

**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 2015



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Note

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Part one
First regular session 2015

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 26 to 30 January 2015**

I. Organizational matters

1. The first regular session 2015 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 26 to 30 January 2015. The President of the Board welcomed all delegations and thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their leadership and commitment to the work of the Board in 2014. He congratulated the new members of the Bureau on their election.

2. In accordance with rule 7 of the rules of procedure of the Executive Board, the Board elected the following members of the Bureau for 2015:

President: H.E. Mr. Fernando Carrera (Guatemala)
 Vice-President: Mr. Sahak Sargsyan (Armenia)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Minami (Japan)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Kelebhone Maope (Lesotho)
 Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai (Nepal)

3. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its first regular session 2015 (DP/2015/L.1), and approved the report of the second regular session 2014 (DP/2015/1). The Board adopted the annual workplan for 2015 (DP/2015/CRP.1) and approved the tentative workplan for the annual session 2015.

4. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2014 appeared in document DP/2015/2, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).

5. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2015/6 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2015:

Annual session 2015	1 to 12 June 2015 (New York)
Second regular session 2015:	1 to 4 September 2015

UNDP segment

II. Statement by the Administrator and financial, budgetary and administrative matters

6. In her opening remarks to the Executive Board (available on the [Executive Board website](#)), the Administrator thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their commitment and support throughout 2014 and congratulated the newly elected President and Vice-Presidents for 2015. The session was webcast live and, in a short film, the Administrator highlighted the work of UNDP in 2014. The Administrator acknowledged in moving terms the sad passing of former Executive Board Chair and Permanent Representative of Sweden, H.E. Mr. Mårten Grunditz, who had been a strong support to UNDP.

7. As part of her statement, the Administrator presented the report on direct budget support, 2008-2014 (DP/2015/3), based on UNDP experiences in Burkina Faso and Nepal. UNDP affirmed that providing direct budget support was an important policy option that should remain at its disposal in response to country demand, subject to agreed risk safeguards; it sought Board approval to continue using the policy.

8. Reflecting on 2014, the Administrator focused on UNDP early recovery work in response to crises across the world. She spoke in particular of its work in Syria, where in the context of the Strategic Response Plan UNDP offered emergency livelihood support to displaced populations, especially the most vulnerable. She highlighted UNDP activities in the Central African Republic, South Sudan, Mali, Ukraine and Yemen in areas ranging from electoral assistance and inclusive political dialogue to law and order, peace and reconciliation, justice and governance, constitutional development, transitional justice, early recovery and support for the internally displaced. On the Ebola crisis, UNDP had played its full part in efforts to stop the outbreak, and was the designated lead for the United Nations system on supporting recovery.

9. Looking ahead, the Administrator stressed the huge opportunity that 2015 represented for advancing the global sustainable development agenda, mentioning in particular the seventieth session of the General Assembly in September 2015 in which Member States would agree on the post-2015 development agenda and new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She highlighted the importance of three other international events: the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March; the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July; and the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December. The outcomes of each would be more powerful if there were synergies between them, so that eradicating poverty, building resilience and reducing carbon emissions would go hand in hand. With that in mind, she urged Member States to take a “whole-of-government” approach to the related negotiations.

10. Given its expertise and experience, UNDP, she noted, was particularly well equipped to help countries deliver the integrated sustainable development solutions required to meet the future SDGs. In 2015, the organization tackled the second year of its strategic plan, 2014-2017, having already implemented most of the organizational restructuring aimed at being better equipped to deliver on the plan. The review would bring with it a culture change internally built on a new, comprehensive internal accountability framework grounded in the Board-approved UNDP accountability framework. It would go hand in hand with the strengthening of quality assurance processes and better internal planning tools, such as the new annual business plan, which followed “critical pathways” that helped manage work under the strategic plan.

11. Underpinning those reinforcements was the new resource mobilization strategy, whose main objectives included: (a) mobilizing a “critical mass” of resources to protect core revenue and reverse its downward trend, while increasing the proportion of minimally earmarked UNDP funding; (b) adopting a more coordinated approach to mobilizing non-core resources for policy and programme activities; and (c) diversifying the resource base, drawing funds not only from a wider range of Governments but also from beyond Governments. She looked forward to continued engagement with Member States on the new strategy and through the planned structured dialogue. Highlighting UNDP commitment to transparency and accountability, she stressed the organization’s first-place ranking as the most transparent aid organization in the world in the 2014 Aid Transparency Index.

12. The Administrator emphasized the organization's commitment to South-South and triangular cooperation as important tools for advancing human and sustainable development. The hosting by UNDP of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation was central to that commitment. She underscored the commitment of UNDP to its responsibilities and leadership role in the United Nations development system, and highlighted how the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) was working to deliver more coherent, effective and efficient support to programme countries as they transition to the SDGs. Central to that collective effort were measures to improve the way UNDG members planned, designed, monitored and implemented together, including by building on delivering as one and self-starter experiences, which had been funnelled into the new standard operating procedures. Key to its success was ensuring predictable, secure funding for the resident coordinator system through, in particular, the system-wide cost-sharing arrangement approved in 2014.

13. Board members thanked the Administrator for her statement and welcomed the newly elected President and Vice-Presidents for 2015. They concurred that 2015 was a year of crucial importance and, commending it for its work to date, underlined the central role UNDP and the United Nations system had to continue to play in the design and implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the future Sustainable Development Goals. UNDP was well positioned to support partners in understanding and tackling the multidimensional aspects of poverty and inequality, strengthening democratic governance and building resilience to sustain development gains. They sought the organization's ongoing technical expertise and input on a range of topics to help ensure the final goals were ambitious, actionable, measureable and implementable. They saw UNDP actively involved in the year's three important conferences on financing for development, disaster risk reduction and climate change, in addition to September's General Assembly summit on the post-2015 development agenda.

14. They commended UNDP for its work in conflict and crisis settings that plagued different regions, highlighting in particular the conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. They underlined the organization's crucial early recovery work and its crisis response activities focused on longer-term development in collaboration with humanitarian actors. They sought UNDP leadership in ensuring an integrated United Nations system approach to peacebuilding, and the mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity in its own policy and programme work areas.

15. Across the board, delegations stressed that the organization's overarching mandate — according to its strategic plan, 2014-2017, and the quadrennial review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system — must remain poverty eradication and inclusive growth, prerequisites for realizing sustainable development, especially in the least developed countries, and towards which all efforts for greater corporate efficiency and effectiveness had to be geared. UNDP should continue to accord particular attention to capacity-building in helping countries to transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the SDGs. They underlined the special needs of middle-income countries and small island developing states (SIDS), noting that the International Year of SIDS in 2014 had ended with the adoption of the Samoa Pathway agreement. They encouraged UNDP to actively support the SIDS agenda and to ensure the fair, accurate and predictable distribution of regular resources to the region.

16. Member States continued to voice their support for the structural reform exercise, by which UNDP was becoming fit-for-purpose to deliver against its strategic plan and the quadrennial review and to engage the post-2015 development agenda. They stressed the importance of building a solid performance management culture, including strengthened evidenced-based reporting capacity, financial oversight, human resource management and the effective administration of justice. A large number of Board members, however, also expressed concern that the exercise was adversely affecting the balance of UNDP staff from developed and developing countries, and stressed the importance for UNDP to remain egalitarian and transparent throughout the process and to update Board members on a regular basis.

17. On the issue of direct budget support, delegations were pleased with UNDP efforts to clarify the situation and adopt a more cautious approach based on its experiences in Burkina Faso and Nepal, for which they requested evaluations to be conducted and lessons learned documented so the Executive Board could decide on the future of this financing instrument. They commended in particular UNDP provisions to use direct budget support only when it had determined it to be the most effective way to achieve results — where there was a shared vision with the receiving Government on policies and values, respect for national ownership and a careful risk assessment. They indicated that UNDP should use direct budget support only for sector-specific themes grounded in capacity development, and to update its corporate procedures in order to allay perceived bottlenecks and develop a risk management framework better adapted to direct budget support operations.

18. Voicing their continued concern over the regular (core)/other (non-core) resources imbalance, delegations called on Member States in a position to do so to increase core contributions and improve the quality of non-core resources. They recognized the critical mass issue from both an institutional and a programmatic perspective, but stated that it should not negatively affect programming activities in developing countries through the redirecting of resources to cover UNDP operational costs. The exercise should focus rather on aligning UNDP with the needs of programme countries while mobilizing financial resources for the programme budget. They stressed that funding for development activities should not be tied to conditionalities or assigned focus areas, but allocated according to national priorities.

19. Board members encouraged UNDP to continue to seek out and engage in new partnerships, going beyond traditional development cooperation to reflect new geopolitical realities, encompassing South-South and triangular cooperation, civil society and the private sector, as well as local governments and cross-border territorial partnerships. In that regard, they expressed strong support for UNDP work on South-South and triangular cooperation and technology transfer through innovative approaches, and some Member States urged it to give the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation increased human and financial resources.

20. The important role of UNDP within the United Nations development system received the strong recognition and support of Member States. They expected that role to become even more apparent in the post-2015 development world, and looked to UNDP to lead UNDG in its work to make the United Nations system of organizations fit-for-purpose to address the post-2015 development challenges.

21. A group of delegations discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the established practice of alternating the annual meetings of the Executive Board between New York and Geneva. They sought further, more detailed information on the different alternatives, based on objective, evidence-based analysis, and reflecting the views not only of Member States but also of United Nations organizations based in New York and Geneva. Placing the issue within the broader United Nations governance debate, they urged the Board not to take a decision until it had a complete picture of the pros and cons of alternating annual sessions.

22. In response, the Administrator thanked the Board members for their support and commitment to UNDP, including its role in supporting the post-2015 process. She assured the Board that poverty eradication was the organization's top priority and at the heart of its strategic plan. UNDP had played its full part in implementing the quadrennial review, working with UNDG members and with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and had contributed to the report of the Secretary-General to be presented at the Economic and Social Council's operational activities segment in 2015.

23. The Administrator welcomed the strong emphasis by many Board members on the UNDP role in disaster risk reduction and in addressing climate change. She emphasized the importance of finding synergies across all upcoming major international frameworks: the post-2015 agenda, the Conference on Financing for Development outcome, the new Global Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the global agreement on climate change. She stressed that UNDP was engaged in all those major global processes.

24. The Administrator emphasized that UNDP fully agreed with the need for an integrated approach to peacebuilding, aimed at strengthening the foundations for longer-term development. The new UNDP organizational structure was in line with that approach and UNDP was committed to working with United Nations partners to promote coherent system-wide approaches to peacebuilding and strengthening resilience, including bridging the gap between humanitarian and development action.

25. Regarding UNDP restructuring and human resources, the Administrator stressed that the internal structural change process had been transparent and fair, while highlighting, in response to concerns expressed, that as of December 2014 the overall balance of staff from developed and developing countries in positions filled had shifted in favour of staff from the South. Staff are the organization's greatest asset and UNDP sought to improve recruitment, development and performance management processes.

26. With regard to SIDS, she highlighted that UNDP was stepping up its work and was engaged with partners in devising innovative solutions to address their specific needs. She also highlighted that UNDP was actively promoting South-South and triangular cooperation in all its work and was fully committed to its hosting of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.

27. On funding issues, the Administrator highlighted that UNDP sought to address the core/non-core resources imbalance through the new resource mobilization strategy. A larger, more stable core resource base enabled UNDP to deliver more effectively on its strategic plan, while more minimally earmarked non-core resources helped UNDP to work strategically and respond quickly to crises. She

encouraged Member States in a position to do so to step up contributions to core resources and to use the new funding windows, which constitute a good vehicle for minimally earmarked resources. On direct budget support, UNDP focused on sector-wide budget activities, with support to specific national institutions, earmarked to select sectors, coupled with capacity development, and based on necessary safeguards. She requested that the Board allow the pilot period to continue.

28. On evaluation, UNDP was committed to working with Member States in developing and strengthening a robust evaluation policy and corporate function, with a genuinely independent Evaluation Office, built on the highest international standards and best practices and buttressed by a strong corporate results-based management culture. In order to safeguard the independence of evaluators, UNDP was decoupling the payment of consultants from the management of decentralized evaluations, establishing a hotline for reporting the questionable treatment of evaluators and creating a repository of completed evaluations to compare with final reports submitted. Monitoring and evaluation capacity was key; UNDP had assigned monitoring and evaluation experts to country offices, the number of staff members varying in line with programme size. She noted that a 2014 United Nations Joint Inspection Unit review rated UNDP as the top evaluation performer in the United Nations system and stressed that UNDP welcomed independent external reviews measuring its performance. In sum, UNDP was committed to building a culture of quality programming and evidenced-based monitoring and reporting of results at the global, regional and country levels.

29. On the alternating venue of Board sessions between New York and Geneva, she noted that while UNDP recognized the opportunity that Geneva-based venues held for engagement with other United Nations constituencies, and while it appreciated the cost concerns relating to holding meetings in Geneva, it was an issue that the Board had to resolve through its rules and procedures.

30. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/1: Report on direct budget support, 2008-2014.

III. Country programmes and related matters

31. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item and presented the draft country programme documents for Chile ([DP/DCP/CHL/3](#)), Guatemala ([DP/DCP/GTM/3](#)), Madagascar ([DP/DCP/MDG/3](#)) and Mali ([DP/DCP/MLI/3](#)), as well as the second nine-month extension of the country programme for Colombia, and the first two-year extensions of the country programmes for Myanmar and Papua New Guinea ([DP/2015/4](#) and Corr.1).

32. The Permanent Representative of Chile, the Permanent Representative of Guatemala, the Permanent Representative of Madagascar and the Permanent Representative of Mali elaborated on the draft country programme documents for Chile, Guatemala, Madagascar and Mali, respectively. The Permanent Representative of Colombia elaborated on the second nine-month extension of the country programme for Colombia.

33. The Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP, presented and elaborated on the draft country programme documents for Chile and Guatemala, as well as the second nine-month extension of the country

programme for Colombia, elaborating on them from the regional perspective. The Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, presented and elaborated on the draft country programme documents for Madagascar and Mali from the regional perspective.

34. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the following country programme documents: Chile, Guatemala, Madagascar and Mali.

35. The Executive Board approved the second nine-month extension of the country programme for Colombia and the first two-year extension of the country programmes for the Myanmar and Papua New Guinea.

IV. Evaluation

36. The President of the Board introduced the item and the review of the UNDP evaluation policy ([DP/2015/5](#)), indicating that because a summary of the review had been distributed to Member States in advance, there would be no formal UNDP presentation on the review.

37. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced and elaborated on the management response to the review of the UNDP evaluation policy ([DP/2015/6](#)).

38. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, presented and elaborated on the Independent Evaluation Office response to the review of the UNDP evaluation policy ([DP/2015/7](#)).

39. Underscoring the importance that they attached to a strong evaluation function, Board members appreciated the conducting by UNDP of a review of its evaluation policy, which had identified a broad range of challenges, and they welcomed the separate responses from UNDP and the Independent Evaluation Office. They stressed that the evaluation function should be viewed as a useful, required tool for organizational and individual learning and accountability.

40. Member States looked forward to a well-defined response to those challenges, including: (a) a holistic and continued push across the organization to nurture a results-oriented planning, monitoring and reporting culture that would improve staff responsiveness to evaluations, while safeguarding the independence, quality and usefulness of evaluations; (b) a clearly defined road map for the preparation of the revised evaluation policy; and (c) a series of informal Board consultations on the draft of the revised policy ahead of the annual session.

41. The most difficult set of challenges that the new policy had to address, Board members noted, lay with the quality, impartiality and independence of decentralized evaluations, the findings for which indicated the regular lack of reliable data on programme performance. This situation deprived UNDP of the evidence it needed to make sound resource allocation and programming decisions, and deprived donors of the evidence they needed to justify their investments, while giving programme countries only limited knowledge of UNDP contributions to their development. The new policy should provide the needed guidance on how to improve decentralized evaluations.

42. Delegations drew attention to the report of UNDP on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2013 ([DP/2015/8](#)). While

recognizing the encouraging findings on UNDP management of country-level resources, they expressed concern over the lack of performance indicators, baseline data and defined targets, which underlined the link between quality results-based management and the evaluation function. They looked forward to a clear policy for assessing country-level results that would articulate criteria for determining when (or not) to undertake a decentralized evaluation. The policy should delineate oversight and roles and responsibilities, define measures to ensure the independence of the evaluation from the management function, lay out mechanisms for effective responses to evaluations at all levels and for monitoring management actions and be supported by an operational action plan. The new policy should articulate a time-bound mechanism and clear responsibilities for tracking the implementation status of management actions at all levels, corporate and decentralized.

43. The Independent Evaluation Office had a crucial role to play in providing guidance, norms and standards for decentralized evaluations, in supporting UNDP management in its efforts to foster an effective evaluating and learning culture and in ensuring quality assessments. The new policy should clarify responsibilities and mechanisms for improving enforcement guidelines and define the role of the office in the quality assurance of decentralized evaluations.

44. Delegations concurred with the Independent Evaluation Office's capacity-building proposals for addressing the impartiality issue of decentralized evaluations, although they suggested that more be done to tackle broader systemic challenges. They fully agreed that conducting a large number of minimally funded annual decentralized evaluations might not be the best approach, and encouraged UNDP to consider replacing them with project completion reports or end-of-project reviews when appropriate, following which the Independent Evaluation Office could undertake quality assessment missions to a small percentage of countries conducting those reviews.

45. Board members underlined the critical importance of adequate funding for an independent evaluation function. The new policy should define the mechanisms for allocating resources to all aspects of the evaluation function and to the Independent Evaluation Office. Delegations stressed the need for UNDP management to consult with and provide the Board with more details on oversight funding (including budget lines distinguishing between monitoring and evaluation expenditures and between corporate and decentralized evaluation), and to ensure, in accordance with existing policy, that the Board annually approved a costed work programme for the Independent Evaluation Office. In close collaboration with the Board, UNDP and the Independent Evaluation Office should carefully consider the costs and benefits of various scenarios for improving the evaluation policy and function and share the first complete draft of the revised policy with the Board in due time ahead of the annual session 2015.

46. The new policy should also define the Board's governance functions. While recognizing, as stated above, that the evaluation policy should clearly articulate the delineation of roles and responsibilities for oversight and conduct of evaluations and reviews, and define the necessary measures to ensure the independence of the evaluation function from the management function, delegations stressed that Board members needed to reflect carefully on how closely it should become involved in the execution of the evaluation function. Some saw the need to further strengthen the independent character of the post of Director of the Independent Evaluation

Office and the operational independence of the Office. Others suggested that UNDP should ensure that the Board was formally involved in the recruitment process of the Director, including approval through an independent panel designated or approved by the Board, with the majority of panel members consisting of external evaluation experts.

47. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, assured Board members that UNDP would establish a road map and conduct regular consultations with the Board in redesigning the new evaluation policy. She reaffirmed the UNDP commitment to a robust evaluation function, which, she stressed, had to have the independence to define its programme of work, a budget within the organization's means and the freedom to determine the conclusions and findings of its evaluation analysis. She highlighted that the quality of evaluations was as important as the independence of evaluators. On the four main issues raised by Board members — quality of decentralized evaluations, independence, budget and tracking — UNDP was keenly focused on strengthening its decentralized evaluations, having prepared an annual strategy for decentralized evaluations to address normative, capacity and evidence-building culture issues throughout the organization. UNDP had an evaluation tracking system in place already, called the Evaluation Resource Database, and country offices were required to demonstrate their use of evaluation findings in country programmes.

48. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, reiterated the UNDP commitment to a strong evaluation function and culture, especially through good country-level reporting capacity and evaluations that informed strategic management decisions. Beginning in 2015, in UNDP programmes exceeding \$50 million, country offices would each have two monitoring and evaluation experts. For programmes between \$10 million and \$50 million, country offices would have one full-time monitoring and evaluation expert. For those below \$10 million, the relevant regional service centre would provide the monitoring and evaluation capacity. Given limits to the ability of UNDP to independently verify all its evaluations, the organization opted for a more focused, high-quality programme of evaluations. The new policy should include measures to ensure efficient mechanisms for zero tolerance against pressure on evaluators; a professionalized decentralized evaluation system; the total separation of authority over payments to evaluators from programme management; and a guarantee of the integrity of findings and recommendations through a repository of documents that evaluators provide to management. UNDP was committed to strengthening independence, improving quality, maintaining fiscal coherence priorities and embracing best practices on evaluation-related governance and appointment of officials. Senior management was pleased to acknowledge that UNDP commitment to a strong evaluation culture had been recognized in the 2014 Joint Inspection Unit analysis of the evaluation function in the United Nations system. According to the report, UNDP was a top performer, scoring four out of five points on independence, relevance, an enabling environment, reliability and the credibility of evaluations.

49. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, looked forward to working with Board members in crafting the new evaluation policy, which would prove to be a good learning experience all around. He stressed that evaluation challenges were complex and would require prioritization in order to be addressed properly. The Board's input was therefore fundamental. UNDP and the Independent Evaluation Office could already begin to better align all corporate oversight

functions; he looked forward to engaging further with management to improve both accountability and learning to ensure that UNDP progressed as it should.

50. The Executive Board took note of the review of the UNDP evaluation policy.

UNFPA segment

V. Statement by the Executive Director and oversight

51. In his statement to the Executive Board (available on the [UNFPA Executive Board website](#)), the Executive Director, UNFPA, thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their commitment, leadership and guidance throughout 2014, which were critical for the success of the 20-year review of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The Executive Director acknowledged in moving terms the sad passing of the former Executive Board Chair and Permanent Representative of Sweden, H.E. Mr. Mårten Grunditz, who had been a strong support to UNFPA. He also congratulated the newly elected President and Vice-Presidents for 2015, noting that it would be a pivotal year for the international development community as it moved towards finalizing the post-2015 agenda and the future Sustainable Development Goals.

52. While the ICPD review demonstrated the progress made over 20 years, the Executive Director stressed that any future set of common goals would succeed only if grounded in the principles of inclusive growth and human rights, without which grave inequalities would emerge. In 2014, the world faced an unprecedented number of complex challenges, from the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa to the entrenched epidemic of gender-based violence. The current year offered a great opportunity for the world to unite around a common agenda built on the principles of inclusive growth and human rights. He underlined the importance of the upcoming Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July as an opportunity to make the right investments focused on people, especially those most in need.

53. UNFPA remained firmly committed to fulfilling its mandate: fighting for the sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights of all people; ensuring that no woman dies giving life; and helping young people to realize their full potential in dignity and through respect for human rights. Driving its change agenda, UNFPA would focus on five priority areas: (a) strengthening the provision of quality reproductive health services, especially as relating to Millennium Development Goal 5; (b) fulfilling its development strategy for young people, in particular adolescent girls; (c) facilitating South-South and triangular cooperation; (d) establishing UNFPA as a centre of excellence in data for development; and (e) reinforcing its humanitarian work, focusing on gender-based violence. Success hinged on investing in youth, especially adolescent girls, guaranteeing them education and health and affording them the right life skills and real choices. Doing so would help to lift millions of people out of poverty, raise living standards and establish a foundation for sustained, resilient development.

54. In order to achieve those goals, as laid out in its strategic plan, 2014-2017, and address the post-2015 development challenges, UNFPA was making itself more fit for purpose by stepping up its engagement with strategic partners and investing in

its communications, resource mobilization and outreach sectors, establishing a new Division for Governance and Multilateral Affairs, including an environmental scanning unit and two liaison offices, and a new Division for Communications and Strategic Partnerships. The new divisions would introduce a more holistic approach to its partnership engagements, allowing UNFPA to better tell its success stories, advocate for issues and redefine its resource mobilization strategy for the post-2015 development environment. The Executive Director noted that the changes were cost-neutral and would benefit country-level programming, including by reassigning senior staff to the field. UNFPA was reinforcing its management in the areas of audit, investigation, evaluation and oversight, while promoting a culture of ethics, integrity and mutual respect.

55. In light of the organizational realignments, the Executive Director, thanking Member States for their financial contributions, drew attention to the fact that the non-core resource base (other resources) was surpassing the core resource base (regular resources). Noting the challenge posed by the volatility of global market exchange rates, he encouraged donors to maintain their contributions so that the Fund could effectively plan its activities. UNFPA has established a new Non-core Funds Management Unit to ensure that non-core resources were used effectively and allocated to countries most in need. It would also report to donors on the added value of non-core resources for UNFPA, thereby demonstrating its commitment to accountability and results. In order to implement its ambitious agenda, UNFPA was engaging with a range of partners at the country level and with the private sector, and facilitating South-South cooperation and technical exchanges. The sharing of expertise and best practices was therefore key. Data for development would thus be a corporate priority for 2015 and beyond — focused on a steady flow of high-quality, timely, authoritative and accessible data to track progress on the Sustainable Development Goals — working with Governments, civil society, the private sector and other partners.

56. The Executive Director stated that UNFPA was committed to driving change with partners through the “Delivering as one” approach, using its standard operating procedures as a practical, collective implementation tool for the post-2015 development agenda. He appealed to Member States to hold the United Nations accountable for the integration and coherence of its policies, programmes, funding and business operations, while ensuring that the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals were grounded in human rights and inclusive growth.

57. Board members commended the Executive Director for his strong leadership of UNFPA, especially in guiding the 20-year review of ICPD and in helping to ensure that ICPD principles were a main feature of the post-2015 development agenda, including through a strong set of indicators. While much progress had been made since 1994, many challenges remained, including the need to step up ICPD implementation and mobilize additional resources. Delegations underscored their unwavering support for Sustainable Development Goals grounded in respect for human rights and inclusive growth, the realization of which UNFPA had a unique role to play in preserving and protecting the right of women and girls to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including access to family planning and health services, and in fostering a promising future for youth, especially adolescent girls. They were keen to see a reduction in the number of women dying in childbirth and

children in infancy, and expressed strong support for the Fund's work in ending female genital mutilation/cutting and early and forced marriage.

58. Delegations encouraged UNFPA to continue to work with programme countries, at their request, to integrate population policies into overall national development plans and to increase its capacity-building activities, especially to support the capacity of programme countries to collect and analyse data. They strongly supported the Fund's prioritization of youth issues, especially in national development planning, through increased investment in education and the promotion of youth employment. They emphasized the importance of respecting national ownership and national priorities, and looked forward to continued transparency and accountability in financial management and in monitoring and evaluation.

59. Member States welcomed the Fund's second-generation humanitarian strategy, which integrated a focus on gender equality, was based on gender-disaggregated data and included efforts to tackle gender-based violence in humanitarian settings. Delegations saw UNFPA as a trusted partner in humanitarian emergencies, supporting women in gaining equal access to health commodities and family planning. In that regard, they fully supported the proposed increase in the humanitarian response fund and the establishment of a humanitarian response reserve, as those funds would allow UNFPA to respond more quickly to requests by countries for assistance during emergencies. Similarly, delegations expressed appreciation and support for the Fund's work to address the urgent needs of vulnerable populations in crisis settings, including access to reproductive and mental health services, especially in response to gender-based violence. In that regard, they encouraged senior management to urgently prioritize filling the gender-based violence coordinator position.

60. Delegations expressed full support for the management changes that the Executive Director proposed, stating that they would lead to positive results for UNFPA, including a closer engagement with Member States, a more responsive relationship with the Executive Board and a greater capacity to respond to the increased demands of the post-2015 development agenda. It was noted that recent internal reforms had allowed UNFPA to improve its service delivery, especially through increased core funding to its global programme to enhance reproductive health commodities. In that light, three suggestions were made: UNFPA should continue to seek to broaden its global programme funding base; prioritize the implementation of its new system to improve programme management, data collection, monitoring, evaluation and results reporting; and expedite the finalization of its risk management strategy.

61. In response, the Executive Director thanked Board members for drawing attention to the unique mandate of UNFPA, both in development and crisis settings, and for supporting its proposed actions to bolster its humanitarian response capacity. He noted the unprecedented number of complex Level-3 crises in 2014, a situation Member States and the United Nations would have to continue to address for the foreseeable future. The Fund was strengthening its crisis surge capacity in an effort not only to provide much needed health-care services but also to facilitate the transition to longer-term stability. UNFPA would participate in the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015 to ensure that sexual reproductive health and reproductive rights were reflected in the outcome document.

62. Turning to population dynamics, the Executive Director stressed the importance that UNFPA placed on engaging youth in order to build resilient societies and communities made up of healthy populations. Noting his chairmanship of the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council on the Demographic Dividend, 2014-2016, he drew attention to contemporary thinking that emphasized a focus on the continuum of life and the ageing process in any development approach.

63. Regarding oversight, the Executive Director noted that UNFPA would continue to build its accountability profile, and reiterated the Fund's commitment to transparency in reporting not only to donors but also to beneficiaries. While thanking Board members for their generous financial contributions, he stressed that funding continued to be an issue. He encouraged Member States to work with UNFPA to close the funding gap, in particular for the global programme's reproductive health commodity security component as well as for the regular budget, and to benchmark their contributions to the United States dollar.

64. In closing, the Executive Director restated the Fund's commitment to engaging with all partners in ensuring that the ICPD principles and priorities were reflected in the post-2015 development agenda and the future Sustainable Development Goals.

Oversight

65. The Director, Office of Audit and Investigation Services, UNFPA, presented the report of the Executive Director on the revised oversight policy ([DP/FPA/2015/1](#)). She acknowledged the contribution of other UNFPA offices, particularly the Legal Office, in the formulation of the policy.

66. Board members commended UNFPA for the revised oversight policy, and welcomed the Fund's proactive, consultative process with delegations. They also commended its leadership in setting a clear, unambiguous tone for effective oversight, and expressed satisfaction with management's demonstrated commitment to transparency, accountability and dialogue with Member States, as well as with the Director, Office of Audit and Investigation Services, for leading the revision process in collaboration with the Evaluation Office and the Ethics Office.

67. Delegations praised the broadened concept of oversight and the notion of shared responsibilities between governing bodies, management and other fiduciary entities, commended the measures taken to strengthen the transparency of information and highlighted the trend towards clearer roles and responsibilities within UNFPA in the areas of audit, investigation and evaluation. Those measures, they noted, would contribute to building a stronger culture of accountability and good governance, and, ultimately, ensure the greater effectiveness and quality of country programme implementation.

68. The delegations looked forward to the policy's effective implementation, which, they noted, set high standards of integrity and professionalism, and to continued improvements in programme performance through a comprehensive, transparent and rigorous assurance system. Effective implementation, they underlined, would require management to carefully appraise and adjust organizational arrangements, capacities and resources. They requested regular updates on the application of the policy and stood ready to engage in dialogue as needed to address any gaps.

69. The Director, Office of Audit and Investigation Services, UNFPA, thanked delegations for their support and looked forward to working with them on implementing and further improving the oversight policy.

70. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/2: Revised UNFPA oversight policy.

VI. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

71. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, presented the report on scaling up UNFPA humanitarian response funding ([DP/FPA/2015/2](#)).

72. Board members expressed concern at the unprecedented number of complex conflicts and crises in 2014 and their dire consequences, including the mass movement of refugees and displaced persons. Noting that the number of simultaneous crises had overburdened the United Nations system, they drew attention in particular to the lack of funding allocated to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services in crisis situations, and underlined the unique role of UNFPA in delivering such services and in co-leading efforts to tackle gender-based violence in conflict settings. They encouraged UNFPA to take a targeted approach based on its comparative advantages, including a clear division of labour with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

73. Similarly, UNFPA has a leading role to play in mainstreaming, at an early stage, comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, as well as the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence, into humanitarian response planning, implementation and resource mobilization. On a related note, delegations noted with appreciation the high rating that UNFPA received for its normative and advocacy roles in humanitarian situations, but stressed the importance of building its risk management capacity in tandem with bolstering its humanitarian response and reporting on results.

74. Board members supported the proposed two-pronged approach: to increase the annual allocation for emergencies, from a ceiling of \$5 million to \$10 million, and to set up a one-time humanitarian response reserve at \$10 million from regular resources. There was, however, a request for more detailed information on the underlying funding structure, as well as its possible impact on the implementation of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, and on country-level programming. That information should include an assessment of the consequences expected on other strategic areas as well as the projected longer-term scenario for future UNFPA development needs and humanitarian response. It was further noted that the United Nations should design sustainable development and humanitarian assistance strategies aimed at preventing crises before they happen.

75. Reaffirming the indispensable role of the United Nations as global coordinator in the humanitarian response system, delegations welcomed the UNFPA commitment to collaborating and coordinating its humanitarian response with other United Nations system organizations through the humanitarian coordination mechanisms, in an effort to guarantee ever greater efficiency and effectiveness. They encouraged UNFPA to play a crucial role in aligning prevention measures through the road map operationalizing the Call to Action on Violence Against

Women and Girls in Emergencies, to actively join discussions with other United Nations organizations to design system-wide solutions, building in particular on private-sector expertise and experience, to take part in designing the Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines on gender-based violence and actively participate in preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016.

76. In response, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, thanked the delegations and expressed appreciation for their strong support. Pointing to the unprecedented number of humanitarian crises worldwide, she highlighted that adjustments were needed so that UNFPA could continue to effectively implement its Board-approved strategic plan, 2014-2017, and simultaneously address the multiple complex humanitarian crises that had arisen. She stressed that the UNFPA strategic plan was not premised on specific contexts but rather on a core strategic objective — the fundamental rights of women and girls in all contexts — the priorities of which had not changed. What has changed is the need for rapid scaling-up to address unforeseen crises and to adjust modalities of operation accordingly. She pointed out that the one-time humanitarian response reserve would account for a mere 0.5 per cent of the annual budget, and represented only 0.025 per cent over the lifetime of the strategic plan; its impact, however, would be immense and would propel the strategic plan's effective delivery to those most in need.

77. She reaffirmed the Fund's unwavering commitment to coordinating closely with the United Nations development and humanitarian mechanisms. In the last two years, UNFPA had strengthened its alignment and collaboration with and contribution to the United Nations humanitarian system through emergency director meetings, field collaboration and active participation in inter-agency steering committees and in preparing the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, scheduled for March 2015, and the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, while co-leading the work stream on the humanitarian response of the Secretary-General's Every Women, Every Child Global Strategy Renewal Process.

78. She assured delegations that the increased allocations for the humanitarian response fund and the humanitarian response reserve would be implemented according to the Board-approved business model and kept within the spirit of the resource allocation system, which features fragility and crisis as criteria. She looked forward to continued engagement with the Board on these matters.

79. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/3: Scaling up UNFPA humanitarian response funding.

VII. Country programmes and related matters

80. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, introduced the draft country programme documents for Madagascar ([DP/FPA/CPD/MDG/7](#)) and Mali ([DP/FPA/CPD/MLI/7](#)), as well as the second, nine-month extension of the country programme for Colombia, the first two-year extension of the country programme for Myanmar, and the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Iraq and the Lao People's Democratic Republic ([DP/FPA/2015/4](#)).

81. After the Madagascar Secretary General, Ministry of Economy and Planning, Jean Gabriel Randrianarison, presented the country programme document for his country, the Regional Director for East and Southern Africa and the Regional

Director for West and Central Africa elaborated on the draft country programme document for Madagascar and Mali, respectively. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean elaborated on the extension of the country programme for Colombia and the Deputy Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific elaborated on the extension of the country programme for Myanmar.

82. Delegations thanked the Executive Board for considering their programmes and UNFPA for its support. They commended UNFPA for developing the draft country programmes in close collaboration with the national authorities, for drawing on lessons learned from previous cycles and for aligning with national development plans and strategies. They highly valued the Fund's technical support and provision of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights services, including advancing rights-based family planning, especially for women and girls, as well as its focus on youth and its work to tackle gender-based violence.

83. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the following country programme documents: Madagascar and Mali.

84. The Executive Board approved the nine-month extension of the country programme for Colombia and the two-year extension of the country programme for Myanmar.

85. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Iraq and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

UNOPS segment

VIII. Statement by the Executive Director

86. In her opening address to the Board (available on the [UNOPS Executive Board website](#)), the Executive Director thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for their commitment and support throughout 2014 and congratulated the newly elected President and Vice-Presidents for 2015. Underscoring the importance of the Board's strong support, she affirmed that UNOPS was on solid financial and operational footing. The year 2015 marked the twentieth anniversary of UNOPS becoming an independent, self-financing United Nations entity and its role continued to be clear: delivering advisory, implementation and transactional services in project management, infrastructure and procurement, while supporting the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding objectives of its partners.

87. Noting the importance of 2015, in which Member States would define the post-2015 development agenda and the future Sustainable Development Goals, the Executive Director affirmed the UNOPS commitment to working with all partners on implementation. As per its mandate, UNOPS contributed to a fit-for-purpose United Nations system through a management perspective built on best practices and technical knowledge in its areas of expertise. UNOPS embraced change as a principle, aided often by modern technology that improves processes, methodologies and tools and ultimately ensures efficient and effective development solutions. In 2015, UNOPS would implement its business innovation and improvement programme to transform the technology underpinning its delivery platform.

88. Asserting the readiness of UNOPS to measure its work against independent external standards, the Executive Director was pleased to report that in late 2014 UNOPS was the first United Nations organization to become Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems certified for its infrastructure practices. That certification was added to the many others it had received, including for its quality management systems, project management practices, sustainable procurement practices, infrastructure practices and environmental management system practices — all certified against the highest international standards. The UNOPS commitment to and adoption of those external standards ensured its ability to mitigate operational risks. For that reason, UNOPS was submitting for Board approval a proposal to strengthen its Audit Advisory Committee and establish a separate Strategic Advisory Group of Experts to advise on industry best practices and standards. Board approval would further align UNOPS governance and accountability mechanisms with that of other United Nations organizations.

89. Cooperation and partnership building were of paramount importance to UNOPS. The organization looked forward to the World Conference on Disaster Risk Management in Sendai, Japan, in 2015, where it would have the opportunity to share the lessons learned and best practices from its widely acknowledged disaster risk management for resilience programme, focused on infrastructure. UNOPS placed a high premium on partner satisfaction as a key indicator of its success and a tool to reassess its priorities. Recent partner feedback revealed overall high levels of satisfaction, with a notable increase in the number of partners that recommended UNOPS. In order to reinforce its accountability and transparency further, UNOPS had taken up the Secretary-General's call for a data revolution and was partnering with UNDP on the International Aid Transparency Initiative to embrace data-driven, evidence-based development solutions.

90. UNOPS was keen to use its expertise to play an active role in linking partners to innovative solutions for sustainable development across a wide range of fields. Noting the changing donor environment, the Executive Director encouraged private investors to finance sustainable economic development through investments that prioritize social and environmental development.

91. Board members commended the Executive Director and UNOPS for a continuing tradition of strong leadership. They reaffirmed their support for the organization's unique mandate and proven track record, through which as a self-financing agency it had demonstrated that the United Nations could execute development projects to the highest standards without relying on Member States' funding. They welcomed its continuing efforts to improve the quality of services it provided and enhance transparency and accountability. They appreciated the steps taken to benchmark its work against the highest international standards in engineering and project management, which had earned UNOPS a well-deserved reputation for efficiency and effectiveness, as well as transparency.

92. Delegations encouraged UNOPS to continue to leverage its comparative advantages, giving priority to operations and maintaining excellence in project management and delivery, while paying close attention to financial stability, improving the quality of work and strengthening internal controls and training. They commended UNOPS for striving toward ever greater sustainability and looked forward to its continued effective managerial and procurement services in support of developing countries. They highly valued the principled focus of UNOPS on

national ownership and leadership grounded in capacity development, a key factor in achieving sustainable development.

93. Similarly, delegations welcomed UNOPS efforts to improve oversight by strengthening its Audit and Advisory Committee and by establishing a Strategic Advisory Group of Experts, actions that raised the bar for the entire United Nations development system. They were pleased to note that the terms of reference for the proposed committee were harmonized with those of the UNDP Audit Advisory Committee, ensuring that the committee's oversight functions did not infringe on those of the Executive Board. Those steps would also help to ensure capacity of UNOPS for greater organizational and risk management. They welcomed the UNOPS design of a new strategy for disaster risk reduction and requested information on its implementation plans. Within the context of ensuring quality data for the post-2015 agenda, they sought more information of UNOPS work with the International Aid Transparency Initiative.

94. Welcoming the organization's new cooperation strategy to broaden and tighten its partnerships with other United Nations organizations, Governments and the private sector, delegations looked forward to receiving more information on how the strategy was being prepared and when UNOPS would present it to the Board. The spearheading by UNOPS of innovative approaches, including by building environmental sustainability into its operations, promoting gender parity in its ranks and undertaking the training of nationals, made it an attractive partner for delivering on the capacity-building components of the post-2015 development agenda.

95. In response, the Executive Director thanked Board members for supporting UNOPS efforts to drive excellence. UNOPS was enthusiastic about its new disaster risk reduction strategy, which it would present at the World Conference on Disaster Risk Management in 2015. The strategy introduced a new method for assessing damage, but most importantly focused on how to assure resilient reconstruction. Many partners had accepted UNOPS partnership broadening proposal, which the organization would continue to extend in an effort to expand its partnerships, building on its commitment to transparency. On procurement, UNOPS was ready to provide the Board with additional information on its procurement streams within the context of balancing development priorities with quality of services. In closing, she thanked the Board for approving the proposal to strengthen the Audit and Advisory Committee and establish an Advisory Group of Experts, and looked forward to working with delegations throughout 2015.

96. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/4: Strengthening of the UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee.

Joint segment

IX. Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

97. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the report of UNDP on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2013 (DP/2015/8 and annexes). The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, introduced the UNFPA follow-up to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2013: Status of implementation of the recommendations

(DP/FPA/2015/3 and annexes). The Deputy Executive Director, UNOPS, introduced the report of UNOPS on the status of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2013 (DP/OPS/2015/1).

98. Board members appreciated the progress the organizations had made in implementing previous recommendations, in particular the top audit-related priorities for 2012-2013. Overall, they welcomed the unqualified audit opinions each organization received for 2013, the second year of their International Public Sector Accounting Standards implementation, and were pleased to note the lower number of high priority recommendations for the 2014-2015 biennium. Emphasizing the importance of effective implementation of recommendations, delegations noted that the rate of implementation had remained low for both UNDP and UNFPA during the biennium, including for the resolution of long outstanding recommendations. They urged the organizations to accelerate implementation in 2015, and requested strong executive-level commitment to ensure accountability for the process and to reduce the overall risk level. That said, the Board commended UNDP for the notable progress it had made on long-outstanding recommendations by January 2015.

99. Member States recognized UNDP and UNFPA actions to strengthen procurement by promoting greater efficiency, transparency, accountability and compliance. They encouraged both to continue to strengthen procurement through further reforms, particularly in procurement planning, capacity and compliance (in close coordination with other United Nations development system organizations) in order to make country offices more efficient. Recognizing UNFPA improvements to its vendor performance evaluation tool, they asked the Fund to closely review those processes to ensure continued compliance and effectiveness in all business units. Delegations encouraged both UNDP and UNFPA to continue their efforts to strengthen asset management. Furthermore, they welcomed both organizations' progress in addressing employee benefit liabilities and looked forward to hearing their positive experiences.

UNDP

100. Board members commended UNDP for its hard work in achieving its new ranking as the most transparent development organization in Publish What You Fund's Aid Transparency Index. They welcomed the organization's plan to address the top eight audit-related priorities for 2014-2015, the harmonized approach to cash transfers and assurance processes for national implementation, programme and project design, monitoring and evaluation and procurement and fraud.

101. Delegations recognized the organization's challenges in implementing the harmonized approach to cash transfers and national implementation modalities, most notably the lack of assessments conducted on the harmonized approach to cash transfers at country level and the weaknesses in the monitoring of implementing partners in national implementation. Recognizing that UNDP was in the process of rolling out a revised harmonized-approach-to-cash-transfers framework and building an implementation-tracking database, they encouraged the organization to coordinate its work towards greater compliance with wider efforts to improve programme quality and performance.

102. Board members noted the set of challenges that UNDP faced in programme and project design, monitoring and evaluation, and indicated that they would closely

monitor progress in that area, especially country office performance, and stressed the importance of fostering a culture of accountability throughout UNDP. They urged UNDP to take measures to address the recurring qualified audits of implementing partners, and to give high priority to the quality assurance of programming and results-based management at the country level. In general, they encouraged UNDP to strengthen its capacity to manage and work with implementing partners.

103. On the issue of fraud, noting the Board of Auditors' appraisal that UNDP needed to reassess fraud risks and set up potent counter measures — despite improvements resulting from a strengthened global payroll system and a clarified division of authority — delegations looked forward to more detailed information in future reports. While appreciating the challenges, they expected continued vigilance in UNDP efforts to uncover and prevent procurement irregularities and other fraudulent practices. They looked forward to updates on future actions to maximize recovery opportunities.

UNFPA

104. Board members welcomed UNFPA progress in addressing the Board of Auditors recommendations, noting that overall liquidity levels had risen between 2012 and 2013. While acknowledging the need for UNFPA to hold sufficient cash balances, they emphasized the importance of managing the balances effectively. They were pleased with the risk-based audit cycle assessment undertaken and looked forward to further improvements to the internal audit cycle coverage. In that regard, delegations highlighted three main areas: business transformation, human resource management and financial reporting.

105. While Board members were pleased with UNFPA progress in strengthening country and regional office capacity, they were concerned that certain issues relating to regionalization might undermine field office effectiveness, particularly the clarity of roles, performance monitoring and country and regional office alignment. While recognizing the vitality of the business case process, they asked for clarification on the overall corporate restructuring process. They urged UNFPA to provide additional training and resources to strengthen internal controls and risk management at the country office level, and to consider options for delegating tasks to service centres, steps that might address recommendations pertaining to inventory management, oversight, procurement and collaboration with implementing partners. On human resource management, noting in particular UNFPA efforts to address the number of vacancies, delegations looked forward to an assessment of its possible impact on programme delivery.

106. Board members commended UNFPA for launching its global programming system, which would strengthen transparency and the management of implementing partners. Recognizing the Fund's key capacity-building work with implementing partners, delegations stressed the need to effectively address associated risks. They were pleased with UNFPA progress in overseeing consultants and temporary assistance, and looked forward to an update of the Fund's review of its policy on special service agreement holders and the creation of a new consultant roster. On financial reporting, Board members, welcoming the revised information on institutional costs and programme expenditure, requested that future updates on

Board of Auditors recommendations be submitted with the Fund's financial report and audited financial statements.

107. In response, the Associate Administrator, UNDP, thanked delegations for their comments and assured them that UNDP would address their concerns, in particular regarding procurement, and would update them regularly on progress.

108. The Deputy Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, focused his response on the harmonized approach to cash transfers. He highlighted that UNDP had undertaken a comprehensive review of its implementation modalities, the most prominent being national implementation, of which the harmonized approach to cash transfers was a component. UNDP had taken a five-pronged approach to addressing harmonized-approach-to-cash-transfer issues: (a) enforcing procedures that worked well; (b) changing procedures where needed, assisting country offices with related assessments, monitoring and procurement; (c) engaging in more effective dialogue with implementing partners and programme countries to weigh best options, with full respect for national ownership and the organization's capacity-building role; (d) revising the corporate fraud prevention policy, aligning it with best practices and promoting the national adoption of fraud policies, focused as well on the recovery of funds; and (e) mainstreaming the harmonized-approach-to-cash-transfers modality throughout the country programming process, from start to finish, and in programming documents.

109. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, focused her response on resource mobilization and delivery, regional and country office capacities, human resource management and procurement. On the issue of the Fund's retaining cash entering 2015, she reported that implementation rates in 2014 were unprecedentedly high, both for core and non-core resources, thanks to an uptake in delivery, reflecting strengthened regional and country office capacity and better oversight. There was a significant reduction in the number of findings by the external auditors hired to assess implementing partners' compliance, marking an overall positive trend. To build on these positive trends, UNFPA had begun in 2014 to institute quarterly portfolio reviews on both the programme and management sides, to discuss implementation and vacancy rates, focused on the causes of delivery performance. She noted that the regionalization process, in tandem with the corporate restructuring, would come to full fruition in 2015, with the Fund's capacities strengthened in all areas of work: human resources, resource mobilization, communications and monitoring and evaluation. UNFPA was currently updating its organizational handbook to clarify roles and responsibilities at different levels and the level of oversight expected. On human resource management, UNFPA had introduced a new human resources analytics post aimed at addressing internal bottlenecks to hiring. In programming, the Fund was trying to pinpoint technical areas in which it had the most vacancies so that it could better target its hiring process in those areas. She thanked delegations for their support of the global programme system, focused on addressing bottlenecks to delivery. On procurement, UNFPA was keen to collaborate in joint procurement approaches with other United Nations organizations.

110. The Director, Division of Management Services, UNFPA, responded to issues related to cash management, financial reporting and operational excellence. Assuring delegations that UNFPA was closely monitoring inflows and outflows of its cash balance, he encouraged donors to promptly submit their pledged funding

contributions, as that facilitated UNFPA programme planning. On training, the Fund had launched a certified accounting course for all its accountants to ensure updated IPSAS skills. Similarly, UNFPA had provided training on managing inventory funds to all focal points to assess and address risks. The Fund had started its operational excellence project in 2013 to review key business processes (finance, procurement, travel, human resources) and to determine how it could execute those processes more efficiently and effectively in support of programme delivery, especially in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. On country office capacity, UNFPA was taking concrete steps to align skills with the organization's business model and national priorities.

111. The Deputy Executive Director, UNOPS, focused his response on UNOPS disclosing of all project data on its website during the previous five years, an initiative that had prompted it to seek International Aid Transparency Initiative certification, which UNOPS was awarded in 2012.

112. The Director, External Audit, United Nations Board of Auditors, noted that panel participants had faithfully presented the Board of Auditors recommendations as laid out in its reports to the three organizations. Both UNDP and UNFPA had shown good progress in responding to current and past recommendations, as validated by the drop in the number of recommendations from one year to the next. He noted, however, that there were timing variations in the organizations response and self-assessment. There were also certain expectation gaps in the response, in particular in terms of recurring recommendations. As part of its focus on transparency, the Board of Auditors had created a template the organizations should follow when reporting on fraud to ensure uniformity on the issues addressed. A final version of the template would be ready for March 2015. The Board of Auditors encouraged the organizations to submit their annual financial statements earlier than prescribed by their financial regulations and rules to afford the auditors more time to complete their work in order to avoid issuance of subpar audit opinions.

113. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/5: Reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for 2013.

Annex

Report of the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP (2 February 2015)

A. In partnership with others: lessons learned on scaling up innovation to reach people in need

1. The President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) opened the meeting welcoming all participants to the joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme (WFP). He also welcomed the United Nations Secretary-General, who was participating for the first time.

2. The Secretary-General began the meeting with a few remarks in which he stressed the increasingly important role of regional bodies and the need to strengthen skill sets and support to Member States at the international level. He underlined four main points, stating that:

- Innovation was not an end in itself
- Partnerships were vital to maximizing knowledge, skills, best practices and resources
- Innovation required the right enabling environment
- United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies had to be able to expand space for innovation and at times allow for failure

3. The heads and deputies of the six United Nations organizations discussed the opportunities and challenges they faced in developing and scaling up innovative ideas, processes and products. It was the first time the six had discussed the issues of innovation, risk-taking and management, partnerships and financing with their respective executive boards.

4. The discussion was organized into a number of segments, including a "fail faire" — an exercise in which participants learn from failure — and a question-and-answer session with Member States. The six organizations shared their experiences in innovating and highlighted the value that innovation provided to programming. Furthermore, a number of ideas were presented on how innovation could improve in the future, including through closer links to outcomes, knowledge-sharing and better communication with stakeholders. The need to bridge different aspects of United Nations operations, particularly humanitarian assistance and development, was highlighted.

5. Member States actively engaged throughout the session and provided a number of comments, notably stating that:

- Innovation was an area in which Governments had to invest
- Links between innovation and results needed improvement
- Innovation could contribute more effective measurements of development

- The post-2015 development agenda promised to be an area in which United Nations organizations could develop a more harmonized approach
6. Furthermore, a number of Member States expressed their vision of the way forward, stating that the United Nations should:
- Encourage data-sharing among all United Nations organizations in order to better utilize big data and strategic foresight methodologies
 - Leverage the expertise of a diverse set of actors, because diversity was a critical component of innovation
 - Test, prototype and pilot new ideas, along with rigorous monitoring and measuring, in order to predict failures and successes
7. In conclusion, the leaders of the six United Nations organizations stressed the importance of creating the right enabling environment for innovation that could cultivate a greater, more inclusive impact, establish partnerships and strengthen cooperation and sharing within the United Nations development system. They agreed that they needed to build innovation into their organizational cultures and that management should allow for possible failure in innovation.
8. In closing, the President of the Executive Board of UNICEF thanked delegations and the six United Nations organizations for their participation and commended them for taking an innovative approach to the joint meeting during the morning session.

B. Innovative approaches to programme design and implementation to support the operationalization of the post-2015 development agenda

9. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS welcomed the representatives of the six United Nations organizations and the guest speakers.
10. The Administrator, UNDP, highlighted that the United Nations system was in the process of reviewing how it worked in order to guarantee its best support to Member States in delivering on the post-2015 development agenda. This review process involved organizations' concerted efforts to become fit for purpose and included strengthening a range of innovative approaches to development practices that they increasingly use. She noted that new technologies allowed the United Nations system to reach ever wider audiences, while engaging end users in identifying challenges and creating solutions could greatly contribute to successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. Finally, the standard operating procedures for "Delivering-as-one" represented a step change in streamlining and coordinating United Nations system work at the country level.
11. The former United Nations Resident Coordinator in Montenegro presented some innovative approaches tried by the United Nations there. For example, a United Nations country team-led initiative had engaged youth in defining challenges and co-creating solutions on youth unemployment in Montenegro. A key lesson learned was that innovation required time and implied trial and failure.

12. The Director, United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, and former Resident Coordinator in Zambia highlighted key lessons learned in Zambia. She underscored that the entire country team should become collectively engaged, particularly at the policy level. Enhanced public engagement was another critical factor. She also cited the importance of simplifying procedures and processes at the local level, noting the implementation of the standard operating procedures, and stressed that the United Nations should jointly endeavour to strengthen and support national capacities. Such innovations would drive the new round of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks with the participation of all stakeholders at the design and delivery stages, covering its main areas: data acquisition and analysis; citizen engagement; sustainable development planning; and business operations. In their comments, delegations stated that:

- Innovation was necessary to address significant and emerging multidimensional challenges, such as poverty eradication and climate change
- Member States would require adequate resources and assistance for the successful realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, while programme countries must seek to mobilize both public and private resources at the national level
- The post-2015 development agenda was about service delivery, which required funding. Cost savings should therefore be further explored in the context of the current system of governance
- The fit-for-purpose discussion should not lead to the further expansion of bureaucracy
- It was necessary to revisit the alleged fragmentation around the issue of climate change/environmental sustainability within the United Nations system
- Repositioning the United Nations system should aim at strengthening its comparative advantages, for example, in the areas of statistics and data, while building on already existing systems and approaches

13. The response from the panel included the following points:

- Major challenges moving forward would arise in relation to the transformative, larger, more complex and urgent post-2015 agenda, as compared with the previous Millennium Development Goals
- The United Nations development system would need to be more cost effective and collaborative, utilizing policy expertise for sustainable results

14. In summarizing discussions, the Executive Director, UNOPS, noted that harnessing the power of technology to gauge opinions across the world provided an inclusive basis to guide decision makers. People-centred development, she stressed, should not be a one-off exercise. The United Nations should remain on its path forward and continue to adapt, learn to anticipate and be ready to innovate.

15. The President of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS closed the meeting by thanking delegations and the six United Nations organizations for their active participation and rich discussion.

Part two
Annual session 2015

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 1 to 9 June 2015**

I. Organizational matters

1. The annual session 2015 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 1 to 9 June 2015.
2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its annual session 2015 (DP/2015/L.2), and approved the report of the first regular session 2015 (DP/2015/9).
3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the annual session 2015 appeared in document DP/2015/25, available on the [Executive Board website](#).
4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2015/15 to the following schedule for the remaining session of the Executive Board in 2015:

Second regular session 2015: 31 August to 4 September 2015
5. Delegations discussed the pros and cons of alternating the annual session venue between New York and Geneva. The Board took no decision on the venue of its annual sessions.

UNDP segment

II. Statement by the Administrator and the annual report of the Administrator

6. In her opening remarks to the Executive Board (available on the [Executive Board website](#)), the Administrator stressed that 2015 offered a once-in-a-generation chance to set a transformational development agenda. UNDP was committed to delivering on its strategic plan, 2014-2017, and driving forward the post-2015 development agenda. She drew attention to UNDP crisis response in countries from Nepal and South Sudan to the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen, and highlighted UNDP work in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to fight Ebola. She underscored UNDP activities supporting 2015 global agreements and the post-2015 development agenda. UNDP was committed to leading the United Nations system in designing a post-2015 implementation strategy, MAPS, focused on mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals in national planning, accelerating progress on goals and providing policy and technical support to programme countries.
7. The Administrator briefed the Board on corporate progress, described in her annual report on the strategic plan: performance and results for 2014 (DP/2015/11 and annexes), including the report card of performance against 2014 milestones. In 2014, UNDP had either met or exceeded most milestones. While UNDP pursued internal restructuring, making it fit-for-purpose, regular (core) funding had again fallen in 2014, exacerbated by unfavourable exchange rate fluctuations. UNDP was working to expand that base, aiming to double the number of core contributors by 2018. She highlighted UNDP finalization of its South-South and triangular cooperation strategy by September 2015 and its commitment to hosting the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation.
8. UNDP remained committed to transparency and accountability, improving its information disclosure policy appeals process and publically disclosing its internal

audit reports. UNDP was committed to its United Nations coordination role, co-chairing the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Working Group on Sustainable Development, forging a successor facility to the Millennium Campaign for the post-2015 agenda, and engaging in Economic and Social Council dialogues on longer-term positioning of the United Nations development system. She drew attention to the UNDP report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014 ([DP/2015/11/Add.1](#)) and its statistical annexes ([DP/2015/11/Add.2](#)).

9. Board members commended the Administrator for her leadership and underscored the vital role UNDP played in helping to define the post-2015 development agenda, the SDGs and related financing agreements; they commended UNDP commitment to sustainable development pathways, inclusive and effective governance and resilience-building. They encouraged UNDP to remain engaged with Member States throughout the process, especially with least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states. They expressed strong support for UNDP early recovery and resilience-building work in humanitarian settings and fragile states, and commended it for its critical response to, among others, the earthquake in Nepal, the Syrian refugee crisis and the Ebola outbreak in West Africa.

10. Board members highlighted the importance of UNDP technical expertise, leadership and innovative approaches, especially in galvanizing global action around the post-2015 agenda through the My World survey and country consultations, linking development and humanitarian responses and building resilience to natural disasters, building LDC climate change adaptation and mitigation capacities, promoting governance and human rights through long-term focus on root causes and shaping the United Nations system to make it fit-for-purpose. They requested clarity on reported falling partner satisfaction with UNDP leadership of the resident coordinator system and expressed concern that decreasing core funding could jeopardize its level of commitment.

11. Delegations commended the annual report's quality and UNDP progress against strategic plan targets, especially rule of law, access to justice, gender-based violence, peaceful management of conflict and social cohesion building in post-conflict, post-disaster settings. They encouraged UNDP to step up governance and basic service delivery. They were pleased with the strategic plan reporting format, the first based on the integrated results and resources framework — a step towards greater transparency and results-based management, together with the report card. They noted with satisfaction corporate improvements in results collection and reporting, and looked forward to seeing how future reports would demonstrate better quality assurance and streamlined country-level business processes. They encouraged UNDP to continue strengthening evidence-based reporting capacities, and looked forward to the robust integrated results and resources framework shaping programme decisions and the 2016 midterm review, enhancing further alignment between with the SDGs. They encouraged UNDP to play a capacity-building role in monitoring, evaluation and accountability for country-level SDG implementation.

12. Delegations valued UNDP work and ability to flexibly respond to programme countries' needs and ensure that the United Nations system carried out assistance for the benefit of programme countries at their request and in accordance with nationally defined priorities. They expressed confidence that UNDP would continue

to apply a differentiated approach to programme country needs, including middle-income countries, grounded in national ownership and the quadrennial review of operational activities for development (General Assembly resolution 67/226), focused on poverty eradication and capacity development, helping countries to transition to the post-2015 agenda.

13. Board members raised concern over ongoing decline of core resources and its potential negative impact on programming, and underlined the need to correct the core/non-core imbalance. They encouraged all members to abide to commitments to predictable, unearmarked core funding, while encouraging emerging donors to contribute. Delegations stressed that resource allocation under programming arrangements should be grounded in objective criteria, fair methodology and reliable, verified data, drawing on multidimensional measures of poverty and vulnerability and focusing on countries most in need. They looked forward to exploring different options for quality funding during structured dialogue discussions in September 2015.

14. Board members placed high importance on UNDP engagement in Economic and Social Council dialogues on longer-term repositioning of the United Nations development system and its ability to address post-2015 challenges. They requested that UNDP set up a mechanism to allow space for technical meetings and workshops with Member States in parallel to the dialogues to foster an exchange of views. They underlined the important UNDP role in promoting South-South and triangular cooperation and called on UNDP to give the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation increased human and financial resources.

15. Delegations commended the Administrator and Office of Human Resources for their management of the organizational restructuring, while encouraging them to ensure recruitment and performance management were effective and robust. They welcomed UNDP efforts to better align policies to programmes, reduce duplication, improve core enabling functions, shift to programme quality and delivery and boost core capacity in priority areas, while underlining the key role of evaluation. A group of delegations drew attention to the perceived staff imbalance between developed and developing countries in UNDP in the wake of the internal restructuring, and urged UNDP to ensure fair geographical representation.

16. In response, the Administrator underscored UNDP commitment to poverty eradication and readiness to provide better results information. UNDP relief-to-development work would greatly benefit from focused attention to crisis drivers, through disaster risk reduction and conflict prevention. A reconfigured UNDP and new crisis response unit guaranteed stronger rapid response to crisis. Gender equality was critical to development and a top UNDP corporate priority; she underscored the need for more gender-disaggregated data. UNDP had integrated quadrennial review reporting into its strategic plan and had set up a strong follow-up process. The new UNDP South-South strategy focused on South-South mainstreaming in programming and partnership reflection of South-South principles.

17. She reiterated UNDP commitment to a robust, independent evaluation function and drew attention to efforts to shield the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) budget from core-funding cuts. On core resource allocation based on differentiated country status, the Board had already adopted an approach in decision 2014/11; she urged that further discussion take place during the 2016 budget review. She

highlighted that 90 per cent of core funding came from 22 Member States and required greater burden sharing. She provided the Board with figures indicating that staff geographical balance in regional offices and headquarters had tipped in favour of developing country representation. UNDP had led the enhancement of the resident coordinator assessment centre, which included focused attention on greater gender balance and a wider pool of agencies. In closing, she emphasized UNDP commitment to a strong ethics culture.

18. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/7 on the report of the Administrator on the strategic plan: performance and results for 2014.

19. The Executive Board took note of the UNDP report on recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014 ([DP/2015/11/Add.1](#)) and its statistical annex ([DP/2015/11/Add.2](#)).

III. Gender in UNDP

20. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, presented the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy 2014 ([DP/2015/2](#)) and annexes.

21. Board members recognized the report's high quality, welcomed the 2014 results and commended UNDP for the strategic plan's high level of gender mainstreaming and gender reporting, while showing the potential future impact. They urged UNDP to continue to mainstream gender equality in all activities, and voiced strong support for gender tools, such as the gender seal, which UNDP should expand and export to other United Nations organizations.

22. Delegations welcomed the significant UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment, noting its gender marker results in early recovery, sustainable development, employment and social protection, but believed more could be done, especially reporting on the gender response to climate risk management. They looked forward to hearing more about the UNDP quality assurance policy and mandatory gender screening processes. Noting country office progress on gender equality and women's empowerment, delegations requested clarification on achievements and where challenges remained. They noted with appreciation progress against 2014 milestones in gender-based violence, especially in crises and conflict.

23. Delegations recognized the Gender Team's work, asked UNDP to fill gender adviser positions in a timely manner and ensure country office gender capacity, according to decision 2014/1. They encouraged UNDP to reach the 15 per cent budget allocation for outcomes 2 and 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment, and requested regular updates on progress and the recruitment of a dedicated gender adviser in countries with a portfolio exceeding \$25 million; they sought an update on the launching of the flexible trust fund for gender equality and women's empowerment. They were pleased to see that the gender equality report was consistent with United Nations system-wide action plan (SWAP) indicators. They recognized UNDP achievement of 80 per cent of gender results in 2014, and encouraged it to continue to provide information on scores against each indicator to identify challenges. They requested information on the assessment by the United

Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) of UNDP gender reporting.

24. Highlighting UNDP leadership's role in coordinating the resident coordinator system and its mandate, with UN-Women, to strengthen gender equality within the United Nations system, delegations stressed the importance of coordinating gender-related programming and technical assistance with other United Nations organizations. They asked that future annual reports reflect joint efforts on gender. While acknowledging UNDP efforts to balance corporate gender parity, especially at senior management and resident coordinator levels, they encouraged the entire United Nations system to do more.

25. A group of delegations stressed that UNDP did not have the mandate, according to its strategic plan, 2014-2017, to work with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, noting that LGBTI-related activities would be offensive to their societies' cultural values. Other delegations fully supported UNDP work with all vulnerable groups, including LGBTI persons, grounded in the post-2015 principle of universality, and encouraged it to do so at country level in agreement with the host Government.

26. In response, the Associate Administrator, UNDP, highlighted that available SWAP scores provided details of UNDP successes and shortfalls in terms of resource allocation, gender architecture and gender parity. On UNDP gender resource allocation, UNDP sought to refine its reporting to capture its gender work in outcomes where it was mainstreamed. She noted that UNDP was reviewing its approach to crisis response to ensure that gender was addressed, and highlighted that the organization followed a human rights-based approach to development that encompassed all vulnerable groups without exception.

27. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, stressed that, according to its mandate, UNDP addressed all forms of discrimination and the protection of vulnerable groups, including LGBTI persons, and, at the country level, in line with the principles of national ownership and always in agreement with the host Government.

28. The Board took no decision on the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2014-2017 ([DP/2015/12](#)).

IV. Human Development Report

29. In line with General Assembly resolution 57/264, the Director, Human Development Report Office (HDRO), presented an update on consultations for the Human Development Report 2015, whose theme was "Work for human development"; he indicated that the 2016 theme would be revisiting human development concepts and measurements.

30. The Board commended HDRO for its invaluable contribution to the global development debate and was pleased with the consultation process it undertook for the 2015 report. Board members looked forward to the annual publication, especially its analysis and findings focused on the important theme of "Work for human development". Acknowledging that 2016 marked the report's twenty-fifth anniversary, the Board observed that the proposed 2016 theme, "Revisiting human development concepts and measurements", was timely and critical for the post-2015

development agenda and for assessing the SDGs. The Board sought clarification on the scope and focus of the issues that the 2016 report would address, highlighted its importance for the LDCs, particularly with regard to data, and requested HDRO help in building national statistical capacity. There was a call for greater complementarity and less discrepancy with national data.

31. In response, the Director, Human Development Report Office, indicated that in light of the global changes of the previous 25 years and a new development landscape, it was important to revisit both the notion and measurements of human development so that the report could continue to contribute to the evolving development debate and dialogue, reflect new realities and provide tools to assess development outcomes. He mentioned that, within that larger scope, broad-based consultations with various actors would determine the themes and issues on which the report would focus. The 2016 Global Forum on Human Development would allow HDRO to obtain the vision, advice and guidance for the 2016 report.

32. The Executive Board took note of the oral report on consultations regarding the Human Development Report 2016 in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/264.

V. Country programmes and related matters

33. On behalf of the Associate Administrator, UNDP, the Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, introduced the item and presented the extensions of country programmes for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen (DP/2014/13). The Deputy Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, presented the draft country programme documents for Armenia (DP/DCP/ARM/3 and Corr.1) and Turkmenistan (DP/DCP/TKM/2).

34. Observing that it was fundamental that country programmes be aligned with national priorities and programming cycles, one delegation noted that its Government had made the necessary arrangements to align the country programmes of UNDP and UNFPA with the country's national development plan, 2014-2018.

35. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Armenia and Turkmenistan. The country programme for Uganda (DP/DCP/UGA/3) was scheduled for Board discussion and approval was withdrawn.

36. The Executive Board took note of the first six-month extension of the country programme for Ethiopia from 1 January to 30 June 2016; the first one-year extension of the country programme for the United Republic of Tanzania from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mozambique and Yemen from 1 January to 31 December 2016; and the first one-year extension of the country programme for Kyrgyzstan from 1 January to 31 December 2017 (DP/2015/13).

VI. Evaluation

Revised evaluation policy

37. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), UNDP, presented the revised UNDP evaluation policy (DP/2015/15); the Associate Administrator, UNDP, presented the vision on implementing the revised policy and professionalizing the decentralized evaluation function.

38. Board members expressed strong support for a robust evaluation function and appreciated UNDP development of the revised policy in close collaboration with Member States. They noted that the new policy included many needed parameters — clear roles and responsibilities, appropriate checks and balances, proposals to strengthen decentralized evaluations, a tighter management accountability chain — that guaranteed an effective evaluation function; they looked forward to its rapid operationalization. They strongly supported the operational independence of IEO and underscored its need for sufficient resources and a costed work programme. They underlined that accountability, learning, impartiality, credibility and utility were the key principles of a robust evaluation function, and noted that, in a time of financial constraints, evaluations were more pertinent than ever, identifying where resources and activities had greatest impact. They encouraged UNDP to incorporate the policy revisions, including a costed work programme, in its budget processes to secure resources.

39. While recognizing the policy's improvements, some delegations stressed that a Board decision should address: (a) the consensus on the IEO Director's appointment process; (b) the target percentage for evaluation budget, similar to those of UNFPA and the UNICEF at 1 to 3 per cent of the programme budget; and (c) the costed multi-year strategy for strengthening decentralized evaluations within six months to ensure the quality of decentralized evaluations.

40. A group of delegations stressed the importance of evaluation for learning and course correction, and made a number of recommendations, including that the revised policy stipulate that UNDP comply with evaluation report recommendations in a time-bound manner and that its compliance be reported to the Board. Management was called upon to consult with the Board on recommendations that it had not addressed. Stressing the critical importance of IEO operational independence, they also recommended that the revised policy specify the Board's lead role in appointing the IEO Director and that the post's duration, renewal and reporting be brought under Board supervision, with the Board President having ultimate approval. Finally, they recommended that the target percentage of the programme budget for evaluation be capped at 5 to 7 per cent, in line with international practices. The group stressed that the revised policy should be finalized with urgency, reflecting the input of Member States, noting with concern that UNDP had not yet incorporated their recommendations.

41. Highlighting that postponing a decision on the revised policy would only hinder progress and be detrimental to programme countries, many delegations voiced a strong commitment to approving the revised policy at the session. A group of delegations, however, requested UNDP to conduct further consultations with Board members to reach consensus by end of June 2015 and the Board to defer the adoption of a decision to the second regular session 2015. The President of the Board encouraged Board members to find common ground and reach consensus at the session.

42. In response, the IEO Director, UNDP, explained the ways in which UNDP had addressed the policy review's five elements. One, with regard to the potential risk of the compromised reliability of decentralized evaluations, the policy proposed separating payments, professionalizing the evaluation function, designing a decentralized evaluation strategy and having IEO independently assess decentralized evaluations for independence, credibility and utility. Two, there were no existing delays on independent evaluations owing to unreasonable disputes, a process for which UNDP had instituted a tracking and monitoring system, following IEO approval through to management response. Three, on lack of independent quality assurance of evaluations undertaken by associated funds and programmes, IEO had assumed responsibility to assess the quality of United Nations Volunteers and United Nations Capital Development Fund evaluations. Four, on updating the relevance of concepts, IEO had aligned them with United Nations norms and standards, adhering to international standards. Five, on IEO operational independence, UNDP had given the Board all details and clarifications to enable it to come to a decision.

43. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, underscoring the extensive consultations on the revised policy to date and information provided to Board members, stressed the need to adopt a decision at the session. In the event of a deferral, UNDP was ready to continue discussions with Board members to strengthen the policy and move forward.

44. In view of the remaining disagreements and inability to reach consensus for a decision at the session, the Executive Board decided to withdraw the item on the revised UNDP evaluation policy (DP/2015/15) from the agenda of the Board session.

Annual report on evaluation

45. The IEO Director, UNDP, presented the annual report on evaluation 2014 (DP/2015/16 and Corr.1); the Associate Administrator, UNDP, followed with the management response.

46. Board members commended UNDP and IEO for adhering to highest quality standards when performing evaluations, which demanded high-quality human and financial resources, and drew attention to three issues. One, noting that vacancies had impacted capacity, they urged IEO to fill outstanding posts and to pursue its professional development programme to boost staff skills. They sought clarification on the consequences of the reduced budget and reiterated the need for a costed work programme. Noting the rise in country office evaluation capacity, they requested information on the criteria used to designate monitoring and evaluation specialists. Two, on follow-up to evaluation findings, they acknowledged the new policy's requirement for management responses with time-bound actions, but expressed concern with the large share of overdue planned actions. Urging effective quality assessments of decentralized evaluations, they were pleased to learn that IEO had revised the evaluation methodology assessment guidance. Three, they called for better synchronization between country-level evaluations and assessments of development results (ADRs) to ensure the updating of country programmes; they suggested that UNDP and IEO develop a practical strategy for end-of-cycle country programme evaluations prior to the Board submission of new country programmes. They encouraged UNDP and IEO to pursue joint evaluations with other United Nations organizations.

47. In response, the IEO Director noted, which regard to vacancies, that IEO often lost staff owing to recruitment by other international organizations, and that in filling vacant posts had the difficult task of finding persons with independent evaluation expertise. While the incumbent Deputy Director had come on board on 1 May, two senior posts were set to be vacant shortly. With regard to the costed work programme, various budget and topic shifts forced delays in its completion; by the second regular session 2015, IEO would hold an informal session to address evaluations that IEO could or could not undertake in light of budget constraints and the need to ensure the highest quality standards. With regard to assessment of development results (ADR), full coverage implied undertaking 40 ADRs per year, while IEO currently managed six to eight; reasons included delays in conducting stakeholder consultations. The new methodology would make performing ADRs quicker and less costly. On lessons learned, despite concerted efforts, joint evaluations were difficult and inherently caused delays owing to inter-agency coordination, but IEO would continue to engage with partners in joint undertakings.

48. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, assured delegations that UNDP was committed to complying with evaluation recommendations in a time-bound manner, and would submit the costed work programme at the second regular session 2015. UNDP management would work with IEO to analyse overdue recommendations and decide on appropriate actions.

49. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, assured delegations that UNDP had standard terms of reference for monitoring and evaluation specialists, tailored to country needs and financial ability. Depending on years' experience and skills required, specialists were recruited at the P-3 or equivalent national officer level, while sometimes also at the P-4 or P-5 and equivalent national officer levels. In all cases, candidates underwent rigorous recruitment that included academic credentials and familiarity with evaluation context. The terms of reference were annexed to the proposal to strengthen capacities for decentralized evaluations; and core resources played an important role in recruiting those with the right set of technical skills. He highlighted that the number of monitoring and evaluation specialists and policy advisors in UNDP had consistently increased in previous years in country offices and regional hubs. In 2014, many country offices had provided monitoring and evaluation training to staff and national counterparts, developed partnerships with government to strengthen national statistics, and increased investment in the monitoring and evaluation function.

Thematic evaluations

50. The IEO Director, UNDP, presented the evaluation of the contribution of global and regional human development reports to the public policy process ([DP/2015/17](#)), and the evaluation of the role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) ([DP/2015/19](#)). The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, provided the respective management responses ([DP/2015/18](#) and [DP/2015/20](#)).

51. Board members appreciated the evaluations and were encouraged by their recognition of UNDP thought leadership and high quality tools in support of MDG achievement. They welcomed recommendations to improve UNDP work and intentions to strengthen the development and application of lessons learned. They

recognized UNDP success in placing the MDGs at the heart of the global development debate and supporting the production of 450 country reports. They noted that, while crisis breakouts and other factors impeded full MDG integration in national development planning, there were non-implementation areas where UNDP could have made a difference; they recommended that UNDP analyse the conditions conducive to policy implementation and use the findings for strategic decision-making.

52. They recognized partnership analysis of evaluations and sought UNDP views on how to enhance private sector partnerships, which were low, in order to strengthen future SDG achievement; they sought an update on UNDP work to create synergies with the regional commissions and the World Bank on statistics and data. While recognizing that UNDP added value in supporting countries to produce national SDG reports, they indicated that more time was needed to articulate its added value at the regional and global levels, adding that recommendations on the UNDP post-2015 role were premature. They recognized that there would be greater clarity on the role of the United Nations system in the post-2015 run-up and urged greater collaboration among partners on the global agenda. They sought information on the financial implications of UNDP proposed actions in response to evaluation findings.

53. On regional human development reports, delegations highlighted the importance of an independent HDRO in orienting global development discussions towards a human-focused approach. They appreciated UNDP efforts, as noted in the management response, to disseminate the reports' findings.

54. In response, the IEO Director underscored that the Evaluation Advisory Panel had determined the thematic evaluations to be extremely concrete and of high quality. He stressed that IEO preferred to provide fewer but more targeted recommendations. He drew attention to the high calibre of the experts assuring the quality control of the evaluations.

55. The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, highlighted that MDG implementation had been a completely new undertaking that proved to be a learning-by-doing process pointing to the need for: (a) a financing framework, which led to the International Conference on Financing for Development; and (b) an advocacy tool, which led to the United Nations Millennium Campaign. Similar tools would now precede the SDGs to facilitate their implementation. The third element was the lack of multilateral financial support from the World Bank, which had created its own mechanism (poverty reduction strategy papers), de facto launching a separate normative framework. Experience had shown that citizens wished to be involved in the open, transparent process of the post-2015 agenda. UNDP was ready to work with delegations to set up an evaluation review framework and support evaluations at the global, regional and national levels.

56. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/8 on the 2014 annual report on evaluation; the report on the evaluation of the contribution of global and regional human development reports to the public policy process and the management response; and the report on the evaluation of the role of UNDP in supporting the national achievement of the MDGs and the management response.

VII. United Nations Capital Development Fund

57. The Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, introduced the item. The Executive Secretary, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), presented the annual report on results achieved in 2014 ([DP/2015/21](#)) and offered perspectives for 2015.

58. Board members commended the Executive Secretary for her leadership and reaffirmed their strong support for UNCDF within the United Nations development system and within the context of the post-2015 agenda. They underlined the Fund's critical ability to provide and boost the quality of grants, loans and credit to public and private partners and local authorities in the developing world, especially in LDCs, small island developing states and fragile and conflict-affected countries. They highlighted the Fund's ability to drive innovation and adapt to rapidly changing circumstances — particularly pertinent for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. There was the call for UNCDF to ensure that the ultimate purpose of its activities was poverty reduction.

59. Pointing to the need to target official development assistance to those most in need, delegations highlighted the unique UNCDF ability to deliver on “smart aid” key elements: bolstering countries' capacity to generate their own domestic resources and leverage other sources of funding, whether public, private, domestic or international. With its inclusive investment mandate, the Fund was well positioned to help LDCs mobilize, allocate and invest resources for local investment. With tight private sector partnerships, UNCDF had the capability to leverage resources and know-how in places that the private sector had previously not served.

60. Delegations expressed appreciation for the UNCDF mainstreaming of gender equality, women's economic empowerment, food security, basic services provision and climate change adaptation approaches into community-based planning. Attention was drawn to the UNCDF CleanStart global programme — part of the Partnership Framework for Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development and one of the Fund's sustainable-energy-for-all initiatives — that offered risk capital and technical advice to microfinance institutions and energy enterprises in an effort to replicate low-cost clean energy solutions, with the potential to scale up and impact base-of-pyramid energy markets.

61. Board members appreciated the Fund's strong commitment to quality programming, transparency and accountability for results, and supported its 2014 organizational change to be fit-for-purpose for post-2015. They drew attention to the Fund's commendable track record of achieving an average 1:4:10 leverage ratio of core and non-core to domestic and other investment resources. Board members strongly appealed for crucial funding to UNCDF so it could ensure its vital work in LDCs, and noted with concern the decrease in core resources from 2013 to 2014, falling short of the \$25 million needed to sustain its presence in LDCs. They requested that UNCDF organize regular informal consultations with Board members to raise awareness of its mandate and budget constraints.

62. In response, Executive Secretary, UNCDF, underscored the Fund's readiness to work with Member States to construct models allowing UNCDF to serve the maximum number of LDCs during their graduation period and help them achieve inclusive growth targets. UNCDF looked forward to working with Board members

on scenarios to scale up its presence in 40 LDCs and to engage in innovative partnerships aimed at designing solutions to development challenges.

63. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/9 on the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2014.

UNFPA segment

VIII. Statement by the Executive Director and annual report of the Executive Director

64. The UNFPA Executive Director, in his statement to the Executive Board (available on the [UNFPA website](#)), highlighted 2015 as critical for the future global development agenda. UNFPA had made good progress in 2014, the first year implementing its strategic plan, 2014-2017, as described in his annual report: progress made in implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017 (DP/FPA/2015/5 Part I and annexes), the statistical and financial review (DP/FPA/2015/Add.1 Part I) and the UNFPA report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014 (DP/FPA/2015/5 Part II).

65. While the world was on track to achieve many MDGs, growing inequality threatened gains and heightened post-2015 challenges to reach those most in need through transformational, inclusive sustainable development, as the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) had recognized. Youth stood at the heart of the solution; capitalizing on the demographic dividend would trigger rapid growth and social advancement. Success required countries to make investments in: (a) sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, including family planning and contraceptive services; (b) human capital development, empowering, educating and employing youth; (c) adolescent girls, advancing gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment; and (d) evidence-based analysis of population trends to seize opportunities of changing demographic structures. Member States' support was critical to positioning UNFPA to address those issues and guaranteeing their integration in the post-2015 agenda. UNFPA was working to improve its delivery of results through a strengthened results framework, a new business model and better funding arrangements.

66. In 2014, UNFPA responded to 34 humanitarian crises and five level-three emergencies (in the Central African Republic, Iraq, the Philippines, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic), implementing its new generation humanitarian strategy, including the minimum initial service package. The Fund reached some 5.4 million women and girls in crises worldwide with psychosocial support and reproductive health services, including on gender-based violence. It was on the ground in Ebola-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In 2014, UNFPA launched its road map to accelerate achievement of maternal and newborn survival to reach MDGs 4 and 5, and maintained steady progress on 89 per cent of its strategic plan.

67. The Executive Director highlighted the Fund's work to enhance programme effectiveness, improve the mobilization, management and alignment of resources and drive adaptability, including through fit-for-purpose organizational changes. He noted the positive assessment of UNFPA by the Multilateral Organization

Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) in 2014, and highlighted the global programming system roll-out. In 2014, the Fund had mobilized its highest contribution revenue in history, surpassing the \$1 billion mark. UNFPA continued to diversify its resource base and strengthen its engagement with non-traditional donors; he stressed the need to target non-core resources strategically.

68. Board members expressed unwavering support for the Fund's work and the Executive Director's leadership. They commended UNFPA for the progress made during the first year of implementing its strategic plan, 2014-2017, noting that it had achieved 80 per cent of targets. That achievement showed that the Fund's new programme management system and integrated results and resources framework had the potential to provide better evidence of the impact of its work, including at the global and regional levels. Noting the 2014 MOPAN assessment of the Fund's positive trend in organizational efficiency and effectiveness, delegations encouraged UNFPA to strengthen data collection, analysis and risk assessment for better evidence-based planning, reporting and evaluation through training, and to improve output indicators in the run-up to the strategic plan's 2016 midterm review. One delegation called for UNFPA to analyse implementation challenges and costs to ensure more effective, efficient implementation, while another called for the Fund to present, in future annual reports, output progress towards expected outcomes, with related costs, and to make the narrative more results-focused and analytical.

69. Board members commended UNFPA for its commitment to Family Planning 2020, an important vehicle for providing women and girls access to safe contraceptive services; but noted that the initiative needed greater resources and more secure reproductive health commodities to ensure complete success. They urged UNFPA to identify global programme shortfalls and to rally the international community to close them. They stressed that meaningful progress in key work areas required integrating universal sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. Safe abortion, some noted, should be part and parcel of that package, including stronger measures to ensure the inclusion of the marginalized.

70. Delegations saw UNFPA as a key partner in helping countries to attain lagging MDG 5 targets A and B, champion ICPD principles and capitalize on the demographic dividend in the post-2015 context, given its strong youth focus. A key UNFPA priority in 2015, they said, was helping Member States to identify concrete ways to achieve the SDGs and targets relating to population and development, especially sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and gender equality, whose omission in the MDGs had been a costly mistake. They encouraged the Fund to pursue progress in performance indicators in the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

71. Delegations were confident that UNFPA would continue to align with programme countries' needs and priorities and remain committed to national ownership while helping countries to build capacity. They noted with appreciation UNFPA fundraising efforts, leading to the highest contribution revenue in its history and an increase in core resources in 2014, and encouraged the Fund to explore different funding channels and wider partnerships. They called upon Member States to honour funding commitments and increase core contributions, while encouraging UNFPA to address the negative impact of exchange rate fluctuations.

72. A few delegations expressed concern over the inability of the Commission on Population and Development to reach consensus at its forty-eighth session, and

proposed that UNFPA work with the commission to review its methodology and procedures. They viewed UNFPA as the champion of the ICPD Programme of Action, the achievement of which was key to making the post-2015 agenda transformative, and urged UNFPA to lead the international community's response.

73. Many delegations commended UNFPA for its reproductive health and reproductive rights work in humanitarian settings, especially in Ebola-affected countries, and encouraged it to continue to show leadership in embedding gender-based violence prevention in humanitarian response planning and implementation, through its role as the inter-agency coordinator on gender-based violence. They commended the Fund for mobilizing contact tracers and supplies and equipment for infection prevention, and supporting women and girls through reproductive health and reproductive rights services. They noted with appreciation the integration of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030. They commended UNFPA for its unique ability to galvanize a common agenda and support for South-South cooperation.

74. In response, the Executive Director highlighted the Fund's swift response to the May 2015 earthquake in Nepal. UNFPA was prepared to support Member States to achieve consensus in the Commission on Population and Development; political will required both UNFPA results on the ground and programme countries integrating ICPD principles in national planning. He reiterated the importance of capitalizing on the demographic dividend, which, once accomplished, would engender the second demographic dividend on ageing (a society's ability to take care of its elderly) — an important issue on which UNFPA was prepared to work with Member States. UNFPA was ready to work with partners on improving reproductive health commodity security and the related issue of domestic resource mobilization.

75. He highlighted that UNFPA had improved its operational effectiveness and strengthened programme delivery through a number of initiatives: conducting a study of its humanitarian activities and establishing a rigorous process through which it vetted implementing partners, focusing on accountability and fund management. In the context of the System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UNFPA focused its energies on ending child marriage. On improving outcome indicator targets' threshold, the Fund would analyse, in 2016, its annual report against 80 per cent of its milestones. The corporate restructuring exercise had made the Fund better equipped to mobilize resources and implement the ICPD Programme of Action; UNFPA looked forward to discussing the draft resource mobilization strategy with the Board.

76. The Board adopted decision 2015/10 on the report of the Executive Director: Progress in implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017.

77. The Executive Board took note of the statistical and financial review, 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/5 Part I/Add.1](#)).

78. The Executive Board took note of the UNFPA report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/5 Part II](#)).

IX. Evaluation

79. The Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, presented the annual report on evaluation for 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/6](#) and annexes), and the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) presented the management response ([DP/FPA/2015/CRP.1](#)). Board members welcomed UNFPA efforts to translate the revised evaluation policy into practice in planning and management, internal monitoring and evaluation capacity-building. They welcomed the greater diversity of country and regional evaluations, which engendered more evidence-based approaches, and strongly encouraged the Evaluation Office, in coordination with management, to provide clear guidance for strategic evaluation planning and management, in line with predetermined criteria, at central and decentralized levels.

80. Delegations were pleased with the improved evaluation quality rating, noting evaluation quality and information reliability were key to allowing UNFPA to adjust to evolving country needs. They strongly supported Evaluation Office efforts to integrate United Nations System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women evaluation indicator reporting tools into existing quality assurance mechanisms. They welcomed the joint evaluation on gender equality joint programmes and encouraged UNFPA to continue to cooperate with UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women to build on lessons and progress in making joint programmes coherent, efficient, relevant and sustainable in national contexts. Stressing the importance of disseminating and institutionalizing evaluation lessons, they viewed the management response tracking system as a key instrument that UNFPA should strengthen to determine how much it used evaluation results to support organizational decision-making.

81. Highlighting that the evaluation budget fell below the threshold allocation of 3 per cent of programme budget, delegations welcomed Evaluation Office and management efforts to find a practical approach to disaggregate and track expenditures for evaluation separately from monitoring expenditures. They supported efforts to ensure non-core funded programmes allocated adequate resources to evaluation to relieve the institutional budget. Emphasizing that broad coverage of quality evaluations depended on core and non-core resources and human expertise, they welcomed, in addition to junior professional officers and secondments, the proposed capacity development strategy. National capacity-building was a resource intensive practice that required a coherent approach that valued network building among national and regional expertise. They encouraged the Evaluation Office to work through the United Nations Evaluation Group and EvalPartners, and to capitalize on 2015 Year of Evaluation opportunities, to explore joint approaches that increase efficiency and effectiveness of regional and national-level evaluation capacity-building.

82. In response, the Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, reiterated that the office aimed to continue improving evaluation planning and management throughout UNFPA. That would be reflected in the evaluation workplan and budget presented at the second regular session 2015. The new workplan and budget would set out evaluation financing principles to ensure clarity and transparency and balance allocation of evaluation resources from the institutional and organizational budgets. In 2015-2016, the office was working on developing comprehensive evaluation guidance and improving the evaluation quality assurance system, including for evaluations the Evaluation Office conducted. The Director recognized the

importance of joint evaluations and working in support of independent United Nations system-wide evaluations; in 2015, UNFPA was actively engaged in one of two pilot system-wide evaluations focused on United Nations support to country-level statistical capacity. The planned capacity development strategy was a crucial step in building evaluation capacity at headquarters, regional and country levels, which helped to build national evaluation capacities, and on which the office was engaged with the United Nations Evaluation Group.

83. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme), UNFPA, highlighting commitments in the strategic plan, 2014-2017, drew attention to its more robust, indicator-based theories of change that included building a results chain from global to country levels, thereby tagging country-level activities back to the theory. That chain allowed UNFPA to monitor in an impartial, objective, measurable way how it adhered to its theories of change and if those theories were delivering along the anticipated path of change. That chain allowed the Fund to determine the success of the strategic plan's more upstream approach focused on national capacity development. Similarly, the UNFPA financial and human investment in evaluation was built into the integrated results framework and budget, allowing the Fund to more easily readjust and build on evaluation lessons. UNFPA was committed to quality country programme and thematic evaluations that informed decision-making at all levels.

84. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/11: Annual report on evaluation, 2014.

X. Country programmes and related matters

85. The UNFPA Deputy Director (Programme) provided an overview of the new country programme documents for Armenia ([DP/FPA/CPD/ARM/3](#)), Turkmenistan ([DP/FPA/CPD/TKM/4](#)) and Uganda ([DP/FPA/CPD/UGA/8](#)); and the country programme extensions for Lebanon, Papua New Guinea, Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen ([DP/FPA/2015/9](#)). She emphasized the importance of national ownership and the consultative process undertaken by governments with UNFPA support during the preparation of the country programmes.

86. Following her statement, the regional directors for East and Southern Africa and for Eastern Europe and Central Asia presented the country programmes from their respective regions; next, the regional directors for the Arab States and for Asia and Pacific presented the three country programme extensions for approval, from their respective regions.

87. Observing that it was fundamental that country programmes be aligned with national priorities and national programming cycles, one delegation noted that its Government had made the necessary arrangements to align the country programmes of UNDP and UNFPA with the country's national development plan, 2014-2018.

88. In accordance with its decision 2014/7, the Executive Board approved the country programme documents for Armenia, Turkmenistan and Uganda.

89. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for Lebanon, the two-year extension of the country programme for Papua New Guinea, and the fourth one-year extension of the country programme for

the Syrian Arab Republic. It took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for the United Republic of Tanzania, Somalia and Yemen.

UNOPS segment

XI. Statement by the Executive Director and annual report of the Executive Director

90. The Executive Director, UNOPS, presented her annual report ([DP/OPS/2015/2](#) and annexes): highlighting progress against the strategic plan, 2014-2017; emphasis on sustainability, focus and excellence; and expertise in building management and implementation capacity. In 2014, UNOPS provided services in development, humanitarian and peacebuilding settings, focused on national capacity development; equitable economic growth; social justice and inclusion; and environmental impact mitigation.

91. Demand for UNOPS services in 2014 was stable, supporting over 1,200 projects in more than 80 countries, often in challenging environments. UNOPS contributed to expanding partners' capacity in construction and rehabilitation; urban planning; provision of medical supplies; health, human rights and gender training — including generating paid work for local labour. Half of UNOPS delivery in 2014 was for the United Nations system; the largest the Department for Peacekeeping Operations. Its 2014 partner survey indicated an over 75 per cent satisfaction rate. In 2015, UNOPS was named chair of the International Recovery Platform at the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Management, and was awarded the gold certificate in sustainable procurement. It helped countries arrange new partnerships and access innovative funding from non-traditional donors and private investors, including through impact investment.

92. UNOPS was eager to invest in sustainability reporting, through the Global Reporting Initiative, and explore ways to address climate change. UNOPS regularly trained staff in project management, infrastructure discipline and procurement operations and had instituted an emerging leaders programme to develop talent. UNOPS was engaged in exploring technological innovations and upgrading its information technology systems to ensure smarter, agile, integrated processes for global reach and efficient risk management. It worked hard to enhance its systems for managing strategic and operational risks and organization-wide compliance.

93. Board members commended UNOPS for its 2014 performance and welcomed its increased project delivery, especially in challenging environments. They applauded the organization's responsible financial stewardship, benchmarking against international standards, expanding work into disaster risk reduction, work in risk management, and efforts to improve staff training and working conditions. Noting its efforts to mainstream gender, they sought information on the gender survey conclusions. They appreciated that in 2014, over one third of UNOPS projects had created paid work for local labour, and encouraged it to expand that trend to bolster development impact.

94. Delegations encouraged UNOPS to expand multi-faceted partnerships with local development actors throughout project lifecycles so local citizens could derive maximum benefits; UNOPS exploration of impact investment initiatives was a

positive step. They highlighted that UNOPS worked differently from other United Nations organizations, deriving income from services and offering a flexible management service fee; UNOPS procurement services created value for money. They encouraged United Nations organizations to trust UNOPS for their procurement needs. They were keen to learn how UNOPS engaged with United Nations organizations to establish common services, given its procurement expertise and potential for “Delivering as one” operations.

95. On results reporting, commending its sustainability reporting, they noted the annual report’s output-focus and called for clarity on how UNOPS planned to develop the results framework, in line with new United Nations formats, to gauge outcomes and impact. They sought an update of UNOPS efforts to design a sustainability screening tool, and speculated if United Nations organizations could use the tool in SDG follow-up activities. They asked UNOPS to elaborate on future challenges, priority setting, and plans to work on disaster risk reduction and resilience building in disaster-prone countries.

96. In response, the Executive Director highlighted that as a not-for-profit organization UNOPS faced challenges demanding strong risk management. Exploring new funding approaches and ways of partnering was key to a strong, relevant UNOPS and did not in imperil work in its mandated areas. UNOPS would pursue highest quality standards through international certification and explore new approaches to challenges. The Global Reporting Initiative was part of its larger work designing a sustainability screening tool for planning and reporting. UNOPS had a web-based tool to track its procurement activities, including its collaborative procurement and common services with United Nations organizations. UNOPS was pursuing better procurement reporting, on which it would report at the second regular session 2015. UNOPS was keen to work with partners to explore better ways to address and report on disaster risk reduction and resilience building for disaster-prone countries.

97. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/12 on the annual report of the Executive Director.

Joint segment

XII. Internal audit and oversight

98. The Director, Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI), UNDP, introduced the UNDP report on internal audit and investigations for 2014 ([DP/2015/22](#) and annexes). The Director, Office of Audit and Investigation Services (OAIS), UNFPA, introduced the UNFPA report on internal audit and investigation activities for 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/7](#), [DP/FPA/2015/7/Add.1](#) and annexes). The Director, Internal Audit and Investigations Group (IAIG), UNOPS, introduced the UNOPS activity report for 2014 ([DP/OPS/2015/3](#)). Presentations were each followed by management responses, delivered respectively by the Associate Administrator, UNDP, the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, and Deputy Executive Director, UNOPS.

99. Board members, underscoring the importance of oversight, commended the three offices for their professionalism, high standards, commitment to improving audit and investigation functions quality, and key role assessing their respective

organizations' governance, risk management and control framework. Stressing the priority of implementing audit recommendations, they welcomed each organization's progress in addressing internal audit issues and positive steps tackling weaknesses. They welcomed their reports' transparency, accessibility and public availability.

100. A group of delegations: (a) welcomed the reports' details of risk, audit workplan implementation, and investigation and advice-related work, but felt the reports would benefit from commentary on adequacy and effectiveness of the governance, risk management and control framework assessed, in the form of an assurance opinion limited to the risk-based audit undertaken. That would align the reports with international standards, enhance their value internally and provide delegations a clearer understanding of systemic risks, which endangered strategic objectives, and of minor risks, which were easier to solve. It allowed for better-informed choices around risk appetite and resourcing. In situations where an opinion was unfeasible, delegations sought clarification and speculated about developing an opinion in future; (b) on resourcing, noting the inclusion of staffing and resourcing, they stressed that UNDP and UNFPA management should prioritize provision of adequate financial and human resources to their audit and investigation offices and requested they include in future reports a statement specifying whether resources were appropriate for undertaking activities effectively; and (c) welcomed the risk-based approach, especially OAIS risk assessments, and looked forward to the same in future OAI reports, while noting the UNFPA longer audit cycle for high risk areas when compared to other United Nations organizations.

101. Delegations welcomed adoption by the Chief Executive Board of the "three lines of defence" model in effective risk management and control for the United Nations system, and looked forward to an assessment of whether UNDP and UNFPA first and second lines of defence offered adequate assurance. They appreciated the adopted framework for joint internal audits of joint United Nations activities, while underscoring that joint audits were crucial to ensure accountability in multi-partner funding mechanisms, which should become an important funding source for the United Nations development system post-2015.

102. Board members drew attention to a number of common recurring issues in programme, financial and inventory management, staff capacities, national implementation and execution, procurement and around "Delivering as one". They welcomed steps each organization was taking to address those challenges, encouraged them to intensify efforts, and were interested in learning if more corporate process audits were considered, especially for higher risk issues. They expressed concern with recurring vacancies in audit and investigation offices, and encouraged the organizations to jointly review recruitment processes and keep the Board updated.

103. Delegations welcomed the organizations' follow-up to fraud and allegations of wrongdoing, and appreciated the heightened focus on external and internal fraud, the rise in finalized cases, the number of investigation reports prepared and management letters issued; they welcomed enhanced sharing of lessons from investigations. While noting its challenges, Board members acknowledged the amount of defrauded funds actually recovered and urged the organizations to take measures to ensure recoveries; they asked that future reports include details of recoveries from previous years.

UNDP

104. Board members welcomed OAI confirmation it was able to effectively perform planned audit and investigation activities with available resources. On the risk-based approach, they welcomed OAI initiatives, including the launch of the proactive investigation model and pilot performance audit approach to address problems before they spread, and targeted work on systems and processes for efficiency, effectiveness and support to strategic objectives. They welcomed work on developing policy frameworks and guidelines and support for social and environmental compliance. They pointed to recurring audit-identified UNDP weakness in procurement, and stressed the importance for related procedures, decisions and practices to be transparent, fair and aligned with rules. They encouraged UNDP to intensify implementation of outstanding audit recommendations, especially on human resources.

UNFPA

105. Board members commended the Director, OAI, for her active role as Vice-Chair of the United Nations Representatives of Internal Audit Services (UN-RIAS) for joint audits and as UNDG focal point.

106. They were pleased with the drop in audit recommendations in office governance and operations management, but concerned about audit ratings in programme management, including for nationally executed projects. They welcomed efforts to address performance management issues in country offices and lack of alignment between country and regional offices, and looked forward to the revised organizational handbook. They encouraged UNFPA to take steps to ensure organization-wide compliance with existing programme management guidelines. They reiterated concern at the absence of a comprehensive approach to risk management and asked for updates on setting up a comprehensive enterprise risk management system, urging management to coordinate its risk management strategy with revisions to the internal control framework.

107. Regarding investigation, there was concern at the number of outstanding cases overall and of complaints dealing with harassment, abuse of authority, fraud, financial irregularities and conflict of interest; they urged UNFPA to take a zero-tolerance policy in addressing them. Noting the investigations' growing complexity and time-consuming nature, delegations expressed concern at OAI reliance on external consultants.

108. On office capacity, noting the negative impact vacancies had on ability to undertake internal audits and investigations (2014 audit coverage and audit cycle length were below levels stipulated in the revised charter and lower than other organizations), and noting OAI challenges in keeping track with rising investigation numbers, delegations requested that UNFPA set aside sufficient resources for internal audit and investigation and stressed the need for effective recruitment and entry-on-duty processes. They looked forward to a presentation at the second regular session 2016 of actions management would take to ensure OAI ability to perform its internal audit and investigation mandate and provide assurance and coverage, as per decision 2015/5, paying due attention to the balance between core activities and advisory services.

UNOPS

109. Delegations were pleased with the improved follow-up to audit recommendations, but concerned at the rise in procurement-related recommendations. They encouraged management to reverse that development and pursue enhanced procedures. They requested that IAIG periodically report on the legal framework review results for cases where compliance was unmet in order to make adjustments and strengthen investigation capacity to address fraud, financial irregularities and conflict of interest. Noting the rise in internal audit recommendations, they encouraged UNOPS to streamline efforts to improve them, including greater effectiveness, transparency, accountability, and optimization of financial, technological and human resources. They urged UNOPS to continue to collaborate with United Nations organizations in those areas and enhance synergies for enhanced accountability. They stated that the UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee should have the same function and have its members appointed in the same way as similar committees in UNDP and UNFPA.

Management responses

110. In response, the Associate Administrator, UNDP, highlighted that UNDP was implementing a range of initiatives to address procurement, including staff capacity-building, policy reviews, refinement of real space approach, focused support to high risk countries, relocation of staff to regions. On fraud, she noted that out of the \$6.1 million loss, \$5.2 million related to another United Nations organization, so that UNDP only incurred a \$900,000 loss. UNDP was committed to improving procurement planning and oversight and to addressing audit and investigation recommendations.

111. The Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, stressed on resourcing of audit and investigation that UNFPA was committed to working with the Board to find a financing model when it submitted its 2016 budget revision. UNFPA would keep the Board updated on lessons of its enterprise risk management, and very much embraced a risk management culture organization-wide. She underlined that a caseload increase did not necessarily imply a rise in wrongdoing findings, in particular regarding alleged cases of fraud, conflict of interest and others; UNFPA monitored the issue closely, buttressed by its zero tolerance policy, to address substantiated claims.

112. The Deputy Executive Director, UNOPS, stressed UNOPS committed to addressing procurement-related recommendations and reiterated that increased caseload did not necessarily imply a rise in procurement recommendations. UNOPS actually welcomed a rise in procurement recommendations since it was a key work area. He underscored UNOPS commitment to re-establishing its Audit Advisory Committee in pursuit of better governance.

113. The Director, Office of Audit and Investigations, UNDP, noted that UNDP was ready to provide the Board resource-related information and simultaneously draw attention to any concerns about office effectiveness. He endorsed the proposal to share a more comprehensive risk assessment with the Board in annual reports and, while agreeing to supply an assurance opinion, it was critical to base the opinion on the risk-based audits performed.

114. The OASIS Director, UNFPA, drew attention to two types of audit opinion: (a) limited, focused on government, risk management and control processes based on work undertaken; and (b) positive, capturing an organization's entire universe, providing assurance on government, risk management and control processes to fulfil corporate objectives. The latter was difficult to undertake, given resources and work required, but possible to consider as long as expectations of limited or positive assurance were managed in advance. On resource adequacy, OASIS was ready to engage with management and the Board during budget discussions on audit coverage; the strengths of the first and second lines of defence were related to audit coverage. Audit standards would be spelled out in future reports, instead of referring to the charter; UN-RIAS had contributed to developing new legal instruments for United Nations joint activities, which were close to completion. On investigation, she stressed increased caseload did not necessarily relate to behavioural norms issues but pointed to different possible hypotheses (if individuals felt more comfortable coming forward or not), and confirmed the Fund's strict zero tolerance policy.

115. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/13 on the internal audit and investigations reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS.

XIII. Reports of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ethics offices

116. The Director, Ethics Office, UNDP, presented the activities of the UNDP Ethics Office in 2014 ([DP/2015/23](#)) and the Associate Administrator, UNDP, presented the management response. The Ethics Advisor, Ethics Office, UNFPA, presented the report of the UNFPA Ethics Office for 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/8](#)) and the Deputy Executive Director (Management), UNFPA, presented the management response. The Legal Counsel, UNOPS, presented the activities of the UNOPS Ethics Office in 2014 ([DP/OPS/2015/4](#)) as well as the management response.

117. On UNDP, Board members appreciated the Ethics Office's contributions to fostering a corporate culture of ethics, integrity and accountability, and urged it to continue to work with management to ensure that culture took root. They commended the office for continuing to develop innovative approaches, despite resource constraints, and urged management to prioritize Ethics Office funding so it could function effectively, especially in response to rising demand for ethics training and counselling. They welcomed new and ongoing initiatives, such as webinars, peer-training networks, online courses, and the new ethics code roll out, which helped to meet best practices via user-friendly, engaging designs suitable to the unique United Nations ethical context. Noting the 28 per cent rise in total requests in 2014, they commended the Ethics Office for its aggressive awareness campaign, including management promotion of speak-up culture and implementation of Ethics Office recommendations. While acknowledging ongoing efforts, delegations urged management to address recurring staff perception that senior managers were not held to the same ethical standards as staff, and requested periodic updates on its actions.

118. On UNFPA, delegations, acknowledging the Executive Director's commitment to Ethics Office work, urged management to create a work environment that promoted ethical behaviour and a speak-up culture. Recognizing that 2014 was challenging for the office, owing to internal vacancies and transitions, they

appreciated its determination to fulfil its mandated activities. Delegations were pleased with staff compliance with the financial disclosure policy, while encouraging the Ethics Office to ensure staff fully understood its requirements. Board members looked forward to the 2015 online ethics course and encouraged the office to apply lessons and best practices so the course was more user-friendly and suitable to the Fund's unique ethical context.

119. On UNOPS, delegations commended the organization's commitment to briefing staff on their protection against retaliation under the whistle-blower protection policy, a critical step that prevented misconduct, promoted a culture of accountability, and encouraged a speak-out culture. They appreciated the 2014 survey's expanded scope on integrity, ethics and fraud, and encouraged UNOPS and the Ethics Office to build on its results to strengthen ethics services. Noting the importance of United Nations ethics coordination, they welcomed the Ethics Officer's participation as Vice-chair of the Ethics Network of Multilateral Organizations.

120. Overall, Board members urged management of the three organizations to ensure whistle-blower protection from retaliation and to hold perpetrators accountable.

121. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/14 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS.

Part three

Second regular session 2015

**Held at United Nations Headquarters in New York
from 31 August to 4 September 2015**

I. Organizational matters

1. The second regular session 2015 of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York in from 31 August to 4 September 2015.

2. The Executive Board approved the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2015 (DP/2015/L.3), and approved the report of the annual session 2015 (DP/2015/24). The Board approved the draft annual workplan for 2016 (DP/2015/CRP.2) and approved the tentative workplan for the first regular session 2016.

3. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the second regular session 2015 appeared in document DP/2016/2, which was available on the [Executive Board website](#).

4. The Executive Board agreed in decision 2015/22 to the following schedule for future sessions of the Executive Board in 2016:

First regular session:	25 to 29 January 2016
Annual session:	20 to 24 June 2016 (Geneva) or 6 to 10 June 2016 (New York)
Second regular session:	6 to 9, 12 September 2016

UNDP segment

II. Statement by the Administrator and structured funding dialogue

III. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

IV. Funding commitments to UNDP

5. In her opening remarks to the Executive Board (available on the [Executive Board website](#)), the Administrator, UNDP, addressed a series of topics against the backdrop of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, which the General Assembly was set to adopt later in the month. Those topics included: (a) the milestone of the final *Millennium Development Goals Report 2015* of the Secretary-General; (b) the outcome of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa where Member States had reached consensus on a new framework for development financing; (c) UNDP support to implementation of the new global agreements reached in 2015, including the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, the Addis Ababa development financing framework consensus, and the anticipated outcome of the twenty-first Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2015; (d) the United Nations reform agenda and UNDP leadership of the resident coordinator system, including support to South-South cooperation; (e) ongoing UNDP commitment to transparency and accountability; (f) the structured funding dialogue (addressed in the second part of this section); and (g) the UNDP role in conflict, crisis and disaster settings, especially in the Central African Republic, Colombia, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Haiti, Iraq, Libya, Myanmar, Nepal, the Syrian

Arab Republic, Ukraine, South Sudan, Yemen, as well as the Ebola-affected countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

6. In helping Member States to implement the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, UNDP would utilize the MAPS — mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support — approach, through which it would: (a) assist Governments in reflecting the new agenda in national development plans; (b) support countries in accelerating progress on the Sustainable Development Goals targets; and (c) make United Nations system policy expertise on sustainable development and governance available to governments throughout SDGs implementation. UNDP was working through the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to design guidance for national SDGs reports. In addition, the new wave of country programmes being submitted to the Board for approval had undergone rigorous appraisal and were the first to bridge the strategic plan, 2014-2017, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

7. On SDG financing issues, in the wake of the Addis Ababa consensus, and noting the undiminished importance of official development assistance (ODA) and building national capacity to mobilize resources, the Administrator, UNDP, highlighted UNDP support to help programme countries, in particular the least developed countries and the small island developing States (SIDS), to access a diverse range of financing opportunities. UNDP was also very active in preparations for the United Nations climate change conference in Paris in December 2015 through knowledge and expertise sharing, capacity building for least developed countries and small island developing States negotiators, the hosting of regional dialogues on intended nationally determined contributions, designing policy and regulatory settings conducive to private sector investment in renewable energy and mitigation measures, and support to project preparation for the Green Climate Fund, for which UNDP was one of 20 accredited organizations.

8. The Administrator, UNDP, drew attention to the implications that Member States funding decisions were collectively having on UNDP and its ability to achieve the goals set out in its strategic plan, 2014-2017, and to support Sustainable Development Goals implementation and leadership of the United Nations development system. While stressing that the organization was making every effort, including its recent internal reorganization and the launching of the “100 partners campaign”, to adapt its business model to the changing nature of funding, she appealed to Board members to increase their contributions to regular (core) resources, the sole guarantee for a highly strategic and performing UNDP. Furthermore, UNDP was matching or exceeding its best practice benchmarks for transparency and accountability, in particular through its transparency platform — open.undp.org — and the establishment of a more independent public information disclosure appeals process.

9. On coherence issues, UNDP was demonstrating its strong leadership, working through the United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, in setting up the Innovation Facility for the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs); in establishing a web platform for country teams compiling the capacity, tools and guidance available in the United Nations development system to address each of the Sustainable Development Goals, including the resident coordinator and country team global information management system; and in supporting the ongoing roll out of the standard operating procedures to support the rising number of “Delivering as one” countries. UNDP continued to

engage in the Economic and Social Council dialogues on the long-term positioning of the United Nations development system, and was in the process of finalizing its South-South cooperation strategy.

10. Board Members, underscoring the spirit of cooperation and multilateralism that Member States brought to the design and adoption of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, stressed the critical role for the United Nations development system and UNDP in the agenda's implementation. The United Nations, they urged, had to continue to make itself fit-for-purpose to help Member States meet the challenge. They would call on UNDP, in particular, to support their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and deliver the results their citizens demanded, while continuing its critical work in resilience building, democratic governance and recovery, in line with Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies. Given the 2030 agenda challenge, however, they saw the need for further reform of the United Nations development system to make it fit-for-purpose, as noted in the Economic and Social Council dialogues.

11. A group of delegations — drawing attention to the UNDP mandate under the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (General Assembly resolution 67/226) — noted with regret that several aspects of that mandate had not been fulfilled, in particular regarding the critical mass concept of core resources and the core/non-core imbalance. While recognizing the UNDP 100 partners campaign, they cautioned that a weak core resource base, which had fallen an unprecedented 11 per cent in 2014, jeopardized the principle of universality of the United Nations development system as well as the capacity of UNDP to achieve its strategic plan, 2014-2017, and to fulfil its Sustainable Development Goals implementation mandate. They called for improving the quantity, quality and predictability of core resources to all programme countries. Non-core resources, for their part, should be flexible and aligned with the UNDP strategic plan and national priorities, based on demand-driven, nationally owned programming. The group was concerned with possible overrepresentation of donor countries and urged the further democratization of developing countries in the Executive Board and a more equitable geographic representation within UNDP governance structures and the resident coordinator system.

12. Emphasizing that poverty eradication, in all its multidimensional forms, had to be the overarching goal for UNDP, as laid out in its strategic plan, 2014-2017, and in the Sustainable Development Goals, the same group of countries requested UNDP to report further on its poverty eradication programmes, through transparent measures of progress beyond per capita income, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States. They reiterated, further, additional concerns that they had raised during the annual session 2015, including: (a) the removal of three governance-related indicators that appeared in the draft integrated results and resources framework, 2014-2017, and, subsequently, Board approval of the amended framework at the current session, with full respect for national policy space; (b) the operational independence of the Independent Evaluation Office, including Board oversight of the process to appoint its Director, key to its credibility. In that regard, they called for the Board to expedite the finalization of the revised evaluation policy at the current session. The group also reiterated its position that the annual sessions of the Board should take place solely in New York, in lieu of the existing practice to alternate between New York and Geneva, in order to broaden the participation of developing countries.

13. Another group of delegations made a call to establish a comprehensive action plan of cooperation with middle-income countries in order to forge an integrated, holistic poverty eradication approach specific to their needs. Highlighting that a reported 70 per cent of the world's poor live in MICs, they stressed that the trend to reduce funding and programme activities in MICs risked causing a reversal of hard won development gains. On behalf of small island developing States, many of whom were also middle-income countries, another group of delegations underlined their particular vulnerabilities to climate change and natural disasters, and looked to UNDP capacity building and development support, in line with the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the 2014 SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway. These countries also stressed the importance they accorded to South-South and triangular cooperation and the role of UNDP in their promotion through increased financial and human resources and through stronger regional and subregional partnerships.

14. A number of Board members saw UNDP continuing to play a key role in strengthening the link between development and humanitarian actions and funding, as indicated in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. They highlighted the UNDP role in helping countries to build resilience to natural disasters and human-induced crises and conflicts and to build back better and stronger. They encouraged UNDP to continue to work closely with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to ensure the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit would set an ambitious agenda, vital for the success of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

15. In her response, the Administrator stressed the centrality of poverty eradication as the overarching goal of the UNDP strategic plan and the UNDP drive to make itself fit-for-purpose to deliver on the post-2015 agenda. She highlighted the organization's important role in early recovery and in the preparation of and participation in the World Humanitarian Summit 2016, at which she hoped partners would reach a breakthrough on the funding front, especially in light of the tripling of humanitarian funding over the previous decade and the pressure it had placed on the available pool of financing. She drew attention to the particular vulnerability of small island development states and the special needs of middle-income countries. On funding, speaking to concerns raised across the Board, she underscored the criticality of core resources in ensuring UNDP was able to fulfil its post-2015 agenda mandate and its special leadership role of the United Nations development system. With regard to the concerns raised over the governance indicators in the UNDP integrated results and resources framework, 2014-2017, she noted that those indicators would only be applied at country level in strict conformity with Member States' wishes and the principle of national ownership.

Structured funding dialogue; financial, budgetary and administrative matters; and funding commitments to UNDP

16. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item, including the annual review of the financial situation, 2014 (DP/2015/26), detailed information relating to the annual review of the financial situation, 2014 (DP/2015/26/Add.1), and the status of regular funding commitments to UNDP and its funds and programmes for 2015 and onwards (DP/2015/27). Three presentations followed by the Director, Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy, UNDP, on the structured funding dialogue; by the Director, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, on the

thematic funding windows; and by the Deputy Director and Chief Financial Officer, Bureau of Management, UNDP, on the financial situation in 2014 and projections for 2015 and beyond. In turn, the Permanent Representative of Benin, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Chile, and the Deputy Permanent Representative of Norway presented their perspectives on the evolving nature of their cooperation with UNDP, given changes in the financial landscape.

17. Board members, pointing to the 2015 consensus reached on the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and the Addis Ababa financing for development framework, were hopeful that delegations would similarly achieve agreement on the future of UNDP funding. Highlighting their readiness to continue to engage in frank, pragmatic discussions as part of the structured funding dialogue, they stressed that UNDP had to continue to make every effort to secure a strong, stable, reliable core resource base, which they saw as key to the success of the organization's move to become fit-for-purpose and fulfil its support to programme countries, especially the LDCs and SIDS, while addressing the specific needs of middle-income countries. Sound financial planning and transparency were crucial, especially as funding streams would no doubt continue to be diverse in number and nature, while Board members and UNDP should work together to counter fragmentation. In that regard, they were encouraged that in 2014 UNDP had maintained a positive net asset position on its balance sheet and had achieved year-end liquidity for core resources above the Board-requested threshold.

18. Drawing attention to the ongoing imbalance between core and other (non-core) resources and the continued fall in core resources, dropping 11 per cent in 2014 — which they saw as a reflection both of global fiscal realities and the new landscape of development funding where traditional and new donors were exploring innovative ways to leverage results — Board members hoped the structured dialogue would point to a way out of the core/non-core impasse. There was general concern that a continued drop of the core resource base would eventually jeopardize UNDP capacity to deliver and reverse hard won development gains. Noting that while 120 Member States contributed to three other United Nations development organizations in 2014 only 56 contributed to UNDP, a group of countries highlighted that sustainable, predictable funding to UNDP was not possible if only 10 donors provided some 84 per cent of the core resource base, as was the case in 2014. They therefore urged contributions from emerging donors and other developing countries, in addition to private sector mobilization, while valuing UNDP efforts to broaden its donor base through its 100 partners campaign.

19. Stressing the need for new approaches to improve the quality of non-core thematic funding, delegations welcomed the UNDP proposal to reform and consolidate its funding instruments for greater flexibility and more attractive incentives, such as the idea of four comprehensive thematic funding windows to become operational in 2016. They reaffirmed their commitment to transparent and effective funding at the country level and improved quality of funding overall. The success of the funding windows, they noted, hinged on UNDP capacity to attract quality funding while avoiding any diversion away from the core base. UNDP should link those funding instruments to its comparative advantages and the strategic plan priorities, while working for leaner, effective governance and more useful reporting formats. They were confident that new contributors would come on board once the new funding mechanisms were operational. Delegations welcomed the establishment of a multi-agency Sustainable Development Goals fund to support

the United Nations Development Group-endorsed MAPS initiative and all efforts at a United Nations system-wide approach to maximize limited resources and to share experiences and burden, including through joint procurement. Highlighting their commitment to aid effectiveness, delegations welcomed the organization's unqualified audit opinion for the tenth consecutive year and its continued commitment to the low cost of transactions. Delegations looked forward to the midterm review of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, particularly within the context of the new 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

20. In response, the Associate Administrator, UNDP stressed the importance of all funding modalities for UNDP, especially long-term multi-year contributions to core resources that ensured the organization's ability to deliver on its strategic plan, 2104-2017, and its United Nations development system coordination role. In addition, she highlighted the importance of thematic funding windows to ensure better quality programming and the need for reserve funding for unforeseen crises.

21. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/16 on UNDP funding issues.

V. Country programmes and related matters

22. The Associate Administrator, UNDP, introduced the item and gave an overview of the country programmes and extensions. The Permanent Representative of Colombia presented and elaborated on the country programme document for Colombia, The regional directors for Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Arab States, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and Latin America and the Caribbean presented and elaborated on the country programmes for Algeria, Belarus, Cambodia, China, Colombia, El Salvador, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Maldives, Panama, Serbia (including the results and resources framework for Kosovo* in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)), Swaziland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and Somalia, the exceptional one-year extension of the country programme for Côte d'Ivoire and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon and Libya.

23. The Executive Board Reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for: Algeria (DP/DCP/DZA/3); Belarus (DP/DCP/BLR/3); Cambodia (DP/DCP/KHM/3); China (DP/DCP/CHN/3); Colombia (DP/DCP/COL/2); El Salvador (DP/DCP/SLV/3); Georgia (DP/DCP/GEO/3); Guinea-Bissau (DP/DCP/GNB/2); Indonesia (DP/DCP/IDN/3); Kazakhstan (DP/DCP/KAZ/3); Malaysia (DP/DCP/MYS/3); Maldives (DP/DCP/MDV/3); Panama (DP/DCP/PAN/3); Serbia (DP/DCP/SRB/2), including the results and resources framework for Kosovo* in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (DP/DCP/SRB/2/Add.1); Swaziland (DP/DCP/SWZ/3); Tajikistan (DP/DCP/TAJ/2); the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (DP/DCP/MKD/3); Turkey (DP/DCP/TUR/3); Uganda (DP/DCP/UGA/4); Uzbekistan (DP/DCP/UZB/3); Zambia (DP/DCP/ZMB/3); and Zimbabwe (DP/DCP/ZWE/3).

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

24. The Executive Board withdrew the country programme document for Azerbaijan ([DP/DCP/AZE/3](#) and Corr.1).

25. The Executive Board took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and Somalia ([DP/2015/28](#)).

26. The Executive Board approved the exceptional one-year extension of the country programme for Côte d'Ivoire and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon and Libya ([DP/2015/28](#)).

VI. Evaluation

27. The Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, presented the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment ([DP/2015/29](#)). The Director, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, presented the management response to the evaluation ([DP/2015/30](#)).

28. Noting that gender equality and women's empowerment were key to the success of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, Board members welcomed the evaluation findings and its recommendations on the UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2013, and found the management response positive, especially its implementation timetable. They commended the Independent Evaluation Office for its excellent work on evaluating the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment. Delegations drew attention in particular to the recommendation that all UNDP programming and policies should be attentive to framing women as agents and active citizens, and that the UNDP contribution to transformative change required accelerated efforts in all focus areas to target the roots of inequalities, structures of unequal power, and participation and relations, including unequal norms, values and policies. UNDP should also strive for gender equality within its own workforce.

29. Recognizing the ongoing UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment, delegations reaffirmed that UNDP should continue to be a leader in the field within the United Nations system and especially in close partnership with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). United Nations partnerships and coordination were crucial in post-crisis countries and those lagging on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and helped to avoid duplication and strengthen gender equality throughout the system. Delegations called on UNDP to further bolster and communicate its comparative advantages, for example in the area of climate change, and to allocate, in line with the United Nations system-wide target, at least 15 per cent of its resources to activities focused primarily on gender equality in 2017, using the gender marker as the main tracking tool. In general, they saw the gender marker as an effective, reliable tool to track, report and plan, including on financial expenditures and allocations. Likewise, and as the evaluation had recognized, the gender equality seal was a useful tool; delegations appreciated plans to assess the seal and encouraged UNDP to incentivize its adoption in the maximum number of country offices.

30. Board members looked forward to building on the evaluation in the context of the midterm review of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017, including the suggestion to integrate the UNDP gender equality strategy into the strategic plan. Delegations were also very keen to pursue the evaluation recommendation to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of gender equality contributions, which

they noted would help UNDP cull lessons learned from diverse settings and better articulate its niche and leadership role.

31. In response, the Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP, underlining the inherent complexity of evaluating a topic many of whose elements fell outside UNDP control, and drew attention to the excellent collaboration among all parties involved. The assessments of development results, he noted, provided tangible, validated work at country level, which was especially visible in such thematic evaluations. He recognized the high level of detail in the management response and expressed satisfaction with the progress and outcome of the evaluation.

32. The Director, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, UNDP, noted that UNDP would indeed use the evaluation to further strengthen its implementation of the gender equality strategy and fully utilize the tracking system of the Independent Evaluation Office to gauge progress against the admittedly ambitious UNDP targets. In that regard, he drew attention to the steady pace at which UNDP was working to achieve its goals, including through: (a) the minimum allocation of 15 per cent of resources to gender equality specific activities (UNDP, he stressed, aimed to measure its success against the most demanding principles), for which the intrinsically gendered Sustainable Development Goals provided a strong benchmark; (b) joint United Nations work through United Nations Development Group and UN-Women at the global, regional and country levels; (c) adoption of the corporate programme and project quality assurance system, according to which gender analysis and gender results were mandatory requirements for successful appraisal; and (d) integrating a strong crosscutting chapter on gender results in the midterm review of the strategic plan, building on country level results and lessons learned.

33. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/17 on the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment and the management response.

UNFPA segment

VII. Statement by the Executive Director and structured funding dialogue: implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review

VIII. Funding commitments to UNFPA

IX. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Statement by the Executive Director

34. In his opening remarks, the Executive Director, UNFPA, highlighting the historic consensus on the soon-to-be-adopted 2030 agenda for sustainable development, stressed that the role of the United Nations was to translate the agreement into bold actions that transform lives and the trajectory of nations. The human-centred focus of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the action agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in

Addis Ababa clearly reflected the conclusions of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) beyond 2014 and its programme of action: the need to focus on the most vulnerable, including women and young people, and to use a human rights-based approach.

35. The Sustainable Development Goals, he noted, reaffirmed the critical importance of the Fund's mandate, in particular its current work to help countries to harness the potential of their exploding youth populations, known as the demographic dividend, which the Fund was addressing through capacity and partnership building and through targeted investments and interventions. Those investments on youth also focused on empowering adolescent girls and women through, for example, the Action for Adolescent Girls Initiative and the Global Programme to End Child Marriage, which were especially important for building resilience in post-conflict settings. Young people, he stated, often depicted as easily susceptible to extremism, were actually the main contributors to peace and resilience building — and UNFPA was working to tap into their potential. From the African Youth Initiative Network, nominated for the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize, to the HackForYouth initiative, young people were designing creative solutions to a range of SDG-related challenges.

36. With nearly 60 million persons forcibly displaced and some 400 natural disasters in 2014, UNFPA had stepped up its investments in humanitarian settings focused on protection from gender-based and sexual violence, providing life-saving health and obstetrics services, and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. The Fund was actively engaged in preparations for the World Humanitarian Summit 2016 and was keen to realign its strategic plan, 2014-2017, with the Sustainable Development Goals and include a broader humanitarian strategy with a more robust framework as part of its 2016 midterm review. Part of those investments included the Fund's successful efforts over the previous five years to bolster staff safety and security, especially for surge staff working in high-risk duty stations, and to reinforce its emergency preparedness and response.

37. At the corporate level, the Executive Director informed the Board that UNFPA had launched its new enterprise resource management strategy in June 2015 and had identified 12 top corporate risk areas, along with risk owners. All the of the Fund's business units were undertaking online risk assessments and designing mitigation strategies. He was also pleased to report that the United Nations Board of Auditors had given UNFPA an unqualified audit report in 2014, with satisfactory progress implementing recommendations. In addition, he highlighted the preliminary positive feedback by the Office of Audit and Investigations on the Fund's work to redress issues with the global and regional programme. Noting steady progress on the evaluation front, he stated that UNFPA would submit its quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2016-2019, to the Board at the current session.

38. Financially, UNFPA experienced in 2015 a sharp fall in resources, which unfavourable exchange rates had further exacerbated. In its updated integrated resource plan, 2014-2017, submitted to the Board for consideration, the Fund had introduced a series of austerity measures on all integrated budget components in order to align spending and remain financially sustainable, including reduced spending plans. That move, he stressed, risked having consequences on the Fund's capacity to deliver on its mandate. He highlighted in particular how the financial gap was negatively affecting the Fund's ability to deliver much needed family

planning and reproductive health commodity security services. UNFPA was working to partners to overcome the challenge, including the design of its integrated resource mobilization strategy being submitted to the Board at the session, building on its strong donor base. He appealed to Board members to support the global programme and, through it, millions of women and girls throughout the world.

39. In their comments, Board members commended the Executive Director for his strong leadership and the Fund's dedicated staff for their commitment throughout the world in implementing the ICPD beyond 2014 programme of action, the backbone of the Fund's mandate. They noted that the 2030 agenda demanded a United Nations system-wide strategy, grounded in the quadrennial review, to meet the challenge. The UNFPA-specific mandate, they affirmed, to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights was crucial to the success of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and its overarching goal to eradicate poverty and the promise to leave no one behind. That was especially pertinent in the least developed countries and small-island developing states. Within that context, they stressed the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment and the need to reduce inequality within and between countries. They also drew attention to lagging Millennium Development Goal 5 — to reduce maternal mortality and provide universal access to reproductive health — and urged the Fund to continue to take the lead in tackling the unfinished business relating to Goal 5, especially important in crisis settings where health services were disrupted.

40. Board members highlighted the areas where they saw the Fund's comparative advantages in tackling the challenges of the 2030 agenda: family planning, unsafe abortion, female genital mutilation, and gender-based violence in humanitarian settings. They encouraged UNFPA to make every effort at the country level to achieve the family planning goals for 2020, noting that progress to date had been lagging. That required stronger leadership and guidance for country offices, building staff capacity to accelerate and strengthen a movement for family planning. They voiced strong support for the global programme to enhance reproductive health commodity security and urged Member States to help close the \$1 billion funding gap. On abortion, underlining the ICPD mandate, delegations looked to UNFPA to ensure that where abortion was legal, it had to be safe, and where unsafe abortion occurred, women had to receive post-abortion care. They commended UNFPA for its efforts to combat female genital mutilation and to cull lessons from the joint programme, while encouraging it to build country office and partner capacity and systems.

41. On the humanitarian front, delegations underscored the Fund's critical work and partnerships in a record number crises around the world, including five level-three crisis in 2015. Noting that the Fund's humanitarian funding was rising rapidly in response to crises, delegations stressed the importance of working with UNFPA to ensure it continued to have the capacity to deliver rapid, reliable provision of safe birth and reproductive health kits, family planning commodities, and programmes to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. They welcomed the Fund's unwavering commitment to its role as coordinator of the gender-based violence area of responsibility within the humanitarian response architecture at the field level. In that regard, delegations were pleased that UNFPA had taken concrete steps to bolster its roster of qualified experts to respond to and deliver those critical services. They were keen to learn more about the Fund's efforts to prioritize and address gender-based violence in emergencies and protect sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

42. Board members reaffirmed the importance for UNFPA of harnessing the demographic agenda through intensive programmes targeting young people, building their skills and potential through training and education. They encouraged UNFPA to strengthen capacities to collect and analyse demographic data, crucial for implementing and monitoring progress in those areas.

43. A number of delegations underscored the importance of maintaining full support and funding to middle-income countries, whose rising economic status might obscure their entrenched levels of poverty and whose public health services required the Fund's continuing strong presence and support, while respecting the principle of national ownership. In that regard, some delegations expressed concern that the practice of earmarking financial resources risked diverting much needed funding away from middle-income countries where nearly 70 per cent of the world's poor lived, thereby cutting away at programme activities and reversing hard won development gains, as noted in the Addis Ababa financing for development action agenda. They urged UNFPA to take steps to ensure its resource mobilization strategic did not further widen the gap between core and earmarked non-core contributions. They reaffirmed their intention to promote the establishment of a comprehensive action plan of cooperation for middle-income countries, in partnership with the United Nations and UNFPA and in accordance with the Addis Ababa financing for development action agenda, in an effort to design transparent measurements of sustainable development progress beyond per capita income, recognizing the multidimensional nature of poverty.

44. In response, the Executive Director, UNFPA, noted that while the Sustainable Development Goals were now the focus, there was still unfinished Millennium Development Goals business for which the international community remained accountable. For UNFPA, he spoke in particular of maternal mortality, which he affirmed was a complex, crosscutting issue that the Millennium Development Goals, given their incomplete approach, could only partially address. The more comprehensive Sustainable Development Goals were better designed to meet the maternal mortality challenge and the Fund, to achieve that goal, had to work with all partners, including civil society and the private sector. On family planning, he stressed the issue of access for women and girls on the ground, which required national leadership and commitment and long-term, predictable resources. He again appealed to donors to step up their contributions, and to emerging donors to consider making new contributions. He also underscored the need to raise domestic resources, led by national Governments, without which the Sustainable Development Goals could not be achieved. Furthermore, private sector contributions helped to lower the cost of commodities while donor bilateral partnerships with Governments further allayed the cost burden. He assured middle-income countries that UNFPA would remain present and active in their countries, targeting its activities where they were needed most, as defined by national priorities. On the core/non-core debate, the Fund was actively working with all partners to improve resource flows. He stressed that UNFPA was highly committed to the evaluation function, and assured the Board that there was no further vacancies to fill in the Independent Evaluation Office. The issue was not about staffing but about providing the needed resources for quality evaluations. The Fund was also at the forefront of United Nations reform and coherence efforts and was making every effort to meet its commitments.

Structured dialogue: implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review; funding commitments to UNFPA; and financial, budgetary and administrative matters

45. The Director, Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, UNFPA, presented the UNFPA resource mobilization strategy (DP/FPA/2015/11) and the report on contributions by Member States and others to UNFPA and revenue projections for 2015 and future years (DP/FPA/2015/10). The Director, Division for Management Services, UNFPA, presented the updated integrated resource plan, 2014-2017 (DP/FPA/2015/CRP.4).

46. Highlighting the importance of being fit-for-purpose and noting that the UNFPA core to non-core ratio was balanced, Board members welcomed the Fund's funding dialogue and the new resource mobilization strategy, and expressed appreciation for the regular consultations during its design. They attached great importance to a strong resource mobilization strategy for the realization of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, and were certain that the proposed approaches would reinforce UNFPA capacity to address the 2030 agenda challenges. They appreciated the "whole organization" approach to resource mobilization and looked forward to the detailed action plan for the four funding source approaches. Given the negative factors impacting funding, they strongly encouraged UNFPA to focus on "enablers": linking resources to results; designing clear resource mobilization targets; and pursuing innovation and excellence in fund management. They also welcomed the six principles and the links between institutional performance and development results. While pleased with the Fund's successful efforts to bring about reduced spending, some cautioned against the risk of sustained austerity on programme delivery. Delegations encouraged the Fund to maintain a critical level of flexible, predictable core resources and underlined that its strategy should be results driven, evidenced based and focused on the Fund's comparative advantages.

47. Noting the proposed introduction of new thematic windows to attract funding, delegations requested details on the themes and outcomes of the strategic plan for which they were being considered. They also sought more detailed information on funding gaps for each expected outcome and target on an annual basis in order to inform the ongoing structured dialogue, as per decision 2014/24, including: an overview of resources; an update on efforts to shift to regular, softly earmarked resources; and an update on private sector collaboration. There was a request for a risk analysis on the potential consequences of unmet financial needs. They encouraged the Fund to further build staff capacity at the regional and country levels in order to mobilize resources, for which there was a call for a cost-benefit analysis, and they welcomed the establishment of a non-core resources management unit within UNFPA.

48. They were pleased with the strategy's focus on diversifying and attracting non-traditional donors, including through South-South cooperation; leveraging domestic funding through country programmes aligned with national development plans; and developing a new online system that visualizes real-time data on expenditures and donor contributions to improve transparency and to target underfunded areas. It was noted, in that regard, that as of 2015 traditional donors still accounted for over 60 per cent of UNFPA core resources. They encouraged UNFPA to continue to expand and strengthen its partnerships with the private sector. They stressed that the structured dialogue should be viewed within the context of Sustainable Development Goals implementation, the Economic and Social Council

dialogue on the governance of the United Nations system, and the 2016 quadrennial review. They encouraged UNFPA, in that regard, to work closely with its United Nations system partners to bolster synergies, lessons learned and coherence. They looked forward to regular informal dialogue with management on funding gaps and opportunities in the run up to the 2016 midterm review of the strategic plan.

49. In response, the Director, Division of Communications and Strategic Partnerships, UNFPA, assured the Board of the Fund's continued commitment to work in middle-income countries, in line with its global presence policy. He again drew attention to the UNFPA online transparency portal that provided real-time data on expenditures and donor contributions in every country, which also served as a donor confidence booster in how the Fund was managing funds committed to it. He also highlighted similar tools already in use, such as the strategic information system and the global programming system. On the proposed cost-benefit analysis and investment in capacity, he assured delegations that UNFPA was keen to address those issues together through the continued structured dialogue. He noted, in that regard, that expert regional resource advisors had significantly helped to raise additional funds for UNFPA at both the country and regional levels. UNFPA very much welcomed the dialogue and looked to other United Nations organizations for lessons and best practices. Funding gaps, on outcomes two and four in particular, remained an issue and UNFPA was keen to find a solution through, for example, thematic funds. He affirmed that the Fund's increasing engagement in humanitarian crises effectively forced a greater disparity between core and non-core, with more going to non-core. He assured the Board that UNFPA was seized with the issue of how to address the maternal mortality challenge and other related unfinished Millennium Development Goals business.

50. The Director, Division for Management Services, UNFPA, stressed that the Fund was achieving its accountability and transparency commitments with regard to the funds entrusted to it. Despite lack of resources, the Fund, he noted, was fully compliant with International Aid Transparency Initiative principles, and its enterprise resources planning system was on track, which also served to strengthen the Fund's risk management approach. Furthermore, he drew attention to the Fund's 2014 clean audit opinion as well the three lines of defence model for accountability approved by the Chief Executives Board of the United Nations Development Group and for which UNFPA was also on track. He emphasized that the currently existing large funding gap, based on the Strategic Plan 2014-2017, was bound to have a negative impact on the integrated results framework and was a matter of great concern. He urged that all efforts be made to minimize the current funding gap for 2015, even at this late stage.

51. In closing, the Executive Director, UNFPA, addressed three issues. One, on cost-benefit analysis, he indicated the UNFPA business model would change once Sustainable Development Goals implementation began and the Addis Ababa action agenda came into force. Country-level resource flow analysis would be required to better manage those resources flows, whether through the private sector or civil society. Regional partnerships would help to organize this analysis country per country. UNFPA was ready to build government capacity to achieve that goal. Two, on humanitarian assistance, while agreeing that crises attracted non-core resources, he noted that UNFPA, through a more flexible crisis response mechanism with greater capacity, would help to allay the core/non-core imbalance. Three, on the UNFPA space around the Sustainable Development Goals, the goals were

intentionally cross-cutting and required the cooperation of all United Nations organizations, demanding a multi-disciplinary approach to the solution, which was at the heart of the SDG design.

52. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/18 on funding commitments to UNFPA.

X. Evaluation

53. The Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, presented the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2016-2019 ([DP/FPA/2015/12](#)).

54. Board members commended UNFPA for the well-prepared quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2016-2019, and for having organized the regular consultations with Member States. They were pleased with UNFPA efforts to strengthen the Evaluation Office and its commitment to a strong evaluation function. They welcomed the analysis of evolving needs and the proposals for new approaches, including, for example, that the office to be more involved in cluster and system-wide evaluations, a move that would help to pool resources and widen impact. They appreciated the decision to ground the plan on key principles, including a balanced approach to accountability and learning. They also supported the office's guidance to UNFPA on planning, management, resourcing and use of programme level evaluations. They welcomed plans to conduct meta- and synthesis evaluations to feed into strategic lesson learning. They noted, with regard to impact evaluations, that the Fund sought to focus on adolescent and youth interventions under outcome 2 of the strategic plan, and encouraged UNFPA to approach the issue from a sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and gender equality perspective. They also appreciated UNFPA clarification of the status of decentralized evaluations and for highlighting the challenge of evaluating earmarked funding.

55. Delegations supported the efforts of the Evaluation Office to cluster country office evaluations, beginning with the proposed pilot to perform five country office evaluations simultaneously. They also welcomed the office's work to develop clear criteria to select and prioritize corporate evaluations, as well as the consultative process followed with staff at country level and headquarters on what corporate priorities should be over the following five years, based on relevance, utility and coverage. They encouraged the Fund to work with other United Nations organizations and especially with the United Nations Evaluation Group in designing a common approach to national evaluation capacity-building.

56. On evaluation financing, while recognizing UNFPA plans to the fund evaluation function and welcoming its goal of investing 3 per cent of programme resources in evaluation, Board members were concerned that UNFPA had only spent 0.37 per cent of programme expenditures on evaluation in 2014. In addition, delegations were concerned that the office's capacity was commensurate with its function and role.

57. In response, the Director, Evaluation Office, UNFPA, stressed that UNFPA played an active role within the United Nations Evaluation Group on national evaluation capacity-building, including in a number working groups. She drew attention to her chairmanship of two such groups: one, on the professionalization of the evaluation function and, the other, on decentralized evaluations. On financing, she highlighted the significant increase in resources of over \$4 million for 2016-2017,

which, while showing significant progress, still fell short of the 3 per cent budget norm. She underscored, however, that increased investments for thematic and programme evaluations were expected from regional and country offices — costs which were not yet reflected in the budget. She stressed that the Evaluation Office and the Programme Division were actively working to ensure that decentralized evaluation expenditure was captured in the global programming system for 2015, allowing for better reporting on expenditures at the decentralized level. On human resources, she noted the Board's concern, and indicated that the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan included resources for augmenting mid-level staff in the office and that the planned capacity development strategy would provide an opportunity to review staffing at all levels. She also noted that country offices had seen an increase in monitoring and evaluation staff in 2015, and two Board members had provided junior professional officers in regional offices. UNFPA was seeking to hire even more junior professional officers both at central and regional levels.

58. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/19 on the UNFPA quadrennial evaluation workplan and budget.

XI. Country programmes and related matters

59. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) introduced the item.

60. The UNFPA regional directors Europe and Central Asia, Asia and the Pacific, East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean presented and elaborated on the country programmes for Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cambodia, China, Colombia, El Salvador, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Panama, Serbia, Swaziland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Uzbekistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as the six-month extension of the country programme for Ethiopia, the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique and Ukraine, and the second one-year extension of the country programme for Côte d'Ivoire.

61. The Executive Board reviewed and approved, in accordance with its decision 2014/7, the country programmes documents for Azerbaijan ([DP/FPA/CPD/AZE/4](#)), Belarus ([DP/FPA/CPD/BLR/2](#)), Cambodia ([DP/FPA/CPD/KHM/5](#)), China ([DP/FPA/CPD/CHN/8](#)), Colombia ([DP/FPA/COL/6](#)), El Salvador ([DP/FPA/CPD/SLV/8](#)), Georgia ([DP/FPA/CPD/GEO/3](#)), Guinea-Bissau ([DP/FPA/CPD/GNB/6](#)), Indonesia ([DP/FPA/CPD/IDN/9](#)), Kazakhstan ([DP/FPA/CPD/KAZ/4](#)), Maldives ([DP/FPA/CPD/MDV/6](#)), Panama ([DP/FPA/CPD/PAN/3](#)), Serbia ([DP/FPA/CPD/SRB/1](#)), including the results and resources framework for Kosovo ([DP/FPA/CPD/SRB/1/Add.1](#)), Swaziland ([DP/FPA/CPD/SWZ/6](#)), the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ([DP/FPA/CPD/MKD/1](#)), Turkey ([DP/FPA/CPD/TUR/6](#)), Tajikistan ([DP/FPA/CPD/TJK/4](#)), Uzbekistan ([DP/FPA/CPD/UZB/4](#)), Zambia ([DP/FPA/CPD/ZMB/8](#)), and Zimbabwe ([DP/FPA/CPD/ZWE/7](#)).

62. The Executive Board approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for Côte d'Ivoire, and took note of the six-month extension of the country programme for Ethiopia and the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique and Ukraine ([DP/FPA/2015/14](#)).

UNOPS segment

XII. Statement by the Executive Director and budget estimates for the biennium, 2016-2017

63. In her opening remarks, the Executive Director, UNOPS, informed Board members that UNOPS remained on strong financial footing and demand for its services continued to rise. She presented the UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium, 2016-2017 (DP/OPS/2015/5), the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) on UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium 2016-2017 (DP/OPS/2015/7) and the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of United Nations system organizations, 2014 (DP/OPS/2015/6).

64. As a self-financing organization pursuing the objectives of its strategic plan, UNOPS required continued investments to guarantee its financial stability as a not-for-profit entity. She highlighted that UNOPS was on track in achieving its strategic plan targets, thanks to strong delivery figures, better cost recovery, greater efficiency gains through the establishment of shared service centres in Bangkok and Copenhagen, and overall decreased management costs. UNOPS was expected to achieve the target it had set for net revenue for the biennium, with the operational reserve projected to remain above the minimum requirement. Ready to respond to the rising demand for proper infrastructure, UNOPS was also encouraged by increasing demand for services from the United Nations Secretariat and the positive recommendation it received from the High-level Panel on Peace Operations.

65. Keen to adapt to change and to improve its delivery, UNOPS, she noted, had simplified its structure by decentralizing in order to empower its global operations. That move was an integral part of its risk management approach, focused on laying the groundwork for a dedicated quality assurance function. UNOPS was also showing leadership in sustainability; in 2016, it would publish its first ever sustainability report, adopting external best practices by aligning with the Global Reporting Initiative, a global standard. Similarly, in response to audit recommendations, UNOPS was reviewing the key areas of its human resource policies and practices to ensure it supported its partners to the highest standards, a top priority. In that regard, she underscored that more women than ever comprised its global management team.

66. UNOPS, she highlighted, played a central role in ensuring that development assistance and private and domestic funding complemented each other, so that private capital was well invested in developing countries. UNOPS worked with a wide range of partners to encourage investment in development projects, an endeavour for which its business model was well placed. That model included a cost recovery approach that more accurately attributed costs to projects, and lent itself to exploring innovative means of development financing. In that regard, UNOPS was further assessing the opportunities of social impact investing, especially important in the light of diminishing development assistance.

67. Board members commended the Executive Director for her strong leadership in ensuring the continued viability of the UNOPS business model, which they highly valued, especially within the context of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. They were pleased with UNOPS ongoing efforts to maintain a

balanced budget, and encouraged it to continue to maintain its operational reserve above the minimum requirement. They welcomed the revised client pricing policy, which had led to increased transparency and reduced management costs, and encouraged UNOPS to continue to periodically revise its costs recovery policy in order to further improve efficiency and effectiveness. They appreciated that its budget presentation was harmonized with those of other United Nations organizations, for cost classification and results-based reporting, and concurred with ACABQ that UNOPS self-financing model demanded a two-year planning cycle due to forecasting difficulties.

68. Delegations recognized UNOPS move to collaborate more closely with other United Nations system organizations, and appreciated the organization's close working relationship with Member States and the ongoing consultations it had organized on their behalf. Underlining the importance of public-private partnership for Sustainable Development Goals implementation, they strongly supported UNOPS work with the private sector and encouraged it, in that regard, to step up investments in the middle-income countries. They also supported UNOPS decision to maintain its current capacity levels to address Sustainable Development Goals implementation, buttressed by private sector support, strongly encouraged UNOPS continued assistance to peacebuilding in crisis countries.

69. Delegations welcomed in particular the UNOPS report on procurement activities across the United Nations system and appreciated its robust data and statistical analysis, showing how United Nations procurement activities had evolved over the previous decade. They encouraged further improvements in the report, such as presenting procurement data in a standard way for all the funds, programmes and specialized agencies. They stressed the importance of efficient procurement for achieving United Nations goals and objectives, and commended the United Nations, led by UNOPS, for the procurement reforms it had undertaken since 2006. They also appreciated United Nations organizations' efforts to implement General Assembly resolution 57/279, which encouraged them to increase opportunities for developing country suppliers and those in transition. They emphasized, however, that expanding the procurement base had to be accompanied by steps to ensure best value for money. They also urged better delegation of authority and reduction in delays in delivering goods and services, and requested that UNOPS include data on those issue in future reports.

70. In response, the Executive Director, UNOPS, reiterated that the organization was committed to working with its partners to meet programme delivery challenges throughout the world. She confirmed that UNOPS had been successful in improving its costing and pricing model and in reducing management expenses. The UNOPS business model, she noted, responded to private sector demands and needs and fostered the channelling of private funding into development cooperation, especially pertinent for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. On procurement, UNOPS was keen to expand its partnerships and actively encouraged private companies to register on the UNOPS online global market place, and thereby benefit from tenders and participate in competition that benefitted projects serving people in need. UNOPS always looked to new ways to engage with Member States and looked forward to expand its presence in many more countries throughout the world.

71. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/20 on UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium, 2016-2017.

72. The Executive Board adopted decision 2015/21 on the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2014.

Joint segment

XIII. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

73. The Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, introduced the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities (DP-FPA-OPS/2015/1). The Director, Procurement Support Office, UNDP, the General Counsel and Director, Legal Group, UNOPS, and the Chief, Procurement Services Branch, UNFPA, presented the report's focus areas and main conclusions from their organizational perspectives.

74. Delegations welcomed the report on joint procurement activities and the progress UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS had made in reducing procurement costs and avoiding duplication. Since 2011, those efforts had resulted in significant improvements and savings throughout the United Nations system, thanks to more efficient processes, lower costs and stronger country office procurement. They encouraged all United Nations organizations to emulate that same financial discipline. They commended the organizations for the innovation they brought to joint procurement, which had resulted in cost savings, more efficient procurement processes and the provision of higher quality goods and services. They sought details on how the organizations intended to expand joint procurement beyond corporate requirements and into key commodities at central and country levels. They saw room to apply joint procurement successes in a more systematic way throughout programme procurement, for even more savings and targeted investments. They looked forward to updates on the consolidation of such practices in the following report.

75. Board members commended UNOPS for being awarded the gold certificate for sustainable development practices by the Chartered Institute for Procurement and Supply. Recognizing the organization's commitment to leading on sustainable, efficient, innovative practices, they encouraged other United Nations organizations to follow its example. They welcomed the innovative approach United Nations organizations had taken to identify non-United Nations partners when there was no scope for collaboration within the United Nations system. They also encouraged UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to establish joint service functions and centres in programme countries, as stated in the quadrennial review.

76. While recognizing that the report on joint procurement provided a great deal of information, delegations suggested that future reports be more analytical and specify how each organization benefitted from joint procurement activities. In that regard, they sought clarification on each organization's actual percentage use of joint procurement. They also requested an update on ongoing efforts by the High-level Committee on Management of the United Nations Development Group to reach long-term agreements on vehicle purchases. They also sought information on progress in improving enterprises resource planning tool so that they ensure more effective flow of information. In addition, they wished to know if the joint initiatives had attracted more private sector actors to the United Nations Global Compact.

77. In response, the Director, Bureau of Management, UNDP, welcomed Board members' recommendations and their request for more analytical reporting in future joint procurement reports, assuring them that the three organizations would follow through, including details on actions by the undg High-level Committee on Management. Noting that the scope of the report was much wider than the previous year, he assured the Board that the organizations were keen to do more on joint procurement, which was an integral part of the broader United Nations coherence agenda and SDG implementation.

78. The Executive Board took note the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities (DP-FPA-OPS/2015/1).

XIV. Follow-up to the Programme Coordinating Board Meeting of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

79. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) presented the 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/2015/31-DP/FPA/2015/13](#)). The Director, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, UNDP, provided a presentation on the report.

80. Board members welcomed the report and, underscoring the implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, stressed the importance of achieving the goal to eliminate AIDS by 2030. They saw UNDP and UNFPA playing a central role in that effort, in particular through the UNAIDS strategic plan, 2016-2021. They welcomed the strengthened partnership between UNDP, UNFPA and other organizations active in the fight against HIV/AIDS, especially the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. They were pleased with the organizations' efforts to forge a common approach focused on integrating the fight against HIV/AIDS into national health policies and other programmes, in particular those for reproductive health and reproductive rights. They urged the organizations to concentrate their efforts in partner countries, especially in designing social protection systems and universal health coverage. They highlighted that the fight against HIV/AIDS was integral to the wider issues of human rights and gender, and in that context, applauded focused efforts on young girls, often the primary victims. Furthermore, protecting the rights and access to care of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, drug users and mobile populations, was crucial to meeting sustainable development goal 3. On intellectual property and treatment costs, they encouraged partner organizations to collaborate with the global health initiative UNITAID, which aimed to identify and step up access to innovative, affordable solutions to improve HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and diagnosis. In that context, they welcomed United Nations organizations' and their partners' joint procurement efforts, which helped to reduce the cost of medicine. They also underscored the need to strengthen national capacities to manage procurement and stocks, which were key for long-term success.

81. In response, the UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) thanked delegations for their strong support to the fight against HIV/AIDS and the significant progress that has been achieved through innovative partnerships. Drawing attention to the 20th International AIDS Conference in Melbourne in 2014, she highlighted four intervention areas identified in a presentation by young people

in which they called for: (a) the creation of a better enabling environment; (b) continued investments in treatment and science to reduce costs and expand access; (c) improved education on HIV/AIDS to ensure better, more informed choices; and (d) the need to frame the discussion on HIV/AIDS within the context of love, stewardship and appreciation. That appeal to common humanity was, she stressed, the legacy of the extraordinary work in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

82. The Executive Board took note of the report on implementation of decisions and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS ([DP/2015/31-DP/FPA/2015/13](#)).

XV. Field visits

83. The rapporteur presented the report on the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of [UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS](#), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the World Food Programme (WFP) to Jordan ([DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2015/CRP.1](#)).

84. In their general comments, Board members stressed the usefulness of the field visits in giving them first-hand experience of the work of United Nations development organizations on the ground and in helping them to understand their positioning at the country level in collaboration with government and partners. They were especially pleased to have visited a country, Jordan that was dealing with a massive influx of refugees, as it gave Board members insight into the regional crisis and its effects on countries in the region. They saw the field visits as an excellent way to share experiences and lessons learned. They also highlighted the importance of United Nations system coherence in programme delivery at county level, building on their different comparative advantages.

85. The Executive Board took note of the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Jordan ([DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNWWFP/2015/CRP.1](#)).

Guidelines for field visits

86. The Secretary, Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, presented the guidelines for the field visits of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and for the joint field visits with UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP Executive Boards ([DP/2015/CRP.3](#)).

87. Board members welcomed the revisions to the field visit guidelines and recommended the following changes: (a) in paragraph 4(a), General criteria to be considered, point (iii), in place of 'A country that has not been visited before', suggest: 'a country that has not been visited before or the least number of times'; (b) in paragraph 4(c), Criteria in relation to the country, point (iv), in place of 'such as human rights or HIV/AIDS, the Millennium Development Goals or other frameworks', suggest: 'development and humanitarian aspects or HIV/AIDS, the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and other frameworks'; and (c) in paragraph 14, in place of 'It is advised that at least one mission member have ambassadorial status', suggest: 'It is advised that at least 25 per cent of mission members have ambassadorial status.'

88. In response, the Secretary, Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, highlighted that in the past, as part of its field visits, the Executive Board had visited a country specifically because of its evolving development context. She indicated that the field visit guidelines would be revised to reflect that approach. She noted that in order to avoid pre-empting the General Assembly adoption of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, there was no mention of the 2030 agenda in the revised guidelines; she noted that reference to the agenda would appear in the final text. On ambassador-level participation in field visits, she highlighted that the proposed guidelines stated ‘at least one’ because in some past field visits there had been no ambassador-level participation at all. The secretariat would revise the text to reflect the proposed “at least 25 per cent” phrase.

89. The Executive Board took note of the guidelines for the field visits of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and for the joint field visits with UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP Executive Boards ([DP/2015/CRP.3](#)).

XVI. Other matters

Address by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) Staff Council

90. In his statement to the Board, the Chairperson, UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council, focused on four overarching issues: the impact of the recent organizational restructurings, transparency and accountability, contract modalities, and balance and diversity in management and staff. The Staff Council stood prepared to discuss those issues and possible solutions with the respective organizations.

91. The Executive Board took note of the statement by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council.

Annex I

Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 2015

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2015/1
Report on direct budget support, 2008-2014

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of document DP/2015/3;
2. *Recognizes* that the primary contribution of UNDP lies in supporting national capacity and policy development;
3. *Requests* that UNDP present an evaluation of the pilot activities carried out under this policy, including detailed information on experience gained during the pilot on UNDP engagement in sector budget support and the impact of these activities, particularly on the UNDP contribution to national capacity and policy development, before the first regular session of the Board in 2017;
4. *Agrees* that UNDP continue the pilot period of implementation of the policy on UNDP engagement in a direct budget support and pooled fund environment, at the sector level, with the flexibility to use the four engagement modalities as described in the related guidelines, until 1 January 2017, with the understanding that no new engagement be initiated beyond 1 January 2017 until a decision is made on the future of the policy;
5. *Recognizes* that all activities already approved under this policy will continue to be implemented until their scheduled completion dates;
6. *Resolves* to decide at the first regular session in 2017, based on the evaluation and management response, whether to continue this policy;
7. *Requests* that the Guidelines and Procedures for Country Offices and Headquarters Units on UNDP engagement in sector budget support and pooled funding arrangements are reviewed for consistency with recognised international practice and UNDP's use of such modalities, and shared with the Executive Board during the second regular session 2015. This should be accompanied by an information note summarising UNDP experiences of the use of this type of assistance, outlining the approach to national capacity and policy development, and providing descriptive details about the nature of the actual risks assessed;
8. *Encourages* UNDP to continue to ensure that the specific fiduciary risks associated with these modalities are assessed, appropriate safeguards are put in place and monitoring and audit processes are undertaken on a timely basis.

30 January 2015

2015/2
Revised UNFPA oversight policy

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the revised UNFPA oversight policy ([DP/FPA/2015/1](#)), which reflects the organization's commitment to accountable, appropriate and diligent oversight;
2. *Notes with appreciation* the consultative process undertaken by UNFPA in developing the revised oversight policy;

3. *Approves* the revised UNFPA oversight policy as contained in document DP/FPA/2015/1;

4. *Requests* UNFPA to continue to monitor the implementation of the policy and to conduct periodic reviews of the relevance and applicability of the policy with respect to the safeguarding and strengthening of UNFPA management oversight functions, including that of programme, and to report to the Executive Board at its annual session in 2017 with proposals to make further improvements to the policy, as necessary.

30 January 2015

2015/3

Scaling up UNFPA humanitarian response funding

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report (DP/FPA/2015/2);

2. *Recognizes* the increasing demand for UNFPA humanitarian response and the resulting need for additional emergency funding resources;

3. *Approves* an annual allocation of \$10 million of regular resources for the emergency fund, reflecting an increase of \$5 million from the previously approved level;

4. *Authorizes* the UNFPA Executive Director to increase the emergency fund by up to \$2 million in a given year, if the number and extent of the emergencies so warrant;

5. *Approves* a one-time allocation of \$10 million of regular resources for the establishment of the humanitarian response reserve;

6. *Requests* UNFPA to report on the status of the reserve and on the use of the emergency fund in its annual financial statements;

7. *Further requests* UNFPA to report at the first regular session 2017 on its humanitarian response funding, so as to allow the Executive Board to review this arrangement, including the criteria for disbursement of resources.

30 January 2015

2015/4

Strengthening of the UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the Executive Director's initiative to align further the UNOPS governance and accountability arrangements with those of sister agencies governed by the Executive Board;

2. *Approves* the establishment of an Audit Advisory Committee to assume the roles and functions, including reporting to the Executive Board, designated to the Strategy and Audit Advisory Committee through its decisions 2008/37, 2009/4 and 2012/5;

3. *Takes note* of the purpose and terms of reference for the UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee, noting that the advisory nature of the committee does not

conflict with the functions of the Executive Board as laid out in General Assembly resolution 48/162;

4. *Emphasizes* that the role of the Audit Advisory Committee is to provide independent views and findings regarding assurances to management and the Board on the audit and oversight functions of the organization;

5. *Acknowledges* the UNOPS commitment to continue seeking external and independent advice on strategy and industry best practices and standards through the establishment of a Strategic Advisory Group of Experts;

6. *Decides* that members of the Executive Board will consider the selection process of the Audit Advisory Committee at the annual session 2015;

7. *Further decides* that pending the outcome of the process, the current members of the UNOPS Audit Subcommittee of the Strategy and Advisory Committee will continue their duties;

8. *Encourages* the frequency, duration and location of all Committee meetings to be determined by the quantum of work, bearing in mind the need to maintain cost efficiencies.

30 January 2015

2015/5

Recommendations of the Board of Auditors

UNDP: Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2013

UNFPA report on the follow-up to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2013: Status of implementation of recommendations

UNOPS: Report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2013

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the unqualified audit opinions issued by the United Nations Board of Auditors for all three organizations for 2013;

With regard to UNDP:

2. *Notes* the progress made by UNDP in addressing the top nine audit-related priorities in 2012-2013;

3. *Supports* ongoing UNDP management efforts in addressing the revised top eight audit-related management priorities for the 2014-2015 biennium and in implementing the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the year ended 31 December 2013;

4. *Requests* UNDP to reassess and strengthen implementation of its risk management activities, and to prioritize the implementation of the revised framework for the harmonized approach to cash transfers, along with measures to ensure its appropriate application in country offices;

5. *Urges* UNDP to enhance its oversight and management of implementing partners with regard to monitoring, reporting, compliance with controls and

assurance activities, including addressing the recurring qualified audits of implementing partners and follow-up on implementation of audit recommendations;

6. *Encourages* continued efforts to uncover and prevent procurement irregularities and other fraudulent practices and improve actions for recovery of funds, and to address vulnerabilities in the Atlas system as identified by the Board of Auditors;

7. *Urges* UNDP to expedite its efforts to respond to the critical findings related to programme/project management, quality assurance, design, monitoring and evaluation;

With regard to UNFPA:

8. *Takes note* of the report (DP/FPA/2015/3) on the actions taken by UNFPA and the further actions planned by the organization to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors for the financial period that ended on 31 December 2013;

9. *Welcomes* the progress made by UNFPA in addressing procurement-related recommendations, and *urges* continued monitoring and evaluation of suppliers with regard to quality and timeliness of goods and services provided;

10. *Requests* UNFPA to inform the Executive Board of the organization's plans to improve its internal audit coverage, with a view to decide on possible financial implications at its second regular session in 2016;

11. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue to strengthen the capacity of its offices at country, subregional and regional levels, particularly with regard to operational improvement, internal controls, oversight and risk management, and to update the Executive Board on the progress made at its second regular session in 2015;

With regard to UNOPS:

12. *Welcomes* the progress made by UNOPS in addressing the audit-related priorities highlighted by the Board of Auditors;

13. *Supports* ongoing UNOPS management efforts to ensure that the remaining recommendations are implemented;

14. *Acknowledges* that because the recommendations were issued to UNOPS in July 2014 and many of them require long-term attention, UNOPS will need to work beyond the financial year 2014 to implement them successfully;

15. *Welcomes* the commitment of UNOPS to continually strengthen local capacity building;

16. *Requests* UNOPS to continue to assess and strengthen implementation of its internal control and risk management policies;

17. *Encourages* UNOPS to closely monitor oversight of procurement activities, particularly with regard to fraud, and to seek opportunities to collaborate with other United Nations organizations in identifying reliable and efficient vendors.

30 January 2015

2015/6

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 2015

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its first regular session 2015, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Elected the following members of the Bureau for 2015:

President: H.E. Mr. Luis Fernando Carrera Castro (Guatemala)
Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Hiroshi Minami (Japan)
Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Kelebhone Maope (Lesotho)
Vice-President: H.E. Mr. Durga Prasad Bhattarai (Nepal)
Vice-President: Mr. Sahak Sargsyan (Armenia)

Adopted the agenda and approved the workplan for its first regular session 2015 ([DP/2015/L.1](#));

Approved the report of the second regular session 2014 ([DP/2015/1](#));

Adopted the annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2015 ([DP/2015/CRP.1](#));

Approved the tentative workplan for the annual session 2014.

Agreed to the following schedule for the remaining sessions of the Executive Board in 2015:

Annual session 2015: 1 to 12 June 2015 (New York)
Second regular session 2015: 1 to 4 September 2015.

UNDP segment

Item 2

Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Adopted decision 2015/1 on the report on direct budget support, 2008-2014.

Item 3

UNDP country programmes and related matters

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

Chile; Guatemala; Madagascar; Mali;

Approved the nine-month extension of the country programme for Colombia;

Approved the two-year extensions of the country programmes for Myanmar and Papua New Guinea.

Item 4

Evaluation

Took note of the review of the UNDP evaluation policy and the accompanying management responses ([DP/2015/5](#), [DP/2015/6](#), [DP/2015/7](#)).

UNFPA segment**Item 5
Oversight**

Adopted decision 2015/2 on the revised UNFPA oversight policy ([DP/FPA/2015/1](#)).

**Item 6
Financial, budgetary and administrative matters**

Adopted decision 2015/3 on scaling up UNFPA humanitarian response funding ([DP/FPA/2015/2](#)).

**Item 7
UNFPA country programmes and related matters**

Approved the country programme documents for Madagascar ([DP/FPA/CPD/MDG/7](#)) and Mali ([DP/FPA/CPD/MLI/7](#)).

Approved the two-year extension of the country programme for Myanmar and the nine-month extension of the country programme for Colombia ([DP/FPA/2015/4](#)).

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Iraq and the Lao People's Democratic Republic ([DP/FPA/2015/4](#)).

UNOPS segment**Item 8
Strengthening of the UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee**

Adopted decision 2015/4 on the Strengthening of the UNOPS Audit Advisory Committee.

Joint segment**Item 9
Financial, budgetary and administrative matters**

Adopted decision 2015/5 on the UNDP report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2013 ([DP/2015/8](#)); UNFPA report on the follow-up to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for 2013: Status of implementation of recommendations ([DP/FPA/2015/3](#)); and UNOPS report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, 2013 ([DP/OPS/2015/1](#)).

Joint meeting

Held a joint meeting of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP on 2 February 2015, which addressed the following topics: (a) in partnership with others: lessons learned on scaling up innovation to reach people in need; and (b) innovative approaches to program design and implementation to support the operationalization of the post-2015 development agenda.

Also held the following briefings and informal consultations:

UNDP

UNDP event on Ebola recovery;

Informal report on UNDP resource mobilization strategy and next steps on structured dialogue;

Informal consultation on streamlined integrated results and resources framework of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017 (decision 2014/11);

Preliminary 2014 results and perspectives on UNCDF positioning in a changing development finance landscape.

UNFPA

Orientation to UNFPA for new members of the Executive Board.

UNOPS

Orientation to UNOPS for new members of the Executive Board.

30 January 2015

2015/7

Annual report of the Administrator of UNDP

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Administrator on the first year of implementation of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 (document [DP/2015/11](#));
2. *Welcomes* the improved quality of the annual report of the Administrator and the overall progress made towards achieving strategic plan results in 2014;
3. *Takes note with appreciation* of the systematic reporting against the results framework of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, including the new approach of linking results to resources and the introduction of the Development Report Card; and at the same time, encourages UNDP to further refine the Integrated Results and Resources Framework methodology and data analysis suggested in the following paragraph;
4. *Encourages* UNDP to continue in future reports to assess progress against the seven outcomes as well as challenges and lessons learned that may influence future programming;
5. *Encourages* UNDP to further analyse the data behind the results using information provided by relevant analytical tools of the organization, including, inter alia, evaluations and audits, to understand what drives or hinders performance and progress, and adjust programmes accordingly;
6. *Suggests* including Report Card tables also for tier three: Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency and in this regard urges UNDP to ensure good progress against organizational effectiveness indicators in 2015;
7. *Requests* UNDP to conduct a review of the monitoring, aggregation and reporting systems related to the Integrated Results and Resources Framework as a part of the midterm review of the Strategic Plan in order to increase its credibility and accountability;

8. *Encourages* UNDP to report more systematically on the impact of the structural reform 2014-2015;
9. *Commits* to continued engagement on ways to finance strategic plan implementation.

9 June 2015

2015/8
Evaluation (UNDP)

The Executive Board

With regard to the annual report on evaluation, 2014 (DP/2015/16) and the management commentaries thereto:

1. *Takes note* of the annual report on evaluation and urges UNDP to address in a timely manner the findings and recommendations, with a view towards improving programme results and impacts;
2. *Approves* the revised programme of work for 2015 of the Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP, recognizing there have been revisions to the plan as a result of changes in the budget;
3. *Requests* the Independent Evaluation Office to present a briefing on lessons learned on evaluation as well as an indicative costed programme of work for 2015 and 2016 at an informal meeting prior to the second regular session of 2015;
4. *Requests* the Independent Evaluation Office and UNDP management to provide to the Board at its second regular session of 2015 a strategy document on how it intends to revise its plans and procedures to improve the quality of decentralized evaluations;
5. *Requests* that in future annual reports, the Independent Evaluation Office presents a costed programme of work with more comprehensive information about the planned evaluations and other activities;
6. *Emphasizes* the importance of comprehensive evaluations of the work of UNDP at the country level, and requests that the Independent Evaluation Office develop a practical strategy for improved evaluation coverage of country programmes at their conclusion to inform the preparation of subsequent country programmes, to be included in the annual costed programme of work for the consideration of the members of the Executive Board;
7. *Urges* the Independent Evaluation Office to ensure that its evaluations offer practical, cost-effective and impact-oriented recommendations that can be used to enhance the work of UNDP globally;
8. *Recognizes* the continuing efforts of UNDP in implementing evaluation management response actions and encourages UNDP to make strong progress on its implementation of follow-up actions of the management responses to thematic evaluations during 2015, taking fully into account the recommendations of the Independent Evaluation Office;
9. *Emphasizes* the importance of maintaining an adequate funding level for this Office as a way of safeguarding its effectiveness and independence; and expects

UNDP to ensure sufficient funding for the Independent Evaluation Office to fulfil its mandates;

With regard to the evaluation of the contribution of global and regional Human Development Reports to the public policy process (DP/2015/17) and the management response thereto (DP/2015/18):

10. *Takes note of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation of the contribution of global and regional Human Development Reports to the public policy process, and requests UNDP to take them fully into account in future global and regional human development reporting;*

11. *Requests UNDP to use the recommendations of the evaluation report both for the global and regional Human Development Reports and to report to the Executive Board, at its annual of 2016, on steps taken in this regard;*

12. *Acknowledges that the evaluation has affirmed that for a quarter century, the global Human Development Reports have made major contributions to the global development debate, and especially the important contribution of global Human Development Reports in mainstreaming of the concept of human development as an input to development policymaking;*

13. *Encourages UNDP to carry out a thorough review of the Human Development Index to reflect the changes in the global development landscape and the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in its method and structure, mindful of the importance of using where possible the most recent available national statistics in the computation of indices, as well as alignment with the goals, targets and indicators of the sustainable development goals;*

With regard to the evaluation of the role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (DP/2015/19) and the management response thereto (DP/2015/20):

14. *Takes note of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation of the role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and requests UNDP to take them fully into account in its current work in support of countries on their fulfilment of the Goals, in preparation for supporting countries as the sustainable development goals are established and efforts are made to achieve them, and for the midterm review of the Strategic Plan in 2016;*

15. *Acknowledges that the evaluation concludes that UNDP has designed and rolled out a high-quality and well-timed set of diverse and complementary tools in support of Millennium Development Goal-related planning, monitoring and implementation;*

16. *Acknowledges the views expressed in the evaluation that UNDP is well positioned to approach the post-2015 era and help countries to achieve the sustainable development goals, while also recognizing that the emerging post-2015 development agenda is significantly more comprehensive and complex than the Millennium Development Goals and will require a longer-term repositioning of the United Nations development system, including UNDP.*

9 June 2015

2015/9
Report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund
in 2014

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on results achieved by UNCDF in 2014 ([DP/2015/21](#)) and the continued strong performance of UNCDF against set targets;
2. *Recognizes* the strategic positioning of the flexible capital mandate of UNCDF in developing innovative partnerships with public and private sector development partners, particularly linked to domestic resource mobilization, and notes the relevance of UNCDF expertise for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda;
3. *Takes note* of the continuous steady growth in UNCDF non-core resources and partnerships, which contribute to the achievement of results by UNCDF primarily with the least developed countries (LDCs);
4. *Expresses concern* that regular resources, decreasing slightly in 2014, remain far short of the \$25 million threshold required to sustain UNCDF programming in 40 LDCs; and notes with concern that as a result, the number of LDCs supported by UNCDF dropped from 33 in 2013 to 31 in 2014;
5. *Recognizes* that a critical mass of core resources is required, in accordance with the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, to ensure that UNCDF maintains its innovation space; so the Fund secures a solid and predictable base from which to leverage additional resources and drive follow on investment including through domestic resource mobilization for local development; and mindful of the importance of guaranteeing presence in up to 40 LDCs according to the 2014-2017 Strategic Framework; and against this background calls on Member States in a position to do so to contribute to UNCDF regular resources to ensure that it can reach the target of \$25 million per year in annual regular resources.

9 June 2015

2015/10
Annual report of the Executive Director of UNFPA

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the documents that make up the report of the Executive Director for 2015: [DP/FPA/2015/5](#) (Part I, Part I/Add.1 and Part II);
2. *Takes note* with appreciation of the systematic reporting against the results framework of the strategic plan, 2014-2017, and the progress achieved;
3. *Acknowledges* and *welcomes* the efforts undertaken by UNFPA to implement the revised strategic direction, including the enhanced engagement in humanitarian settings, and the new differentiated business model;
4. *Requests* the Executive Director to make further improvements in the next annual report by referring to the theories of change document accompanying the strategic plan, making use of evaluation findings and including more details on the implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of United Nations

operational activities for development, lessons learned and actions taken in response;

5. *Recognizes* the need for increased support for effective positioning of UNFPA to augment further efforts to complete the unfinished Millennium Development Goal 5 targets A and B, and to accelerate investments in young people, including in adolescent girls and boys, in order to enable countries to realize the demographic dividend, in line with their national priorities, and *requests* the Executive Director to make a presentation on UNFPA work on the demographic dividend in the context of the midterm review of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017.

24 June 2015

2015/11

Annual report on evaluation (UNFPA)

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Evaluation Office ([DP/FPA/2015/6](#)) and the evaluation workplan for 2015, including amendments to the transitional biennial budgeted evaluation plan, 2014-2015, as well as the management response;

2. *Reaffirms* the central role played by the evaluation function in UNFPA, the relevance of the principles set out in the revised evaluation policy ([DP/FPA/2013/5](#)) and the importance of their implementation within the organization;

3. *Encourages* UNFPA to take action to further strengthen the evaluation function at UNFPA by implementing the recommendations presented in table 3 of the evaluation report;

4. *Takes note* of the challenges in the field of decentralized evaluations, and *stresses* the need to continue to strengthen capacity for decentralized monitoring and evaluation;

5. *Reiterates* the importance of adequate resource allocation, including from other resources for non-core funded programmes, to support a strong, independent evaluation function, and *encourages* UNFPA to ensure that the level of human and financial resources is commensurate with the appropriate level of evaluation coverage and with the necessary alignment with the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017, and its business model;

6. *Welcomes* the initiatives of the Evaluation Office to disseminate evaluation findings for institutional and programmatic strengthening;

7. *Requests* the Director of the Evaluation Office to report in 2016 on progress in addressing key issues and challenges in evaluation in the Director's annual report to the Executive Board.

9 June 2015

2015/12

Annual report of the Executive Director of UNOPS

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note of* the significant contributions made by UNOPS to the operational results of the United Nations and its partners in 2014;

2. *Takes note* of the efforts made to enhance and report on UNOPS contributions to partners' sustainable results, including the pursuit of best practices and recognized standards;
3. *Further takes note* of the overall progress made in implementing the UNOPS Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, which has established a strong foundations for UNOPS to support Member States in implementing the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda;
4. *Encourages* the Executive Director to proceed with the Audit Advisory Committee in accordance with established best practices of UNDP and UNFPA, as well as previous decisions by the Executive Board on this matter;
5. *Recalls* Executive Board decisions 2008/35 and 2009/4 and, in order to promote greater efficiency in UNOPS operations, *requests* the Executive Director to consult with the Secretary-General on the future role of the Policy Advisory Committee vis-à-vis that of the Executive Board regarding oversight and policy guidance to UNOPS, recognizing considerable changes since 2009 to the governance structure of UNOPS and the evolution of its role and mandate;
6. *Encourages* UNOPS to further explore the potential of facilitating partnerships with like-minded actors including from the private sector, placing firm emphasis on social impact investments in the UNOPS mandated areas such as infrastructure development and project management, and with full respect of national ownership.

9 June 2015

2015/13

Internal audit and oversight

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the progress of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS in addressing audit-related management issues in 2014;
2. *Notes with appreciation* efforts to implement outstanding audit recommendations from previous reports;
3. *Notes with concern* the number of recurring recommendations and requests to the respective secretariats of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to step up their efforts to achieve the timely, full, complete and sustained implementation of all outstanding and new audit recommendations;
4. *Requests* the internal audit and investigation offices of the three organizations to provide timely information to the Executive Board when they face challenges in discharging their oversight responsibilities or fulfilling their workplans;
5. *Further requests the internal audit and investigation offices to include in future annual reports:*
 - (a) an opinion, based on the scope of work undertaken, on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organizations' framework of governance, risk management and control;
 - (b) a concise summary of work and the criteria that support the opinion;

(c) a statement of conformance with the internal audit standards being adhered to;

(d) a view on whether the resourcing of their function is appropriate, sufficient and effectively deployed to achieve the desired internal audit coverage;

6. *Welcomes* the inclusion of information regarding losses recovered following substantiated investigations, and *encourages* the UNDP and UNFPA secretariats to continue to strengthen their efforts to ensure that such funds are recovered to the organizations and that finalized cases are promptly followed up;

7. *Encourages* the organizations jointly to review their recruitment procedures for posts in the internal audit and investigation offices and to report to the Executive Board on measures taken to reduce the long vacancies;

With regard to UNDP:

8. *Takes note* of the report on internal audit and investigations ([DP/2015/22](#)), its annexes and the management response;

9. *Expresses* its continuing support for strengthening the internal audit and investigation functions of UNDP;

10. *Requests* that UNDP provide information on follow-up to investigations finalized in previous reporting years and as to losses recovered for such years, as well as continue to provide details of follow-up to, and losses recovered for, investigations concluded in the specific reporting year covered by the report;

11. *Also requests* that the Office of Audit and Investigations provide a thorough presentation of their organizational risk assessment in future annual reports to the Executive Board;

12. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee and the management response thereto;

With regard to UNFPA:

13. *Takes note* of the present report ([DP/FPA/2015/7](#));

14. *Expresses* its continuing support for the strengthening of the audit and investigation functions at UNFPA, and for the provision of sufficient resources to discharge their mandate;

15. *Acknowledges* and *supports* the engagement of the Office of Audit and Investigation Services in joint oversight activities;

16. *Recalls* decision 2015/5 of the Executive Board, where UNFPA was requested to inform the Executive Board of the organization's plans to improve internal audit coverage, and requests UNFPA to consider these plans, including with regard to strengthening investigation capacity, in the revised integrated budget to be presented to the Executive Board in 2016;

17. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee ([DP/FPA/2015/7/Add.1](#)) and the management response thereto and to the present report;

With regard to UNOPS:

18. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group for 2014 ([DP/OPS/2015/3](#)) and the management response thereto;
19. *Take note* of the progress made in implementation of audit recommendations, including those that are more than 18 months old;
20. *Take note* of the annual report of the Strategy and Audit Advisory Committee for 2014 (in line with Executive Board decision 2008/37).

9 June 2015

2015/14

Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS ([DP/2015/23](#), [DP/FPA/2015/8](#) and [DP/OPS/2015/4](#));
2. *Notes with appreciation* the vital role played by the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to foster a culture of ethics, integrity and accountability in their respective organizations, and *urges* the offices to continue enhancing that culture;
3. *Commends* the respective managements of the UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS for their leadership and continued support and commitment to the work of the ethics offices, and *urges* management to continue its efforts to allocate sufficient resources to the ethics function;
4. *Recalls* decision 2011/24, and *commends* the ethics offices for their recommendations to management to strengthen the organizational culture of integrity; *encourages* the offices to continue to provide management with advice and recommendations in this regard, which may include recommendations for improving internal legal and accountability frameworks to address misconduct and protection of whistle-blowers; and *urges* the respective managements of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS to continue to work together with the ethics offices in this regard and to implement their recommendations, as appropriate.

9 June 2015

2015/15

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 2015

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its annual session 2015, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda and workplan for its annual session 2015 ([DP/2015/L.2](#));

Adopted the report of the first regular session 2015 ([DP/2015/9](#));

Approved the tentative workplan for the second regular session 2015;

Agreed to the following schedule for the remaining session of the Executive Board in 2015:

Second regular session 2015: 1 August to 4 September 2015.

Took no decision on the venue of the annual sessions of the Executive Board.

UNDP segment

Item 2

Annual report of the Administrator

Adopted decision 2015/7 on the annual report of the Administrator: performance and results for 2014 ([DP/2015/11](#));

Took note of the report of UNDP on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014 ([DP/2015/11/Add.1](#));

Took note of the statistical annex ([DP/2015/11/Add.2](#)).

Item 3

Gender in UNDP

Took no decision on the annual report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy, 2014-2017 ([DP/2015/12](#)).

Item 4

Human Development Report

Took note of the oral report on consultations regarding the 2016 Human Development Report in accordance with General Assembly resolution 57/264.

Item 5

UNDP country programmes and related matters

Withdrew the country programme document for Uganda ([DP/DCP/UGA/3](#)).

Took note of: the first six-month extension of the country programme for Ethiopia, from 1 January to 30 June 2016; the first one-year extension of the country programme for the United Republic of Tanzania, from 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2016; the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Mozambique and Yemen, from 1 January to 31 December 2016; the first one-year extension of the country programme for Kyrgyzstan, from 1 January to 31 December 2017 ([DP/2015/13](#)).

Reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Armenia ([DP/DCP/ARM/3](#)) and Turkmenistan ([DP/DCP/TKM/2](#)).

Item 6

Evaluation (UNDP)

The draft decision on the revised UNDP evaluation policy was withdrawn.

Adopted decision 2015/8 on the 2014 annual report on evaluation ([DP/2015/16](#)), the report on the evaluation of the contribution of global and regional Human Development Reports to the public policy process ([DP/2015/17](#)) and the

management response ([DP/2015/18](#)), and the report on the evaluation of the role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals ([DP/2015/19](#)) and the management response ([DP/2015/20](#)).

Item 7**United Nations Capital Development Fund**

Adopted decision 2015/9 on the report on results achieved by the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 2014.

UNFPA segment**Item 8****Annual report of the Executive Director**

Decided to adopt the decision on the annual report of the Executive Director at a special session, held on Wednesday, 24 June 2015, from 3.00 p.m. to 3.30 p.m.

Adopted decision 2015/10 on the Report of the Executive Director: Progress in implementation of the UNFPA strategic plan, 2014-2017 ([DP/FPA/2015/5 Part I](#));

Took note of the Statistical and financial review, 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/5 Part I/Add.1](#));

Took note of the UNFPA report on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/5 Part II](#)).

Item 9**Evaluation (UNFPA)**

Adopted decision 2015/11 on the annual report on evaluation ([DP/FPA/2015/6](#)).

Item 10**UNFPA country programmes and related matters**

Took note of the one-year extensions of the country programmes for Somalia (2016), United Republic of Tanzania (1 July 2015-30 June 2016) and Yemen (2016) ([DP/FPA/2015/9](#));

Approved the second one-year extension of the country programme for Lebanon (2016), the fourth one-year extension of the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic (2015) and the two-year extension of the country programme for Papua New Guinea (2016-2017) ([DP/FPA/2015/9](#));

Reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for Armenia ([DP/FPA/CPD/ARM/3](#)); Turkmenistan ([DP/FPA/CPD/TKM/4](#)) and Uganda ([DP/FPA/CPD/UGA/8](#)).

UNOPS segment**Item 11****Annual report of the Executive Director**

Adopted decision 2015/12 on the annual report of the Executive Director ([DP/OPS/2015/2](#)).

Joint segment

Item 12

Internal audit and oversight

Adopted decision 2015/13 on the: (a) UNDP report on internal audit and investigations ([DP/2015/22](#)); (b) report of the Director, Division for Oversight Services on UNFPA internal audit and oversight activities in 2014 ([DP/FPA/2015/7](#)); and (c) activity report for 2014 of the Internal Audit and Investigations Group of UNOPS ([DP/OPS/2015/3](#)).

Item 13

Reports of the ethics offices of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS

Adopted decision 2015/14 on the reports of the ethics offices of UNDP ([DP/2015/23](#)), UNFPA ([DP/FPA/2015/8](#)) and UNOPS ([DP/OPS/2015/4](#)).

Item 14

Other matters

Held the following briefings and consultations:

UNDP

Side event “Restore or reform? Strategic support to core government functions in the aftermath of crisis”

UNV side event — State of the World’s Volunteerism Report

Joint UNDP and Mission of Finland side event “UNDP support to dialogue and internal mediation processes in the Middle East and North Africa region”

Side event on the UNDP Gender Equality Seal

UNOPS

Informal consultation

UNFPA

Briefing on the demographic dividend

Briefing on the UNFPA humanitarian preparedness and response in Northeast Nigeria: supporting women and girls rescued from Boko Haram

Informal consultation on the new UNFPA resource mobilization strategy

9 June 2015

2015/16
UNDP funding issues

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note of:*

(a) the annual review of the financial situation, 2014 (DP/2015/26 and Add.1) and the status of regular resources funding commitments to UNDP and its funds and programmes for 2015 and onwards (DP/2015/27);

(b) the proposed funding mechanisms and incentives for attracting and optimizing flexible and predictable financing;

(c) the efforts of UNDP to further diversify its donor base and to mobilize additional resources and other forms of support from diversified sources, including the '100 Partners for Development' campaign;

2. *Recalls* the Executive Board decisions highlighting the importance of regular resources — 98/23, 99/1, 99/23, 2002/9, 2002/18, 2003/24, 2004/14, 2005/20, 2006/24, 2007/17, 2008/16, 2009/10, 2010/14, 2011/15, 2012/10, 2013/13 and 2014/24 — and also recalls General Assembly resolutions 62/208, 67/226 and particularly resolution 64/289, entitled, 'System-wide coherence';

3. *Notes with serious concern* the decline in contributions to regular resources in 2014 and the increasing imbalance between regular and other resources, at a nearly 1:5 ratio;

4. *Reiterates* the need to avoid the use of regular resources to subsidize activities financed by other resources, and reaffirms that the guiding principle governing the financing of all non-programme costs should be based on Executive Board decision 2013/9;

5. *Emphasizes* that regular resources are the bedrock of UNDP and essential to maintaining the multilateral, neutral and universal nature of its mandate and to carry out its work, and, in this regard, encourages UNDP to further mobilize these resources while continuing to mobilize other resources to respond to the needs of all programme countries, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable;

6. *Highlights* the importance of stable and predictable contributions to regular resources, and notes the important need to enhance the quality, predictability and alignment of contributions to other resources to the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, which comprise an important complement to the regular resource base;

7. *Reiterates* its concern about the restrictive nature of earmarked resources, which could limit the organization's capacity to fulfil the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, and requests UNDP to continue the funding dialogue to address this issue;

8. *Notes* that currency fluctuations can affect the resource levels of UNDP and requests UNDP to continue to report to the Executive Board on its work to address the impact of currency fluctuations and to continue to monitor the work of other international organizations in this regard to ensure that its currency management remains optimal;

9. *Urges* donor countries and other countries in a position to do so that have not yet provided their contributions to regular resources for 2015 to do so as early as

possible, and encourages those countries in a position to do so to consider making multi-year pledges for future years;

10. *Welcomes* Member States' continued dialogue with UNDP on funding issues, including how to facilitate a shift from highly earmarked resources to regular resources, or less restricted/earmarked resources, and urges Member States to prioritize the provision of regular resources and other resources that are flexible, predictable, less earmarked and aligned to the outcomes of the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017;

11. *Requests* UNDP, in the context of the structured dialogue on financing, to:

(a) Engage in informal dialogues with Member States throughout the year, including ensuring the arrangement of special interactive discussions among Member States on the margins of the annual session each year, to ensure an ongoing discussion, exchange of information and analysis of funding issues and options, taking into consideration the midterm review of the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2014-2017, the Economic and Social Council dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations Development System, and the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including the funding analysis. This includes exploring incentives, mechanisms and funding windows to broaden the donor base and to encourage donors to increase and prioritize regular resources contributions as well as to shift to less restricted other resources, aligned to the Strategic Plan;

(b) Submit, within the context of the annual reporting on funding and resource mobilization, an analysis of the predictability, flexibility and alignment of resources provided for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including funding gaps and their implications for the Integrated Results and Resources Framework;

(c) Continue to respond to the evolving development opportunities to widen its partnerships with the private sector, in line with the UNDP policy on private sector engagement, as well as with civil society organizations, philanthropic organizations, the general public, multilateral organizations, international financial institutions and global public-private alliances in a transparent and coordinated manner;

12. *Recognizes* that government cost-sharing constitutes an earmarked funding mechanism that strengthens national ownership as well as contributes to the achievement of country programmes and, in that regard, underlines the need to take the special characteristics of government cost-sharing into account when considering mechanisms to incentivize less restricted/earmarked other resources funding, while ensuring the alignment of such resources to the Strategic Plan.

4 September 2015

2015/17

Evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment and management response

The Executive Board

With regard to the evaluation of UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment (DP/2015/29) and the management response thereto (DP/2015/30):

1. *Acknowledges* that the evaluation has found far reaching change and a marked improvement in UNDP's approach and implementation of policies to address gender mainstreaming since the last independent evaluation in 2006;
2. *Notes* the evaluation report conclusions and recommendations, and management response;
3. *Requests* that UNDP report on progress in responding to the evaluation recommendations as contained in the management response in its annual report on gender in UNDP;
4. *Notes* that the report on the implementation of the UNDP gender equality strategy in 2014 (DP/2015/12) documents that UNDP has already responded to several of the challenges identified in the evaluation report, and requests that UNDP in its report to the Executive Board on the implementation, performance and results of the gender equality strategy at its annual session of 2016, address areas of work requiring special attention and follow-up that have been identified in the evaluation.

3 September 2015

2015/18

Funding commitments to UNFPA

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report on contributions by Member States and others to UNFPA and revenue projections for 2015 and future years (DP/FPA/2015/8) and the updated integrated resource plan, 2014-2017 (DP/FPA/2015/CRP.4);
2. *Welcomes* the UNFPA resource mobilization strategy and its objectives, as outlined in document DP/FPA/2015/11;
3. *Takes note* of the proposed funding mechanisms and incentives for attracting and optimizing flexible and predictable financing and the efforts made by UNFPA to broaden the funding base and to mobilize additional resources and other forms of support from diversified sources;
4. *Highlights* the importance of stable and predictable contributions to regular resources, and *notes* the important need to enhance the quality, predictability and alignment to the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017 of contributions to other resources, which comprise an important complement to the regular resource base;
5. *Recalls* Executive Board decision 2014/25 on funding commitments to UNFPA and implementation of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
6. *Emphasizes* that regular resources are the bedrock of UNFPA and essential to maintaining the multilateral, neutral and universal nature of its mandate and to carry out its work, and, in this regard, *encourages* UNFPA to further mobilize these resources while continuing to mobilize supplementary resources for its thematic funds and programmes, to respond to the needs of all programme countries, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable;
7. *Acknowledges* the need for continued strong political and increased financial support as well as predictable regular resources funding in order to assist countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals as well as to support

countries through the implementation of the country programmes in advancing their national goals relating to the Framework of Action for follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014 and the post-2015 sustainable development framework;

8. *Encourages* all Member States to increase their contributions to regular resources, including by making contributions during the first quarter of the year and to make multi-year pledges in order to ensure effective programming;

9. *Requests* UNFPA, in the context of the structured dialogue on financing, to:

(a) Engage in informal dialogues with Member States throughout the year, including in specially arranged interactive sessions prior to the Executive Board sessions, to ensure an ongoing discussion, exchange of information and analysis of funding issues and options, taking into consideration the midterm review of the UNFPA Strategic Plan, 2014-2017; the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the United Nations Development System; and the reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including the funding analysis. This includes exploring incentives, mechanisms and funding windows, along with their impact to broaden the donor base and to encourage donors to increase and prioritize regular resources contributions, as well as to shift to less restricted other resources funding, aligned to the Strategic Plan;

(b) Submit, within the context of the annual reporting on funding commitments to UNFPA, an analysis of the predictability, flexibility and alignment of resources provided for the implementation of the Strategic Plan, including funding gaps and their implications for the Integrated Results Framework. The report will be the culmination of the informal dialogues referred to in paragraph 9 (a);

10. *Encourages* UNFPA to continue to adapt to the evolving development partnership opportunities to widen its partnerships with the private sector, civil society organizations, philanthropic organizations, the general public, multilateral organizations, international financial institutions and global public-private alliances in a transparent and coordinated manner, in line with institutional engagement parameters and principles.

4 September 2015

2015/19

Quadrennial evaluation workplan and budget (UNFPA)

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the proposal to move from a biennial to a quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2016-2019;

2. *Acknowledges* the transparent and participatory process undertaken by UNFPA in developing the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2016-2019 ([DP/FPA/2015/12](#));

3. *Acknowledges* the key principles that have guided the evaluation plan, in particular the alignment with the strategic plan and business model;

4. *Notes* the need to maintain a balance between accountability and learning, with a clear focus on utility;
5. Welcomes the diversification of the range of evaluations, including the piloting of a cluster evaluation, and the approach to impact evaluation related to adolescents and youth;
6. *Encourages* the Evaluation Office to further engage in joint or system-wide evaluation initiatives;
7. *Supports* efforts to coordinate joint approaches for national evaluation capacity development through the United Nations Evaluation Group;
8. *Notes* the increased allocation of resources, as set out in the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan, and encourages UNFPA to continue to work towards the target of three per cent of programme expenditure set out in the revised evaluation policy ([DP/FPA/2013/5](#));
9. *Notes with interest* the key principles mentioned in paragraph 49 of the evaluation plan to guide the resourcing of the evaluation function;
10. *Approves* the quadrennial budgeted evaluation plan for 2016-2019.

3 September 2015

2015/20

UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium 2016-2017

The Executive Board

1. *Approves* the net revenue target;
2. *Endorses* the two-year aspiration of UNOPS with respect to its management results and the targeting of resources to pursue operational excellence.

4 September 2015

2015/21

Annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2014

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2014 ([DP/OPS/2015/6](#));
2. *Appreciates* the contributions of the United Nations entities which have provided the information necessary to compile the annual statistical report and encourages all entities of the United Nations to participate in contributing to this important procurement report;
3. *Appreciates* the transparency under which the report is made available to the public by UNOPS through the International Aid Transparency Initiative on data transparency.

4 September 2015

2015/22

Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 2015

The Executive Board

Recalls that during its second regular session 2015, it:

Item 1

Organizational matters

Adopted the agenda and workplan for its second regular session 2015 ([DP/2015/L.3](#));

Adopted the report of the annual session 2015 ([DP/2015/24](#));

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 2016:

First regular session: 25-29 January 2016

Annual session: 20-24 June 2016 (Geneva) or 6-10 June (New York)

Second regular session: 6-9 and 12 September 2016

Approved the draft annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2016 ([DP/2015/CRP.2](#)) and adopted the tentative workplan for the first regular session of 2016.

UNDP segment

Items 2, 3 and 4

Structured funding dialogue; Financial, budgetary and administrative matters; and Funding commitments to UNDP

Adopted decision 2015/16 on UNDP funding issues.

Item 5

Country programmes and related matters

Withdrew the country programme document for Azerbaijan ([DP/DCP/AZE/3](#));

Took note of the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Burkina Faso, Chad and Somalia ([DP/2015/28](#));

Approved the exceptional one-year extension of the country programme for Côte d'Ivoire and the second one-year extensions of the country programmes for Lebanon and Libya ([DP/2015/28](#));

Reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for:

Algeria ([DP/DCP/DZA/3](#));

Belarus ([DP/DCP/BLR/3](#));

Cambodia ([DP/DCP/KHM/3](#));

China ([DP/DCP/CHN/3](#));

Colombia ([DP/DCP/COL/2](#));

El Salvador ([DP/DCP/SLV/3](#));
 Georgia ([DP/DCP/GEO/3](#));
 Guinea-Bissau ([DP/DCP/GNB/2](#));
 Indonesia ([DP/DCP/IDN/3](#));
 Kazakhstan ([DP/DCP/KAZ/3](#));
 Malaysia ([DP/DCP/MYS/3](#));
 Maldives ([DP/DCP/MDV/3](#));
 Panama ([DP/DCP/PAN/3](#));
 Serbia ([DP/DCP/SRB/2](#)), including the results and resources framework for Kosovo* ([DP/DCP/SRB/2/Add.1](#));
 Swaziland ([DP/DCP/SWZ/3](#));
 Tajikistan ([DP/DCP/TAJ/2](#));
 The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ([DP/DCP/MKD/3](#));
 Turkey ([DP/DCP/TUR/3](#));
 Uganda ([DP/DCP/UGA/4](#));
 Uzbekistan ([DP/DCP/UZB/3](#));
 Zambia ([DP/DCP/ZMB/3](#));
 Zimbabwe ([DP/DCP/ZWE/3](#)).

Item 6
Evaluation

Adopted decision 2015/17 on the evaluation of the UNDP contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment and management response.

UNFPA segment

Items 7, 8 and 9

Structured funding dialogue; Funding commitments to UNFPA; and Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Adopted decision 2015/18 on funding commitments to UNFPA.

Item 10
Evaluation

Adopted decision 2015/19 on the UNFPA quadrennial evaluation workplan budget.

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Item 11
Country programmes and related matters

Reviewed and approved, in accordance with Executive Board decision 2014/7, the country programme documents for:

Azerbaijan ([DP/FPA/CPD/AZE/4](#));

Belarus ([DP/FPA/CPD/BLR/2](#));

Cambodia ([DP/FPA/CPD/KHM/5](#));

China ([DP/FPA/CPD/CHN/8](#));

Colombia ([DP/FPA/COL/6](#));

El Salvador ([DP/FPA/CPD/SLV/8](#));

Georgia ([DP/FPA/CPD/GEO/3](#));

Guinea-Bissau ([DP/FPA/CPD/GNB/6](#));

Indonesia ([DP/FPA/CPD/IDN/9](#));

Kazakhstan ([DP/FPA/CPD/KAZ/4](#));

Maldives ([DP/FPA/CPD/MDV/6](#));

Panama ([DP/FPA/CPD/PAN/3](#));

Serbia ([DP/FPA/CPD/SRB/1](#)), including the results and resources framework for Kosovo*([DP/FPA/CPD/SRB/1/Add.1](#));

Swaziland ([DP/FPA/CPD/SWZ/6](#));

Tajikistan ([DP/FPA/CPD/TJK/4](#));

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia ([DP/FPA/CPD/MKD/1](#));

Turkey ([DP/FPA/CPD/TUR/6](#));

Uzbekistan ([DP/FPA/CPD/UZB/4](#));

Zambia ([DP/FPA/CPD/ZMB/8](#));

Zimbabwe ([DP/FPA/CPD/ZWE/7](#));

Approved the second, one-year extension of the country programme for Côte d'Ivoire ([DP/FPA/2015/14](#));

Took note of the six-month extension of the country programme for Ethiopia and the first one-year extensions of the country programmes for Brazil, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique and Ukraine ([DP/FPA/2015/14](#)).

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

UNOPS segment**Item 12****United Nations Office for Project Services**

Adopted decision 2015/20 on the UNOPS budget estimates for the biennium 2016-2017.

Joint segment**Item 13****Financial, budgetary and administrative matters**

Took note of the report of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS on joint procurement activities (document DP-FPA-OPS/2015/1);

Adopted decision 2015/21 on the annual statistical report on the procurement activities of the United Nations system, 2014.

Item 14**Follow-up to UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board meeting**

Took note of the report on the implementation of decisions and recommendations of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS ([DP/2015/31-DP/FPA/2015/13](#)).

Item 15**Field visits**

Took note of the report of the joint field visit of the Executive Boards of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP to Jordan ([DP/FPA/OPS-ICEF-UNW-WFP/2015/CRP.1](#));

Took note of the guidelines for the field visits of the Executive Board of UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS and for the joint field visits with UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP Executive Boards ([DP/2015/CRP.3](#)).

Item 16**Other matters**

Took note of the statement by the Chairperson of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UN-Women Staff Council;

Held the following briefings and consultations:

UNDP

Informal briefing, 'Leaving No One Behind: the United Nations Capital Development Fund supporting least developed countries to achieve the sustainable development goals';

Informal briefing, 'UNDP electoral assistance in transitional and post-conflict contexts: a presentation of the achievements of UNDP and discussion on the way forward';

UNFPA

Informal briefing on programming for human capital development in post-conflict Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Informal briefing on the humanitarian response of UNFPA;

Informal briefing on the Global Programme to Enhance the Reproductive Health Commodity Security of UNFPA.

Annex II

Membership of the Executive Board in 2015

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

African States: Angola (2015), the Republic of the Congo (2015), Ethiopia (2015), Guinea (2017), Lesotho (2015), Libya (2017), Niger (2015), the United Republic of Tanzania (2016).

Asian and Pacific States: China (2016), Fiji (2015), India (2017), the Islamic Republic of Iran (2015), Nepal (2016), Pakistan (2015), Yemen (2017).

Latin American and Caribbean States: Antigua and Barbuda (2017), Cuba (2016), Ecuador (2016), Guatemala (2015), the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (2017).

Eastern European States: Armenia (2016), Bulgaria (2015), Montenegro (2016), Russian Federation (2017).

Western European and other States (WEOG)*: Australia, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States.

* WEOG has its own rotation schedule, which varies every year.

