



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

1 June 2018

Dear Colleagues,

Yesterday, the General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system, which is enclosed for your reference. This is a landmark resolution which ushers in the most comprehensive reform of the United Nations development system in decades.

I am grateful to Member States for their leadership and ambition in providing the mandates required to take forward our collective efforts and better position the United Nations to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I also wish to reiterate my appreciation for your active engagement and support since the launch of the review process of the United Nations development system. Throughout this process, you have engaged in a spirit of openness and partnership, particularly as we worked to provide recommendations that responded to the guidance given in the 2016 resolution on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.

The resolution offers a unique opportunity for the system to become more than the sum of its parts and effectively deliver on the ambition of the 2030 Agenda. It provides us with robust mandates to immediately move forward with the implementation of a repositioned United Nations development system.

I want to highlight some of the critical mandates contained in the resolution, the operationalization of which will be detailed in full consultation with entities of the United Nations development system:

- First, the resolution endorses my proposals for a reinvigorated Resident Coordinator system, with the functions of Resident Coordinators now separated from those of the Resident Representatives of the United Nations Development Programme. Greater accountability for collective and system-wide action on the ground will be achieved through a matrixed dual reporting model to structure the relationship between Resident Coordinators and the Secretary-General on the one hand, and members of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) on the other.

Principals of the United Nations Development System

- Second, the resolution endorses the transformation of the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO) into a stand-alone office in the Secretariat with managerial and oversight functions of the Resident Coordinator system, reporting through the Deputy Secretary-General.
- Third, the resolution approves the establishment of a new generation of UNCTs, through a redesigned, strategic, flexible, and results-oriented United Nations Development Assistance Framework and a new approach to physical and non-physical presence through appropriate criteria to ensure tailored responses to country needs and priorities, as well as the advancement of common business operations, including common back offices and common premises.
- Fourth, the resolution endorses a two-phased approach to reposition our work at the regional level, on a region-by-region basis. We will soon launch a dedicated workstream to optimize working arrangements under existing mandates and resources, while reviewing options for the longer-term repositioning of our regional assets. This will ensure greater coherence between the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and the Regional Economic Commissions.
- Fifth, the resolution also paves the way for continued efforts in enhancing the transparency and accountability of system-wide results, including through the United Nations Economic and Social Council, entity-specific governing bodies, and stronger capacities for system-wide evaluations.
- Finally, the resolution welcomes the proposal of a Funding Compact, which will be operationalized through a Funding Dialogue and is expected to improve the quality and predictability of resources for the United Nations development system.

I am committed to proceeding in a swift manner in implementing all aspects of the repositioning of the United Nations development system. I will establish a transition team to coordinate the change process across all reform efforts, with specialized teams dedicated to each workstream. The team will consult closely and rely heavily on the inputs of the work of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group. Led by the Deputy Secretary-General, it will work in the same open, transparent and inclusive way we have conducted this process thus far.

We will also be consulting closely and reporting transparently to Member States as the transition unfolds. A key milestone in this regard will be the implementation plan for the inception of the new Resident Coordinator system, which will be presented to Member States by the end of the seventy-second session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Bringing about transformational change is a complex endeavour. Change is never easy; yet, it can be well-managed and inclusive to ensure smooth transitions and tangible outcomes. It is now our shared responsibility to ensure that we deliver on this historic opportunity.

I count on each and every one of you to uphold the momentum and honour the trust conferred to us by Member States. Your personal leadership and the active communication and engagement of your staff at all levels are essential to our success. Let us all remember that, in the end, the repositioning of the United Nations development system is not about processes. It is about delivering results for people through a strong development footprint in support of countries to leave no one behind.

I look forward to proceeding on this new journey with you.

Yours sincerely,

*with the very warmest personal regards*



António Guterres