPS reports be analytical in approach, describe problems encountered, explain major deviations from targets, and include analysis of materialized internal and external risk factors to the projects and how UNOPS has handled them;
4. *Requests* that UNOPS review and develop a timeline to implement all outstanding recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and the Joint Inspection Unit, and to present this to the Executive Board at the second regular session 2022;
5. *Welcomes* the achievement of gender parity and requests that UNOPS take further measures with a view to ensuring equitable geographical representation across the UNOPS workforce, and report back to the Board, through existing reporting, on steps taken in that regard;
6. *Welcomes* the contributions of UNOPS to COVID-19 response and recovery activities;
7. *Expresses* serious concerns at the reported irregularities, potential financial losses and alleged misconduct linked to S3i investments;
8. *Requests* that UNOPS, with urgency, take the following steps, as temporary measures, to address the failures regarding S3i and to slow accumulation of UNOPS reserves:
 - (a) take all necessary steps to recover funds related to the S3i;

(b) freeze all further S3i-related investments not already contractually committed by UNOPS;

(c) transfer into the operational reserve any balance not committed to projects from the growth and innovation reserve, accumulated surpluses, and the S3i reserve;

(d) freeze all further transfers of money out of the operational reserve into the growth and innovation reserve, the S3i reserve, accumulated surpluses, or for any purpose other than daily operations;

9. *Further requests* that UNOPS report to the Executive Board when these actions have been completed and decides to consider, upon completion, whether these actions satisfactorily address the root causes and institutional vulnerabilities within UNOPS that led to the failures associated with S3i in order to terminate the temporary measures;

10. *Decides* to create a working group in accordance with rule 9 of its rules of procedure consisting of 10 members and observers of the Executive Board to assess the root causes and institutional vulnerabilities within UNOPS that led to the failures associated with S3i, with a view to making recommendations to the Executive Board to facilitate additional necessary actions to consider at the second regular session 2022 and the first regular session 2023;

11. *Requests* that the Bureau of the Board conduct consultations with the regional groups to present two nominees per regional group to compose the working group, to be appointed by the Board through a silence procedure;

12. *Requests* that the working group undertake its work in consultation with, as appropriate and not limited to, UNOPS, the United Nations Board of Auditors, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and the Joint Inspection Unit;

13. *Requests* the working group to focus its work on the following, and to present its work to the Executive Board:

(a) options for the appropriate use of UNOPS reserves;

(b) options to increase transparency around UNOPS management fees and costing structure, with a view to limiting the accumulation of UNOPS reserves;

(c) any other matters deemed appropriate by the Bureau for the working group to discuss;

14. *Requests* that UNOPS provide the following to the Executive Board and the working group, at the earliest possible date, and with a view to facilitating the efforts of the working group in an expedited manner, complementary to any other actions undertaken by UNOPS:

(a) a third-party review of the oversight mechanisms that existed for S3i investments;

(b) a third-party review of UNOPS internal control systems, risk management and overall governance structures, including an assessment of the integrity of the wider UNOPS portfolio and a review of UNOPS cost structures;

15. *Requests* that UNOPS submit the terms of reference for these third-party reviews for approval by the working group prior to the commissioning of the reviews;

16. *Requests* that the Executive Director, ad interim, provide the Executive Board, as soon as possible, but no later than 15 July 2022, an action plan with a timeframe for all actions, including but not limited to those requested in this decision, to address concerns regarding S3i, with a view to enhancing transparency and accountability;

17. *Recalling* decision 2020/13 on the working methods, and recognizing the urgency of the situation, decides to include an update on the progress of the working group, including any preliminary findings, as an item for decision on the agenda of the second regular session 2022 and the first regular session 2023.

10 June 2022

2022/14

Update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

The Executive Board

1. *Takes notes* of the updates provided by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on the implementation of General Assembly resolution [72/279](#) and related mandates on the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and requests that UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS provide future updates in a concise, clear and relevant manner within existing reporting;
2. *Urges* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to implement General Assembly resolutions [72/279](#), [75/233](#) and [76/4](#) and to support the efforts of the Secretary-General in implementing related mandates;
3. *Welcomes* the partnerships with the international financial institutions, and decides to include an update on UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS engagement with the international financial institutions as a standalone item on the agenda of the first regular session 2023;
4. *Welcomes* UNDP and UNFPA progress in aligning country programme documents to the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, and urges UNDP and UNFPA to continue to seek confirmation from the resident coordinators of the alignment of the country programmes with the Cooperation Frameworks;
5. *Stresses* the importance of integrated solutions, including enhanced cooperation, collaboration and coordination across humanitarian, development and peacebuilding operations of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to address the complex, multifaceted challenges impacting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and requests that UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS update the Executive Board on how they are collaborating in joint analysis, needs assessments, planning, including collective outcomes, and programme delivery;
6. *Requests* that UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS provide the Executive Board with an update on the implementation of the management and accountability framework, including the contributions of heads of agencies at country level and regional representatives to the implementation of United Nations development system reform;
7. *Requests* that UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS efforts provide the Executive Board with information and data on their respective to realize efficiency gains through their contributions to system-wide coherence, collaboration and harmonization, and stresses the need to continue to realize efficiency gains, as stated in operational paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution [72/279](#).

10 June 2022

2022/15
Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit and investigations, and management responses

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the progress of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in addressing audit-related management issues in 2021;
2. *Notes with appreciation* efforts to implement outstanding audit recommendations from previous reports;
3. *Reiterates* the importance of the provision of sufficient resources for audit and investigation functions;
4. *Requests* that the Executive Board receive more regular closed briefings from the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), the UNFPA Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) and the UNOPS Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), in a timely manner and throughout the year, as needed, on potential red flags, audit findings and the status of investigations;
5. *Requests* the Directors of the OAI, OAIS and IAIG to provide at the second regular session 2022 their comprehensive assessments on the independence of each office, containing reflections on (but not limited to) the degree to which each respective office can determine freely: (a) how and when to report to and brief the Executive Board; (b) the scope of audits and investigations; (c) what and who to audit or investigate; (d) what assessments to make; (e) how to utilize available funds; and (f) its relationship with the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS); and requests them to also provide suggestions and pathways on how to further strengthen the independence of each respective office as well as their budget estimates required for the execution of the full mandate;
6. *Decides* to include an item on internal controls for decision at the second regular session 2022;

With regard to UNDP:

7. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI) on internal audit and investigation activities in 2021 (DP/2022/15), which has been harmonized with those of other United Nations agencies, in line with Executive Board decision 2020/10, and its annexes and the management response thereto;
8. *Expresses* continuing support for the internal audit and investigation functions of UNDP;
9. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Audit and Evaluation Advisory Committee, which should be reviewed as a separate document within the framework of this report;
10. *Requests* that an independent evaluation of the OAI be undertaken to confirm that its resourcing, capacity and capability are appropriate to meet its workload under the newly strengthened fiduciary system in a timely and comprehensive manner;

With regard to UNFPA:

11. *Takes note* of (a) the report of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) on UNFPA internal audit and investigation activities in 2021 (DP/FPA/2022/6), harmonized with those of other funds and programmes, in line with Executive Board decision 2020/10; (b) the opinion of OAIS on the adequacy and effectiveness of the UNFPA framework of governance, risk management and control; (c) the annual report of the Oversight Advisory Committee (DP/FPA/2022/6/Add.1), and (d) the management response to these two reports;

12. *Expresses* continuing support for the strategic initiatives OAIS has started to embark on to improve its efficiency and effectiveness so it can better carry out its mandate;

With regard to UNOPS:

13. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG) for 2021 ([DP/OPS/2022/3](#)) and the management response;

14. *Reaffirms* the need to ensure the full independence of the UNOPS internal audit and investigation mechanisms;

15. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee for 2021, in line with Executive Board decision 2008/37, and supports the recommendation that IAIG should maintain a clear delineation between internal oversight and advisory activities;

16. *Requests* the Director of IAIG to provide an update to the Executive Board on the status of investigations related to S3i irregularities at the second regular session 2022, or at an earlier date, as needed.

10 June 2022

2022/16

Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note of* the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ([DP/2022/16](#); [DP/FPA/2022/7](#); [DP/OPS/2022/4](#));

2. *Takes note of* the continuously growing caseload of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ethics offices and, concerned about their limited capacities, requests to ensure their respective ethics offices can adequately execute their mandates;

3. *Requests* the respective ethics offices to report on greater collaboration opportunities on field missions, on training and on outreach as well as on shared ethics-related guidance in their annual reports;

4. *Requests* the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to maintain and strengthen their independence, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [60/248](#) and [60/254](#), and encourages direct and independent communication with the Executive Board, as needed, through reports or briefings, in particular on concerns related to whistle-blower protection against retaliation issues;

5. *Notes* the progress made by the UNDP Ethics Office in strengthening the ethical culture of UNDP;

6. *Welcomes* the continued progress in the work of the UNFPA Ethics Office;

7. *Reaffirms* the need of the full independence of the UNOPS ethics function, and requests an independent review of the ethics function to ensure the independence and impartiality of the work;

8. *Urges* the Director of the UNOPS Ethics and Compliance Office to demonstrate and assure the Board of its full functionality and independence;

9. *Urges* UNOPS to ensure that a strong whistle-blower function and protection against retaliation system is in place to ensure the protection of individuals that report wrongdoings and risks related to weaknesses within the UNOPS management and control systems, and requests UNOPS to finalize and publish an updated whistle-blower policy, to be presented to the Executive Board at the second regular session 2022;

10. *Requests* UNOPS to update and make public its ethics website and to provide all information in an easy-to-access format for all UNOPS employees;

11. *Requests* the Director of the UNOPS Ethics and Compliance Office to report at the second regular session 2022 on the constitution of the office and the actions taken to strengthen the independence of the Office and whistle-blower protections.

10 June 2022

2022/17

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2022

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its annual session 2022, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda and approved the workplan for the annual session 2022 (DP/2022/L.2);

Adopted the report of the first regular session 2022 (DP/2022/13);

Joint segment

Item 2

Update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system

Adopted decision 2022/14 on the update on the implementation efforts on the repositioning of the United Nations development system;

Item 3

Internal audit and investigation

Adopted decision 2022/15 on the reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on internal audit and investigations, and management responses;

Item 4

Ethics

Adopted decision 2022/16 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS;

Item 15

Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment

Took note of the presentations made by UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on protection against sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment;

UNDP segment

Item 5

Annual report of the Administrator

Adopted decision 2022/7 Annual report of the Administrator for 2021;

Item 6
Gender equality at UNDP

Took note of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2022–2025, and of the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2018–2021;

Item 7
UNDP country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNDP country programmes, in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Africa region: Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania;

Arab States region: the Syrian Arab Republic;

Took note of the first one-year extension of the country programme for Angola, already approved by the Administrator;

Item 8
UNDP evaluation

Adopted decision 2022/8 on UNDP evaluation;

Item 9
United Nations Volunteers

Adopted decision 2022/9 on the United Nations Volunteers programme: Report of the Administrator;

Item 10
United Nations Capital Development Fund

Adopted decision 2022/10 on the report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2021;

UNFPA segment**Item 12**
Annual report of the Executive Director

Adopted decision 2022/11 on the implementation of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2018–2021: Report of the Executive Director;

Item 13
UNFPA evaluation

Adopted decision 2022/12 on UNFPA evaluation;

Item 14
Country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNFPA country programmes, in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Kenya ([DP/FPA/CPD/KEN/10](#)); Syrian Arab Republic ([DP/FPA/CPD/SYR/9](#)); and United Republic of Tanzania ([DP/FPA/CPD/TZA/9](#)).

UNOPS segment

Item 16

Annual report of the Executive Director

Adopted decision 2022/13 on the annual report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Project Services and the Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation (S3i) reserve.

10 June 2022

2022/18

UNDP structured funding dialogue

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the report on the structured dialogue on financing the results of the UNDP strategic plans, 2018–2021 and 2022–2025 (DP/2022/28) and annexes, as well as the substantial progress made on United Nations entity-specific commitments under the United Nations funding compact, encourages UNDP to continue its efforts to meet the commitments under the funding compact, and reaffirms the call for entities of the United Nations development system and Member States to contribute to its full and effective implementation, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 75/233;
2. *Notes* the importance of sufficient and predictable regular (core) resources linked to-intended and demonstrated results, as these are critical for UNDP to deliver on the strategic plan, 2022–2025, respond to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and multiple crises, help to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and maintain robust internal control and accountability systems;
3. *Expresses concern* with the current low level and continued decline of regular (core) resources, as these are also key to restoring development gains eroded by the COVID-19 pandemic and multiple crises;
4. *Recognizing* the continued trend of decline in core resources, requests that UNDP provide, in the context of the structured funding dialogue, a detailed analysis of the factors contributing to the decline of core resources and the potential implications on the ability of UNDP to deliver on its Strategic Plan, 2022–2025, and identify measures to address this, which should be taken by UNDP and could be considered by Member States;
5. *Recalls* the importance of funding predictability and multi-year contributions for 2022 and future years to enable UNDP to respond to the evolving needs of programme countries with agility;
6. *Recalls* decision 2020/14 on the importance of broadening the contributor base and encourages UNDP, in line with the United Nations funding compact, to engage with Member States to consider prioritizing contributions to UNDP regular resources in a timely and predictable manner and shifting from highly earmarked to regular and flexible resources, and further encourages UNDP to continue to make efforts in terms of visibility and recognition of contributions, in particular for regular resources and other flexible contributions, with a view to incentivizing an adequate and predictable level of funding;
7. *Notes* the importance of a diverse contributor base, and encourages UNDP to continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to diversify its potential sources of funding, including the private sector, foundations, civil society, individuals, and through strengthened partnerships with international financial institutions;

8. *Notes* the importance of flexible thematic and pooled funding, which are critical for UNDP to accelerate its programming to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;
9. *Encourages* UNDP to continuously strengthen and promote its funding windows as an additional flexible funding mechanism and a useful complement to regular resources;
10. *Also encourages* UNDP to continue to produce and report, through existing reporting mechanisms, on the progress and results in the implementation of its strategic plan, 2022–2025, with a view to incentivizing greater regular and other resources;
11. *Requests* that UNDP include information on the steps taken and the results achieved in the implementation of this decision in the report on the midterm review of its strategic plan, 2022–2025.

1 September 2022

2022/19
UNFPA structured funding dialogue

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the report on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue, 2021–2022 (DP/FPA/2022/10), and related annexes, as well as the substantial progress made on United Nations entity-specific commitments under the funding compact; encourages UNFPA to continue its efforts to meet the commitments under the funding compact and reaffirms the call for entities of the United Nations development system and Member States to contribute to its full and effective implementation, in accordance with General Assembly resolution [75/233](#);
2. *Notes* the importance of sufficient and predictable regular (core) resources linked to intended and demonstrated results, as these are critical for UNFPA to deliver on the strategic plan, 2022–2025, respond to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and various humanitarian crises and to help realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
3. *Recalls* decision 2021/19 on the importance of broadening the contributor base and requests UNFPA to continue engaging with Member States to consider prioritizing contributions to UNFPA regular (core) resources in a timely and predictable manner, in line with the funding compact, and requests UNFPA to continue to make efforts in terms of visibility and recognition of contributions, in particular for regular (core) resources;
4. *Notes* the importance of a diverse contributor base, and encourages UNFPA to continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to diversify its potential sources of funding, including the private sector, foundations, civil society and individuals, and through strengthened partnerships with international financial institutions;
5. *Notes* the importance of flexible thematic and pooled funding, as critical for UNFPA to be able to accelerate programming to meet the organization's three transformative results and contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in those areas in which development gains have been eroded by the COVID-19 pandemic and multiple crises;
6. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue its dialogue with Member States, through the structured funding dialogues, on shifting from highly earmarked funds to more predictable and flexible funding, especially for core resources, and to adhere to the mutually reinforcing commitments of the funding compact.

1 September 2022

2022/20

Annual statistical report on United Nations procurement, 2021

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual statistical report on United Nations procurement, 2021 ([DP/OPS/2022/6](#));
2. *Welcomes* the data and analysis contained therein;
3. *Encourages* UNOPS to strengthen its cooperation with all United Nations system entities in order to enhance reporting on collaborative procurement and on efficiency gains achieved through this mechanism, and highlights the need for the United Nations development system to realize greater efficiency gains and increase transparent and sustainable procurement practices.

1 September 2022

2022/21

UNOPS: Progress report on actions addressing the situation of the sustainable investment in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* decision 2022/13 and expresses its continued serious concerns with the reported irregularities, potential financial issues and alleged misconduct linked to S3i investments;
2. *Requests* that UNOPS ensures that the following funds are placed in the operational reserve and are subject to the provisions laid out in decision 2022/13:
 - (a) any funds recovered from S3i projects or proceeds from S3i investments;
 - (b) all accumulated reserves;
3. *Urges* the Acting Executive Director to take any and all measures within his remit to pursue full accountability for the failures, reported irregularities and alleged misconduct related to S3i with a view to ensuring that the real-world impact for current and future beneficiaries of UNOPS projects remains the organization's top priority;
4. *Notes with appreciation* UNOPS timely preparation and presentation of an action plan for implementing decision 2022/13;
5. *Further notes with appreciation* the provision of information by UNOPS to the working group established in Executive Board decision 2022/13 and encourages UNOPS to continue to engage with the working group and the Executive Board in an open and transparent manner;
6. *Welcomes* the working group's informal paper on options for the use of UNOPS reserves, calls upon the working group to submit its formal report to the Executive Board in advance of the first regular session 2023, and decides to take a decision on the utilization of UNOPS existing and future reserves – to be informed by the third-party assessments requested in decision 2022/13 and the working group report – at the earliest possible opportunity;
7. *Decides* to take a decision on S3i, to be informed by the third-party assessments and the working group report at the earliest possible opportunity;
8. *Decides* to hold, as per the request of the Acting Executive Director of UNOPS, a special session of the Executive Board on UNOPS-related matters at the earliest possible opportunity, following receipt by the Executive Board of the third-party reviews and

any relevant information from the working group, as noted in paragraph 11 of this decision;

9. *Takes note* of UNOPS activities to urgently address the failures regarding S3i and urges UNOPS to continue to be proactive in addressing such failures and to slow the accumulation of its reserves, in consultation with and approval by the Executive Board;

10. *Notes* UNOPS activities to develop a timeline to implement all outstanding recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and the Joint Inspection Unit;

11. *Takes note* of the progress made by UNOPS and the working group in implementing decision 2022/13, recalling paragraphs 14a and 14b, and invites the working group, as needed and at the request of the Bureau, to present relevant information regarding the third-party reviews and options for possible actions to address the failures regarding S3i, slow the accumulation of UNOPS reserves – as well as options for the appropriate use of UNOPS reserves – and increase transparency around UNOPS management fees and pricing structure.

1 September 2022

2022/22

Update on oversight matters

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the reports of the directors of the UNDP Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), the UNFPA Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS) and the UNOPS Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), which provide an assessment on the degree of independence of each office as well as recommendations for improvements in administrative processes and operational arrangements, in line with decision 2022/15;

2. *Takes note* of the suggestions and pathways recommended in the assessments of the independence of OAI, OAIS and IAIG, and of their respective management responses, and requests that: (a) UNDP and UNFPA take action, as appropriate, to implement the assessments' recommendations and report, in their management responses for the annual session in 2023, on the progress made by UNDP and UNFPA, respectively, on their implementation; and asks, in case a recommendation has not or partially been implemented or agreed to by management, the management of UNDP and UNFPA to provide explanations, in line with established practice; (b) UNOPS urgently implement all recommendations made by IAIG and that it report to the Executive Board during the annual session in 2023 on the progress made in this regard;

3. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring that independent audit and investigation offices have full independence in delivering their services to provide the Executive Board, agency management and other stakeholders the necessary and appropriate assurances and advice on the governance, risk management and internal controls of the entities;

4. *Recalls* its decision 2022/15, paragraph 4, and, in this regard, welcomes more regular closed briefings from the independent audit and investigation offices in a timely manner and throughout the year, as needed, on potential red flags, emerging risks and internal control issues, audit findings and the status of investigations, with due regard for confidentiality and privacy;

5. *Also recalls* decision 2022/15, paragraph 3, and reiterates the importance of the provision of sufficient resources for audit and investigation functions in order to preserve the offices' independence, integrity and professionalism, and to allow for full, adequate and effective execution of the respective mandate of each audit and

investigations office, within the established applicable budgetary process, and to update policies, where applicable;

6. *Requests* UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to include, as a permanent annex in their annual reports to the Executive Board, a concise agency-specific summary of the oversight functions responsible for audit, investigation, ethics, evaluation and whistleblower protection, and also requests UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to ensure these summaries follow a uniform template, to be provided by the Bureau;

7. *Further requests* OAI, OAIIS and IAIG to include in the executive summaries of their reports shared with the Executive Board, as appropriate, potential red flags, emerging risks and internal control issues, audit findings and the status of investigations, which require specific attention from the Executive Board;

8. *Welcomes* efforts of OAI, OAIIS and IAIG to harmonize approaches between the organizations and encourages continuing these cooperation efforts to enhance effectiveness, efficiency and inter-agency learning;

9. *Requests* the Bureau of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, in consultation with the relevant bureaux of United Nations development system entities, to provide options and cost estimates for an assessment, including the feasibility of a third-party assessment by an entity external to the United Nations system with independent expertise on governance and oversight, of how the Executive Board, in collaboration with UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS as well as the United Nations system, executes its governance and oversight functions, with a view to ensuring that these functions are aligned with the highest international standards and best practices;

10. *Further requests* the Bureau of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to present these options for consideration by the Executive Board by the first regular session 2023, with a view to providing a final assessment and relevant recommendations to the Executive Board no later than the annual session 2023;

With regard to UNDP:

11. *Notes with appreciation* that OAI conducted the self-assessment in compliance with the request in decision 2022/15 and in conformity with UNDP regulations and rules, policies and procedures, including the consideration of internationally recognized standards applicable for audit and investigations functions, and welcomes responses in the self-assessment report that attest to the independence of the office;

With regard to UNFPA:

12. *Notes with appreciation* that OAIIS conducted the self-assessment in compliance with the request in decision 2022/15 and in conformity with UNFPA regulations and rules, policies and procedures, including the consideration of internationally recognized standards applicable for audit and investigations functions, and welcomes responses in the self-assessment report that attest to the independence of the office;

With regard to UNOPS:

13. *Endorses* IAIG revised audit charter and requests the Acting Executive Director of UNOPS to promulgate it without further notice;

14. *Expresses* concern about the observations outlined in the assessment of the independence of the IAIG;

15. *Urges* UNOPS to promote the independence and integrity of IAIG, and to restore and continuously strengthen its organizational culture with regard to ethics, transparency and integrity;

16. *Recognizes* the recent efforts made by the Director of IAIG to establish regular meetings and interactions with the Executive Board and encourages him to maintain the relationship with the Board.

1 September 2022

2022/23

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 2022

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its second regular session 2022, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda and approved the workplan for the second regular session 2022 (DP/2022/L.3);

Adopted the report of the annual session 2022 (DP/2022/26);

Agreed with the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2023;

UNDP segment

Item 2

Structured funding dialogue

Adopted decision 2022/18 on the UNDP structured funding dialogue;

Item 3

UNDP country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNDP country programmes, in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Africa region: Ghana (DP/DCP/GHA/4), Niger (DP/DCP/NER/4), South Sudan (DP/DCP/SSD/4), Zambia (DP/DCP/ZMB/4);

Asia-Pacific region: India (DP/DCP/IND/4), Mongolia (DP/DCP/MNG/4), Pakistan (DP/DCP/PAK/3), Sri Lanka (DP/DCP/LKA/4);

Arab States region: Egypt (DP/DCP/EGY/4), Jordan (DP/DCP/JOR/4), Libya (DP/DCP/LBY/4), Saudi Arabia (DP/DCP/SAU/4), Yemen (DP/DCP/YEM/3);

Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States region: Kyrgyzstan (DP/DCP/KGZ/4), Montenegro (DP/DCP/MNE/3), Republic of Moldova (DP/DCP/MDA/4), Tajikistan (DP/DCP/TAJ/3);

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Guinea, Myanmar and Ukraine (DP/2022/30).

Approved the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and the Sudan (DP/2022/30);

UNFPA segment

Item 4

UNFPA structured funding dialogue

Adopted decision 2022/19 on the UNFPA structured funding dialogue;

Item 14

UNFPA country programmes and related matters

Approved the following UNFPA country programmes, in accordance with decision 2014/7:

Ghana (DP/FPA/CPD/GHA/8); India (DP/FPA/CPD/IND/10); Jordan (DP/FPA/CPD/JOR/10); Kyrgyzstan (DP/FPA/CPD/KGZ/5); Republic of Moldova (DP/FPA/CPD/MDA/4); Mongolia (DP/FPA/CPD/MNG/7); Morocco (DP/FPA/CPD/MAR/10); Niger (DP/FPA/CPD/NER/10); Pakistan (DP/FPA/CPD/PAK/10); South Sudan (DP/FPA/CPD/SSD/4); Sri Lanka (DP/FPA/CPD/LKA/10); Tajikistan (DP/FPA/CPD/TJK/5); Yemen (DP/FPA/CPD/YEM/6); Zambia (DP/FPA/CPD/ZMB/9)

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Angola, Guinea, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea and Ukraine, (DP/FPA/2022/11).

Approved the first two-year extension of the country programme for Djibouti and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Sudan (DP/FPA/2022/11);

UNOPS segment

Item 6

Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Adopted decision 2022/20 on the annual statistical report on United Nations procurement, 2021;

Adopted decision 2022/21, entitled UNOPS: Progress report on actions addressing the situation of the sustainable investment in infrastructure and innovation (S3i) initiative;

Joint segment

Item 7

Update on oversight matters

Adopted decision 2022/22, update on oversight matters;

Item 8

Field visits

Took note of the report of the Executive Board field visit to Bangladesh (DP/FPA/OPS/2022/CRP.1).

1 September 2022

2022/24

Third-party reviews of the effectiveness of the UNOPS oversight mechanisms for the Sustainable Investments in Infrastructure and Innovation (S3i) initiative and UNOPS internal control systems, risk management and overall governance structures

The Executive Board

1. *Recalls* decisions 2022/13 and 2022/21, and expresses its continued serious concerns with the irregularities, financial issues and misconduct linked to S3i investments;
2. *Welcomes* the KPMG third-party review on the effectiveness of UNOPS oversight mechanisms that existed for S3i investments, and also welcomes the KPMG review of UNOPS internal control systems, risk management and overall governance structures;
3. *Takes note* with great concern of the observations, findings and conclusions in the KPMG reviews, and the scale of the recommendations;
4. *Underlines* the conclusion in the KPMG reviews suggesting that UNOPS refocus on its original mandate of providing infrastructure, procurement and project management services, including to the United Nations system, and requests that the Acting Executive Director, and any forthcoming Executive Director, proceed accordingly prior to the Executive Board deciding on strategic priorities, use of reserves and the future of the S3i initiative;
5. *Welcomes* the UNOPS decision to suspend any form of impact investment and requests that UNOPS further clarify in an information note its role in blended and impact financing prior to its first regular session 2023;
6. *Approves* the creation of a second deputy executive director position;
7. *Recognizes* that fully addressing irregularities within UNOPS is required for trust to be restored, and appreciates the steps already undertaken by the Acting Executive Director, as well as UNOPS staff, in cooperation with the Executive Board and its working group;
8. *Recalls* decision 2022/21, paragraph 3, and underlines the importance of accountability in reforming UNOPS organizational culture, oversight structures and management, and requests that UNOPS take all measures necessary within its remit to recover all funds and ensure full accountability, including individual accountability, in accordance with United Nations staff regulations and rules;
9. *Requests* that the UNOPS Director of the Internal Audit and Investigation Group consider initiating forensic audits into the S3i initiative and associated management failures to further pursue fact-finding and accountability, including individual accountability, in accordance with United Nations staff regulations and rules, with a view to the Acting Executive Director, and any forthcoming Executive Director, pursuing disciplinary measures, and where applicable referring the potential findings to the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs;
10. *Recalls* decision 2022/22, paragraph 3, and underlines the importance for independent audit and investigation offices to have full independence in delivering their services, and requests that the Acting Executive Director, and any forthcoming Executive Director, take necessary measures for that purpose, including sufficient financial and human resources;
11. *Notes* the need for further consideration by the Executive Board of the recommendations from the KPMG reviews on UNOPS governance structure, addressed to the Executive Board;

12. *Requests* that the Acting Executive Director, and any forthcoming Executive Director, in cooperation with the UNOPS Ethics Office, overhaul the speak-up, whistleblowing process completely and to establish a clear, centralized and uniform process that encourages reporting and safeguards fair and confidential treatment of all reports with appropriate rules and protocols, in line with United Nations system best practices, in accordance with and in follow up to decision 2022/16, paragraph 9;
13. *Takes note* of the draft response plan provided by the Acting Executive Director and requests the inclusion of all recommendations of the two KPMG reviews in a comprehensive response plan, along with a clear timeline for the implementation of relevant recommendations, including organizational ownership and prioritization of recommendations, and a publicly accessible online monitoring platform, at the first regular session 2023;
14. *Further requests* that the Acting Executive Director, and any forthcoming Executive Director, provide monthly briefings on the status of implementation of Executive Board decisions and the recommendations of the KPMG reviews to the Executive Board until the annual session 2023;
15. *Agrees* to consider at the first regular session 2023, the working group's mandate and membership, after submission of its final report pursuant to decision 2022/21, with a view to facilitating closer follow up and coordination with UNOPS on the comprehensive response plan for the implementation of Executive Board decisions and the recommendations of the KPMG reviews;
16. *Reaffirms* its decision 2022/13, paragraph 8, and decides on the continuation of the temporary measures indicated therein, until otherwise decided by the Executive Board;
17. *Requests* that UNOPS, following an inclusive consultation process with the Executive Board and within UNOPS:
 - (a) provide, no later than the first regular session 2023, a draft framework for a revised strategic plan, 2022–2025, in line with KPMG recommendations;
 - (b) present to the Executive Board at its annual session 2023 a thorough midterm review of the strategic plan, 2022–2025, and its annexes;
 - (c) submit separately a final draft strategic plan, 2022–2025, including a prioritization of its programme activities and improvements to oversight functions, for Executive Board approval at its annual session 2023;
18. *Requests* that UNOPS commission an external third-party review at the end of the implementation period of the comprehensive response plan;
19. *Requests* that the following items be included as agenda items for decision at the first regular session 2023: (a) the future of the S3i initiative and impact investments in UNOPS; (b) the definition and use of UNOPS excess reserves; and (c) update on the implementation of the comprehensive response plan.

30 November 2022

Annex II

Membership of the Executive Board in 2022

(Term expires on the last day of the year indicated)

African States: Algeria (2023), Cameroon (2024), Chad (2024), Côte d'Ivoire (2024), Kenya (2024), Lesotho (2024), Nigeria (2023), Somalia (2022).

Asia-Pacific States: Bangladesh (2023), China (2022), Iran (Islamic Republic of) (2023), Kuwait (2022), Myanmar (2024), Qatar (2024).

Eastern European States: Bulgaria (2022), Czech Republic (2022), Russian Federation (2023), Ukraine (2024).

Latin American and Caribbean States: Colombia (2022), Costa Rica (2024), Cuba (2023), Guatemala (2023), Peru (2022).

Western European and other States:* Finland, Germany, Greece, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands (Kingdom of), United Kingdom, United States.

* Western European and other States has its own rotation schedule, which varies every year.

Annex III

Report of the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP held on 3 June 2022

An integrated approach towards sustainable investment in people and planet: leaving no one behind as a principle for climate action to ensure a transformative path for the most vulnerable

1. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS opened the joint meeting welcoming all participants of the Executive Boards of UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP, as well as the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. She stressed that the joint meeting was timely for the challenges facing the world were complex, urgent and interlinked and demanded an integrated approach toward sustainable investments for people and planet that superseded individual agency mandates and the capabilities of any single Government. She drew attention to how the interconnected triple Cs – COVID-19, conflict and climate change – were impeding progress toward achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, as evidenced in growing inequality, poverty, a global food security crisis, unprecedented biodiversity loss, energy insecurity, and large numbers of refugees and internally displaced. Systemic solutions and transformative results were needed to tackle the multidimensional vulnerabilities and risks faced by the most marginalized and furthest left behind, building on each organization's comparative advantages and tight interagency collaboration at all levels and in all areas. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, she stressed, was a shared responsibility. Working jointly and coherently among the Executive Boards was now more than ever a matter of urgent necessity to make the United Nations development system, through continued reform, fit for purpose to deliver where it mattered most – on the ground, at country-level, in communities and in people's lives across the globe.

2. In her opening remarks, the Deputy Secretary-General said the joint meeting of the Executive Boards was an increasingly important platform to address issues that required coherent action across the United Nations development system. She drew attention to the galvanizing force of key transitions to green economies, in parallel with human capital investments, for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda at the country level to leave no one behind. The United Nations development system possessed unparalleled capacities – working coherently – to channel its collective assets and comparative advantages to rally partners and drive the key transitions at scale and deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. She commended the Boards for working to make the United Nations development system fit for purpose to meet the challenges and called on them to step up their pace on remaining reform elements and deepen acceleration of the 2030 Agenda – taking into account the setbacks due to COVID-19, conflict and climate change. She highlighted three areas where the guidance of the Boards was crucial: (a) orienting the organizations on how to support countries' self-defined priorities to achieve the Goals and accelerate climate action; (b) ensuring the organizations' strategic documents and business models make full use of reform efforts to support the Goals, especially climate action; and (c) ensuring the organizations were adequately supported financially through sustainable, predictable, flexible funding and within the Boards to progressively shift to more integrated policy advice and options for system-wide collaboration. She expressed deep concern at recent cuts in funding from Member States. She called for tailored discussions by the Boards as part of the structured funding dialogues, including on integrated programming and pooled funding

arrangements, and for their close engagement in upcoming efforts to develop a checklist on implementing the reform agenda and deliver on its promise.

Panel discussion: integrated approach towards sustainable investment in people and planet

3. The Executive Director, UN-Women, while reinforcing the need for collective action, underscored the urgent need for more gender-responsive and child-sensitive strategies to achieve the 2030 Agenda and ensure sustainable investments in people and planet. Women and girls, and children, especially in conflict and humanitarian settings and in rural areas, those belonging to minority or indigenous groups, and migrants and refugees, were disproportionately affected. Their unequal access to justice, resources and opportunities often pushed women and girls to the margins. To reverse that situation, women and girls needed an equal voice in policymaking. To build resilience against crises, sustainable investments were needed to prepare for future shocks and to develop more sustainable responses. Closing the inequality and fragility gaps, which COVID-19, conflict and climate have exacerbated, were key to building resilience and delivering on the 2030 Agenda. Pursuing transformative solutions and pragmatic ideas, the United Nations system had to leverage the potential of multilateralism and international cooperation to support national efforts tailored to national priorities, building and strengthening its partnerships across the humanitarian-development-peace continuum.

4. The moderator of the session addressed the following questions to the heads of the six United Nations organizations whose Boards were represented at the joint meeting.

Question 1: How does climate action contribute to an inclusive, green recovery, including a just transition?

5. The Administrator, UNDP, stressed that the combined socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19, climate change and conflict, especially on the most vulnerable in least developed countries and small island developing States, were provoking an unprecedented food, energy and financial crisis across the globe. The active and collective engagement of the United Nations was needed more than ever to bolster integrated solutions and partnerships, guided by the One-UN principles embodied in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system 2020 (General Assembly resolution [75/233](#)). Committed to that effort, UNDP was working to accelerate development solutions to lift millions out of multidimensional poverty, provide access to clean, affordable energy, and build resilience to climate change. Together with partners, UNDP was focused on three broad areas: (a) integrating social protection measures and policies into countries' socioeconomic fabric; (b) supporting countries through the UNDP Climate Promise to enhance and implement nationally determined contributions and raise adaptation ambitions through a gender-responsive lens; and (c) strengthening policy incentives and deploying innovative financial instruments to catalyse public-private finance at scale aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals. Such collective efforts were designed to propel a historic and just transformation towards a more inclusive, green economy grounded in smart climate-responsive strategies for equitable, inclusive development.

Question 2: Building on the leaving-no-one-behind principle, how is UNICEF working with other organizations to ensure that children are not left behind in climate action?

6. The Executive Director, UNICEF, said that the climate crisis was a children's crisis. The UNICEF children's climate risk index showed that nearly half the world's

children lived in extremely high risk countries and were exposed to the most severe hazards, shocks and stressors. The severe impact of drought on children across the Horn of Africa highlighted how interrelated climate shocks and crises had become and led to multiple crises in health, nutrition and education. Integrated United Nations action was needed more than ever to reinforce food systems and services and reduce the vulnerability of children at the household and community levels. Together with other United Nations organizations, UNICEF worked to integrate climate priorities into national budgets and drive change by leveraging public and private resources in new ways, in close collaboration with youth partners, for greater accountability on climate change. The United Nations had to advocate and ensure a place at the table for youth and children in climate discussions. She called on countries to put children at the heart of the climate response by increasing the resilience of systems children depended on, preparing every child to adapt and participate in creating a more sustainable future, and prioritizing the needs of every child in funding and resources for adaptation and resilience.

Question 3: What should the United Nations system do to support gender-responsive climate action that benefitted women and girls?

7. The Executive Director, UN-Women, said that UN-Women always worked at the heart of and through the United Nations system, including in joint climate action. There was the urgent need for combined efforts to address the triple interlinked crises of COVID-19, climate change and protracted conflicts that were disproportionately affecting women and girls, exacerbating inequalities, threatening jobs and livelihoods, increasing poverty – and hindering achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and leaving no one behind. Climate action and finance had to accompany long-term development policies and strategies to ensure adequate social protection for women and girls through integrated approaches in support of countries' needs and priorities. She highlighted that, at its 66th session, the Commission on the Status of Women provided a clear normative basis on which to strengthen gender-responsive climate action through a coordinated, coherent United Nations system at the country level that prioritized: (a) women's leadership and participation and integrated women's and girls' perspectives in climate action so they benefit from the sustainable energy transition; (b) gender-responsive just transitions that include investments in expanded gender-responsive public services, universal social protection, health care systems, sustainable support and infrastructure, and provision of new decent employment opportunities for women in green and blue jobs; (c) public investments in the care economy, a key pillar of gender-responsive climate action; and (d) improving and investing in gender statistics and disaggregated data to equip all stakeholders with data that informed policy and programme decisions.

Question 4: What is the role of infrastructure in climate change and in ensuring no one is left behind?

8. The Acting Executive Director, UNOPS, said it was important to take a broad perspective on infrastructure that included its traditional, energy and digital components as well as its mitigation and adaptation aspects. Maintaining a balance between these infrastructure perspectives made it possible to keep the focus on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. Infrastructure was central to achieving the Goals overall as it impacted most targets directly or indirectly, with one infrastructure intervention having potential multiple and multidimensional benefits. Beyond its green benefits, for example, infrastructure – when considered broadly – determined how people lived and improved accessibility and inclusion. The architectural concept “universal design” about creating buildings accessible for persons with disabilities could from a broader perspective demonstrate how infrastructure and inclusion worked together to address diversity of needs. It was

important for the United Nations system to address infrastructure needs throughout countries, in line with national priorities, not just in urban cities, through broad partnerships. The reinvigorated resident coordinator system was a primary tool to implement the United Nations climate ambition at the country level where infrastructure's impact was most important.

Question 5: How does its focus on women and girls inform UNFPA actions on climate change, and why is it important to bring women's and girls' perspectives to action in leaving no one behind and climate change?

9. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, shared examples of how climate change and climate-related disasters were having a disproportionate impact on women and girls as evidenced across the globe in increased gender-based violence, trafficking, unwanted pregnancies, inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, among others. UNFPA was working closely with other United Nations organizations to ensure women and girls in climate-affected areas had access to sexual and reproductive and maternal health, mobile health teams, basic services, livelihood assistance, as well as psychosocial support to survivors of gender-based violence. UNFPA, together with other United Nations entities and by supporting South-South cooperation, worked at the policy level with national stakeholders and in communities with women and youth-led organizations to find solutions and build climate resilience. UNFPA supported alternative service delivery facilities for maternal health in emergencies that helped to ensure safe deliveries, cash for health payments, and preoperative blood transfusion kits for neonatal care. UNFPA leveraged its expertise in data and evidence gathering, using population risk and geospatial data systems, to inform the building of resilient health and protection systems. Under the leadership of the resident coordinator, and jointly with other United Nations organizations, UNFPA was working to regain the lost ground due to COVID-19 and put the world back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and leave no one behind.

Question 6: How are United Nations entities collaborating to adequately adapt and build resilience to climate shocks to protect food systems and ensure no one is left behind?

10. The Deputy Executive Director, WFP, said the climate crisis was a daily reality whose most pronounced impacts were taking place in the most vulnerable communities along the fault lines of conflict, climate extremes, food price inflation, and socioeconomic inequalities. It was crucial to acknowledge that the international aid and development system, and its financial instruments, had a major challenge in addressing this situation owing to underinvestment in contexts of fragility, poor social cohesion and conflict. It was therefore key for the United Nations system to work together. The most effective way to reduce vulnerabilities to climate and other crises was through an integrated approach that built on a wide range of actors across the United Nations system and its partnerships. This system-wide collaboration had to take place across the humanitarian-development-peace continuum to be effective and sustainable. United Nations development organizations had a central role as key agents in building resilience through their close engagement with the most vulnerable groups and through their work with Governments to integrate climate protection, resilience-building, and social protection in national development planning. That included addressing the root causes of vulnerability and supporting fragile countries and communities to build resilience and leave no one behind.

Takeaways from the panel discussion

11. The moderator of the discussion pointed to three main takeaways: (a) leaving no one behind was a central transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda that went

hand in hand with the need to reach those furthest behind, and required investments in disaggregated data and empirical evidence to inform policy design and address intersecting inequalities; (b) it was crucial to invest in preventing future climate-related shocks and build resilience against crises through synergetic action, stronger social protection systems, and coordinated delivery by identifying and targeting the most vulnerable and applying a gender-responsive lens; and (c) an urgent bold and global response was needed, commensurate with the scale and gravity of the crisis, that prioritized technology and accessible financing for climate action built on strong interagency coordination and partnerships across the humanitarian-development-peace continuum.

Interactive segment: voices from the field

Government representatives

12. The Vice-Minister of Environment, Ministry of Environment, Water and Ecological Transition, Ecuador, said Ecuador was collaborating with United Nations organizations to address the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution through the lens of the Sustainable Development Goals which sought to promote equality, generate economic opportunities and eradicate poverty. Ecuador was a pioneer in addressing climate change through a gender lens, having integrated gender in its management of climate change through a comprehensive strategy and enabling environment that fostered equality and non-discrimination in climate change policies. As a result, the country's ecosystems and biodiversity had improved and responsible production and consumption were being promoted through a gender lens. Ecuador was working with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), UNDP, and WFP, through the Green Climate Fund, on climate-focused programmes in the Amazon to promote forest preservation and sustainable deforestation aimed at integrating a broad range of stakeholders, including indigenous communities. The programme included capacity strengthening to stimulate a sustainable source of income, with the aim of reducing inequalities and closing the gender gap.

13. The Minister of Gender, Family and Social Services, the Maldives, said the Government had introduced health services, shelters, emergency funds, and agricultural grants and injected income to support climate-affected households to mitigate the worst climate change effects on women and girls. To ensure full implementation of its gender-responsive climate policy, the Maldives had prioritized the mainstreaming of gender through its strategic action plan and had made tremendous progress. The Government enacted a series of legislation upholding the principles of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Programme of Action, and the increase in the number of women in political leadership roles had given women a more powerful voice in formulating climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction efforts at the local level. The Government had signed the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework that promoted greater participation of women in social, economic, political and public life, and the Government recently approved its national gender equality action plan, 2022–2026, with UNDP support, that used innovative solutions to complex development challenges. The plan introduced gender-responsive budgeting and audits with UNFPA support that included climate change costing and disaster risk reduction planning. The Maldives was also working with UNICEF to introduce environmental sustainability and climate action within its enabling policies while mobilizing youth as agents of change.

Youth representative

14. The youth representative, Zimbabwe, said climate change was a children's crisis. It was crucial to give young people and children a voice in climate action decisions so they could play their part in shaping the future. He drew attention to the UNICEF climate mapping programme in Zimbabwe that gave voice to youth and helped them to advocate for climate action at the local level and hold leaders accountable. The programme also allowed youth to participate in the debates at the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of the Parties and other international climate change fora.

Interactive discussion between the presidents of the Executive Boards

15. The presidents of the four Executive Boards, the heads of the six United Nations organizations and members of the Executive Boards provided several comments in response to the six questions raised during the panel discussions on the United Nations development system's role in leaving no one behind as a principle for climate action to ensure a transformative path for the most vulnerable. They highlighted the following points:

(a) the joint meeting of the Executive Boards was an important platform for knowledge-sharing across the Boards to help accelerate system-wide action towards the 2030 Agenda under the leadership of the resident coordinators in the repositioned United Nations development system;

(b) the Executive Boards had to continue to play their oversight and guidance roles to ensure compliance with agreed organizational mandates and the strengthening and realization of United Nations entities' potential and capacities;

(c) the climate crisis disproportionately affected the most vulnerable, especially women and girls, youth, children, persons with disabilities, indigenous communities, and debt-burdened developing countries;

(d) transformative, collective action grounded in global solidarity was needed to support national efforts to build resilience against future shocks;

(e) the trend of major cuts in core resources for development was a major concern and would impede the United Nations system from fully supporting developing countries' efforts to achieve the Goals;

(f) food systems had to be more sustainable and resilient, and agroecological and innovative approaches accelerated, to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and adaptation mitigation in food systems were essential for transformative change and ensuring no one is left behind;

(g) social protection systems were needed to help populations respond to and prepare for climate-related crises;

(h) rationalizing international agricultural trade could correct distortions in the global market and help farmers in developing countries compete;

(i) flexibility and speed were needed to ensure timely provision of emergency concessional financing focused on positive resource transfers to countries in social and economic distress;

(j) the international community should aim to channel at least \$250 billion (of the \$650 billion in special drawing rights) to address the liquidity crisis in developing countries, and developed countries should fulfil their commitments to provide \$100 billion per year toward climate finance and allocate 0.7 per cent of gross national income;

(k) women were indispensable players in achieving peaceful, just, and inclusive societies and in promoting economic and sustainable growth;

(l) climate-related challenges and crises required joint United Nations development system efforts and beyond to succeed;

(m) the strategic plans of the United Nations organizations were blueprints for a stronger, more impactful United Nations development system, in line with reform, that mainstreamed gender and climate change and put partnerships at their core;

(n) United Nations organizations had to strengthen their efforts through joint planning, implementation, resource mobilization, reporting and monitoring processes – leveraging their comparative advantages and cooperation within the humanitarian-development-peace continuum – based on climate and gender-responsive analysis in the common country analysis, in full commitment to the reform agenda and transparency, coherence, due diligence and accountability;

(o) the proposal to establish a (non-process driven) checklist to monitor implementation of United Nations development system reform was welcomed and viewed as a useful tool to track collective and individual organization's progress.

16. In summing up the interactive discussions, the President of the Executive Board of WFP said the climate crisis, compounded by conflict and economic inequality, had made it difficult to achieve zero hunger as set out in the 2030 Agenda. While collaboration among United Nations organizations had increased, there was the need for even greater partnerships to effectively respond to the climate crisis and its impacts. The interrelated challenges of climate change, conflict and food insecurity could not be solved by one organization alone. Integrated programmes were needed that drew on the strengths of each organization and augmented the impact of their collaborative efforts. United Nations reform had therefore to focus not on processes but on improving the lives of people, particularly the most vulnerable.

Closing remarks

In closing, the President of the Executive Board of UNICEF thanked delegations and the six United Nations organizations for their participation in the joint meeting. He stressed the importance of close collaboration across the United Nations development system to address the triple challenge of COVID-19, conflict and climate change. Joint action was crucial, building on the examples of integrated approaches highlighted during the meeting and capitalizing on each organization's comparative advantages, to continue progress against the Sustainable Development Goals. There was clear evidence that when working together and when focused on the most vulnerable and leaving non one behind, the United Nations system was able to transform systems that built resilience and protected the lives of people and the planet.

