Since 1948, when the Charter developed in San Francisco, USA in 1945 came into force, 24 October has been celebrated as the United Nations Organisation’s Day, throughout the world. The theme of year 2013, “Sixty-eight years serving peace, development and human rights”, reflects the huge scope and the complexity of the missions carried out by the Organisation in collaboration with most Member States. “This year again, we have seen the United Nations acting together with others on many issues relating to armed conflicts, human rights and environment… We can do even more… We must be more united”, declared Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon.

In Burkina Faso, the hoisting of the flags was followed by the visit of an exhibition in the morning. Then in the evening, the government accompanied the whole UN System (UNS) in the key celebration organized in a hotel in Ouagadougou. At this ceremony, two speeches were delivered by the Resident Coordinator of the UNS and the Ambassador representing the Minister of State in charge of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation.

The first speaker, Pascal Karorero, commended the collective action conducted by the country and the UNS and urged the stakeholders to enhance efforts to attain the eight Millenium Development Goals (MDGs) set by all the nations in 2000 with a view to creating a better world. These goals concern the reduction of poverty and famine; the attainment of universal primary education; the promotion of gender equality; infant and child mortality; HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases; the improvement of mother’s health; the creation of a sustainable environment; and a global partnership for development.

The second speaker, the Representative of the Minister of State in Charge of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation gave an overview of the main aspects of the cooperation between Burkina Faso and the United Nations that reveals many achievements towards attaining the MDGs. He reaffirmed the determination of the Government of Burkina Faso to take up the remaining challenges, through a strong and sustained strategy to improve the populations’ living conditions.

Pascal Karorero, The UN Resident Coordinator : « In Burkina Faso, health remains a pressing concern »

Since Africa is lagging behind the other regions of the world while we are only two years away from the deadline, wasn’t it worth establishing two-tier MDGs?

I don’t think so. It is up to each country to contextualize the MDGs in relation with their baseline situation. At global level, we can say that the objective of reducing poverty by half has been attained. Some African countries are ahead of others concerning some objectives. For example in Burkina Faso, many efforts have been made in schooling whereas there is still a long way to go regarding health-related objectives.

What is going to happen after 2015?

National consultations have revealed that populations would like MDGs to continue in the selected domains.

New issues have stemmed out sometimes from the progress made in MDGs. For example, employment has become a new problem now, compared to the possibility of choice that existed in the past.

At global level, it is obvious that all the issues relating to power availability will be taken into account because they are extremely useful for the attainment of the objectives. I am optimistic because the world is converging towards development; perhaps at various paces.

The question is the need to speed up where the pace is not quick enough.

Interview conducted by Thérèse Belobo

P. Karorero: « Thanks to MDGs, poverty has been strongly fought »
WHO’s strong delegation