Pakistan delegation is taking the floor to share with the Committee our views on the Secretary General’s report A/61/282 and A/61/479 on the Development Account.

2. We may recall that the Development Account was established by the General Assembly as a part of Secretary General’s reform of the United Nations in 1997 with a view to substantiate the socio economic development activities in the developing countries. An auxiliary but equally important objective of the program being improving the cost effectiveness of programme management and administration. We note with satisfaction the current operations of the development account by DESA as an integral part of its technical cooperation activity.

3. We reaffirm the core objectives of the account, which include capacity building in developing countries through sub-regional, regional, inter regional, economic and technical cooperation, to be promoted through individual projects aimed at improving development. Given its nominal financial denomination the development account can at best complement the development activities and by no means constitutes a substitute to the main frame development activities.

4. Though marginal, the development account has made useful contribution to the ongoing programmes and projects of Member States on advancement of women, sustainable development, trade, partnerships and information and communication technology. These programmes have been vital in supplementing the activities undertaken in the context of strategic framework of the biennium and the implementation of IADGs and MDGs. The programmes and the projects have been executed through UNCTAD UNEP, UNODC DESA, UNHABITAT and regional commissions.

5. Completion of 94 projects totaling amount of 67 million dollars in five tranches represent a fair degree of implementation. The notable issue in the context of implementation of these projects is the funding constraints. As noted by the Secretary General the size of project funding of 600,000, after initiation often ends up in a state of orphanage. It is vital to ensure adequate and predictable financing of the projects once they are launched from available means. We should also continue to build upon the lessons learnt in the implementation of the project including the increased utilization of local experts and consultants.

6. We are happy to note that 15 out of 24 projects within the budget for biennium 2006-2007 have already been approved, while the remaining nine are in the final stages of review. We also note with satisfaction that these projects focus on supporting the implementation of IADGs.
7. As for the key issues the Pakistan delegation agrees with the recasting of the developing account for the biennium 2007-2008 to an amount of 889,100 dollars as recommended by the Secretary General. The crucial aspect in our view is the identification of additional sources for the sustainability of development account. The premise of the utilization of system wide savings and efficiencies has proved unreliable and insufficient to meet the increasing and varied demands on the account. Despite Secretary General’s persistent advice to programme managers and their best efforts to enhance cost effectiveness and management improvement, unfortunately no further efficiency savings are foreseen to supplement the development account. We also believe that savings should arise from the approved mechanisms rather under performance, downsizing or postponement of approved programme activities. We also note with concern that the practice of implementation of all programmes and activities within the existing resources has been a major constraint to enhance the quantification of development account.

8. We particularly regret that no substantial progress to realize the target of 200 million dollars identified in 2002 and has been achieved to date. We also regret that despite General Assembly’s request for identification of additional funding sources other than the savings, which have not been forthcoming no concrete modality has been recommended in the report. Given the impasse on identifying new sources, and given the reluctance of our partners, we are sympathetic to consider the utilization of budget surpluses to increase the funding level of the development account. We are willing to constructively engage to remove the procedural impediments in diversion of budget surpluses towards the development account.

9. We would also like to reiterate that savings should not be at the cost of affecting the normal programme activities, or unnecessary downsizing of mandated programmes and activities. We should also ensure that in pursuit of this objective, no hardships are caused to staff by forced separations.

10. We would like to stress that all UN Department and offices should continue to carry out management reviews to enhance efficiency in delivering mandated programmes, and to identify to achieve the target for the reduction of overhead costs. The purpose of the exercise should continue to be the realization of the target of 200 million dollars that the Assembly had set in 2002 for strengthening the development account.

11. The current level of the development account of 67 million dollars, realized over five bienniums is a poor justification of declaring the development as one of the key pillars of the United Nations activities. It becomes stark when compared with over 5 billion dollars that the UN spends on maintenance of peace and security, the crisis which often arise from the “politics of scarcity”, inadequate attention to socio-economic development and poverty eradication.
12. To strengthen the relevance of the United Nations for 132 developing countries, quintessential increase in the development account, so as it can make a meaningful and significant contribution to their national efforts to implement MDGs and other internationally recognized targets in the fields of human rights and sustainable development should be treated as an urgent priority. As a measure of concrete commitment of our partners to augment development cooperation, and to supplement developing countries national efforts to promote socio-economic development we expect a fair increase in the allocation of development account.

13. We support the construction of additional conference facilities at Vienna International Center on the basis of the cost sharing arrangement proposed in document A/61/166. We understand that the total cost of 52.5 million Euros has been agreed between the IAEA, Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization, UN’s office at Vienna and UNIDO.

14. Pakistan delegation also supports the construction of additional office facilities at the Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa and to expand the scope of the project to include the construction of two additional floors with a total estimated cost of 11,383,300 dollars. We also appreciate the allocation of additional land by the Government of Ethiopia for the implementation of the project. We hope that other host countries would emulate the gesture wherever the additional construction projects are envisaged. We look forward to the completion of all procedural formalities and the launching of the actual construction of the project during the year 2007.

I thank You Mr. Chairman.