



United Nations

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SPEECH

BY THE UN RESIDENT CO-ORDINATOR RICHARD DICTUS AT THE

LAUNCH OF UNDAF 2012-2016

24 OCTOBER 2011, CAPITAL HOTEL

PROTOCOLS

On behalf of the United Nations Country Team in Malawi, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to the Government of Malawi, Development Partners, and our NGO partners for their support during the formulation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period 2012 to 2016. I am grateful for your support and I look forward to your continued co-operation as we implement the goals we have set for ourselves in the UNDAF.

Honourable Minister, the UNDAF spells out the areas of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy that the UN agencies in Malawi– both resident and non-resident – will support during the period 2012 to 2016. It is anchored in the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness which calls for national leadership and ownership of the development agenda. In reflecting the Government of Malawi's priorities as contained in the MGDS, the UNDAF is a powerful example of how the UN agencies

can come together to collectively align their programmes with the priorities of the government.

When the United Nations Country Team -- all represented at this occasion- set out to develop this new framework, the colleagues wanted to make a strong departure from the past. We sought to embed our consultative processes fully within the national planning process. We actively engaged the MDGS, as one United Nations, by providing our advice, collecting and disseminating data and actively pushing on issues through the sector working groups as well as through the regular consultations your ministry ensured. However, those consultations were kept as much as possible within the national processes to ensure that the UN's process was not increasing transaction costs to the Government, civil society and Development Partners.

While we may have been a bit of a nuisance, we think that the result now speaks for itself; UN framework developed through Government-led planning consultations; a UN framework that is virtually led by national priorities and plans; a UN framework that was developed in close partnership with Government, Civil Society and Development Partners; a UN framework that is as much your documents as it is ours!

Honourable Minister, this UNDAF sets out the vision that will seek to render support to Malawi to the tune of US\$600Mln over the next 5 years. This is an ambitious target when we take a look at the continued global economic woes and the trends within the global development community. Yet it is within a 10 percent range of our expenditures in the last three years, which were boosted through additional funding obtained from the Expanded Funding Window for UN Coherence; a new

global fund supported by the Netherlands, Spain, the UK, Norway and other Development Partners. At the same time, we need to jointly seek to mobilize the resources to make this happen; we have been given clear indications that Development Partners will seek to support those Governments that are leading the process of the United Nations Delivering-as-One.

The UNDAF we are launching today comes at a very significant time for Malawi. In four years' time, the nations of the world will gather in New York to take stock of the Millennium Development Goals. It will be a time to see where we are 15 years after the Millennium Development Goals were adopted by the UN General Assembly. So far, we know that Malawi is on track to achieve five of the eight MDGs. Giving credit where credit is due on economic growth, food security, poverty reduction and child mortality, the current progress however leaves no room for complacency; in particular, given the slow progress in girl's education, maternal health and women's economic and political empowerment. This UNDAF therefore offers us an opportunity to (a) consolidate the gains we have made and, (b) accelerate progress in those areas where the country is lagging behind.

Honourable Minister, the UNDAF is the product of extensive consultations that were held with a broad range of stakeholders. The UN Country Team laboured long and hard during the process. We began by launching the Plan of Action for the development of the UNDAF in early 2010. The Plan of Action was premised on the roadmap for the development of the MGDS and contained key milestones, critical processes, and timelines.

The first of these milestones was the Country Assessment, which was undertaken in March 2010 at the beginning of the MGDS process. The assessment reviewed various studies conducted by different stakeholders and came up with three constraints binding Malawi's development: population growth, low capacity, and an inadequate resource base. The assessment also identified five key strategic development priorities as Poverty Reduction, HIV and AIDS, Children and Young People, Gender and Sustainability.

The second milestone was the UNDAF familiarisation workshop, which was held in August 2010 to validate the findings of the assessment. It was from this workshop that the four priority areas of the new UNDAF emerged. These are:

1. Sustainable and Equitable Economic Growth and Food Security
2. Basic Social and Protection Services
3. HIV and AIDS
4. Governance

Apart from these, the UNDAF includes five cross-cutting themes mandated by the UN: gender equality; capacity development; environmental sustainability; results-based management; and human rights programming. The UN Country Team also unanimously agreed to jointly work on issues affecting the most vulnerable and women. In this connection, it is again my great pleasure to report to you that UNWomen is making every effort to open its first country office in Africa - right here in Malawi by the end of this year. We are all very much looking forward to this.

The UNDAF stands as a statement of intent on the part of the 18 UN agencies to work together for the benefit of the Malawian people. We believe that it sets out a flexible but strategic outlook, a clear perspective on how we can work together with the government and the people of Malawi in a meaningful partnership. We believe that the UNDAF gives us the necessary framework for the achievement of results in a more harmonized and cost-effective manner.

Finally, Honourable Minister, let me underline the fact that the UNDAF represents the vision, the broad goals and intended focus of the UN development support between 2012 and 2016. It does not, therefore, seek to address all the development challenges that Malawi faces. Rather, it focuses on those areas where the UN has a comparative advantage and a proven track record of adding value.

In conclusion I would like to thank our government counterparts, my colleagues from the UN agencies, civil society and our Development Partners for the support we have received to make this launch a reality. It is my sincere hope that this level of cooperation will continue throughout the implementation phase.

I thank you.