

## **UN development system must adapt to rapidly changing world, top official tells Assembly committee**



Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson. UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

15 October 2012 – A key United Nations committee today launched a four-yearly review of the Organization’s development activities with a top official calling for re-energizing the system to adapt to the new realities of a changing world.

“The global development map has evolved significantly in recent years,” Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson told the General the Assembly’s second committee, which deals with economic and financial issues.

“The nature of development challenges is also changing. More and more countries recognize that the world needs to do a better job in addressing interrelated social, economic and environmental problems,” he said, noting that nearly half of the countries now categorized as middle-income countries were part of the low-income category as recently as 1995.

The Deputy Secretary-General stressed that sustainable development is front and centre while the number of new actors in development cooperation is expanding.

“Development cooperation is no longer the exclusive domain of States or international organizations,” he said. “We now rely on the contributions of the private sector, foundations, academia and civil society. The United Nations system has to find ever better ways of joining forces with these new partners.”

Mr. Eliasson was speaking at the start of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review (QCPR) dealing with issues of funding for UN operational activities for development and the development effectiveness of the work of the UN system for development.

Implementing the QCPR is binding for 11 UN Funds and Programmes, six research and training institutions and three other entities that cover the whole gamut of UN development activities, ranging from the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)), the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) and the UN World Food Programme ([WFP](#)) to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), the UN Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)) and the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)).

The Committee has before it a report by [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon identifying six main areas for strengthening the UN development system.

These include adapting to change by actively engaging with the UN Development Group agencies, funds and programmes, as well as with Member States, to reposition the system for the longer-term, and revitalizing capacity-building roles by redoubling efforts to build national capacities.

“Even in the most difficult of circumstances, there is more the UN and the wider international community can and should do,” Mr. Eliasson said.

The other points are: reinvigorating the normative role of UN entities to better integrate its work to set norms and standards; reforming the funding system to eliminate highly fragmented non-core contributions and ensure that resource flows remain predictable; enhancing system-wide coherence by improving its capacity to work as one; and increasing efficiency and lowering transaction costs by delivering common services and harmonizing business operations.

“United Nations operational activities for development help millions of poor people around the world,” Mr. Eliasson concluded. “We owe them our best and most serious efforts. We must place the human beings at the centre.”

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