

**THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL**

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**MESSAGE TO 23RD MEETING OF
ARAB STATES REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM
Beirut, 20 November 2017**

Supporting the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a great challenge and opportunity for the UN development system. Applicable to all countries, integrated by design and ambitious in scope, the new Agenda requires the UN development system to reposition itself so it is capable, relevant and cohesive to support Member States in their efforts to realize the Sustainable Development Goals.

The regional architecture of the UN development system has a key role to play in supporting countries and UN Country Teams in their efforts to leave no one behind. And just as the system must reposition itself at global and country levels to live up to the ambition of the 2030 Agenda, the regional approach must change to respond to the new needs and demands of our evolved development landscape.

The Secretary-General has been leading a process of change in the context of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review. Through the Review, Member States clearly called for a UN development system that is more strategic, accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient, effective and results-oriented. I take this opportunity to thank the Regional Commissions, the Regional UN Development Groups, and all agencies, funds and programmes for their engagement in the review of the regional approach of the UN development system.

The direction we need to take to recalibrate the system at regional level to support the 2030 Agenda is clear. As a first step, we must optimize existing arrangements. We need to move towards a system that is well-coordinated at all levels, and where entities recognize and draw on each other's strengths. We will also need to rationalize how the current RCM Working Groups and Task Forces work in light of the 2030 Agenda and UN development system reforms.

As we work to optimize what exists, we also need to move towards a longer-term transition to well-defined functions and responsibilities to be able to support the ambitious promise of the 2030 Agenda. The Regional Economic Commissions have a key role to play as the regional think-tanks that the system and the regions require.

To operationalize the ambitions set out in the 2030 Agenda, partnerships are key. I am glad to note that the RCM of the Arab States also includes the League of Arab States and is open to regional and international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF. Our approach to strategically engage with regional actors and players to enhance our coordination and capitalize on each other's strengths. This will be key to scaling up, accelerating and financing the 2030 Agenda.

I encourage you to use this meeting to engage in a constructive dialogue on how to facilitate knowledge-sharing with other regions, to consider best practices that other regions may have to offer, and to provide feedback on innovative ways in which the UN regional coordination structures can best provide optimal support for country-level delivery.

I wish you a successful meeting.

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