



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

2 December 2010

English only

Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes on its twentieth session

(Geneva, 30 September and 1 October 2010)

I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its twentieth session in Geneva on 30 September and 1 October 2010. The agenda of the meeting (annex I) and the list of participants (annex II) are attached.

2. In adopting the agenda, the Chair drew attention to the Committee's terms of reference, which sets forth two key functions for the Committee: system-wide follow up of intergovernmental decisions; and scanning and identification of emerging programme issues requiring a system-wide response. The current agenda gave equal weight to both functions, with the aim of ensuring greater policy coherence in the United Nations system's overall response.

II. Outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals: implications for inter-agency policy coherence and the work of the High-level Committee on Programmes

3. At its nineteenth session (3-4 March 2010), the Committee agreed that it would next meet directly after the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, in order to review the implications of its outcome for the Committee's further work, with an aim of delineating how it could best contribute to the urgent action required over the next five years within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as how it might relate the outcome to the broader development agenda, including the need for a fairer, greener and more sustainable globalization.

4. Nikhil Seth (Department of Economic and Social Affairs) provided the Committee with an analytical overview of the outcome document. He noted that the success of the Millennium Development Goals Summit was reflected in the wide participation of Heads of State and Government, extensive media coverage, and range of significant commitments announced. He highlighted a number of



noteworthy aspects in the outcome document (General Assembly resolution 65/1), which together represented a significant boost to multilateralism. These included: optimism about the achievability of the Millennium Development Goals; a strong focus on tackling inequalities within countries; clear prioritization of countries that are off track, in particular the least developed countries; an emphasis on the need for inclusive and equitable growth; and a focus on participatory and community-led strategies as well as on gender equality, the empowerment of women and human rights. He then reviewed a number of issues that had been excluded from the outcome document during negotiations. These were related to human security, fragile and failed States, aid effectiveness and mutual accountability, a new mechanism for following up on the financing for development agenda, tax matters, and the green economy. He stressed the particular need to broaden the concept of the green economy in the run-up to the Rio+20 Conference.

5. Mr. Seth focused next on the way forward for the United Nations system. The outcome document contained a strong reference to the role of the United Nations system in supporting the implementation of national development strategies and mitigating the social and economic impacts of the multiple crises. With regard to the post-2015 framework, he noted the need to outline ways to build strategic approaches into the goals and targets. In that connection, he highlighted the specific elements in the outcome that detailed increased efforts on agriculture, employment, education, gender equality, child mortality and maternal health, HIV/AIDS, non-communicable diseases, sanitation, slums, biodiversity and South-South cooperation. Over the next five years, there would be a number of opportunities for the United Nations system to contribute to a forward-looking strategy. These included the reports of the Secretary-General as well as a special event in 2013 in the General Assembly.

6. The Chair, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Mr. Seth for his thorough briefing and for his leadership during the long negotiations leading up to the adoption of the outcome document. A number of salient points were made during the discussion of this item:

- From a sectoral perspective, the outcome document contained many positive elements. Human rights, health, nutrition, education, culture and gender were highlighted as areas that were comprehensively covered. It was felt that the specificity of targets and concrete outcomes was key to the success achieved and to the mobilization of donor resources.
- The question was raised as to how to balance the specificity and measurability of the objectives with the broader policy framework that is needed to address inequalities and enable sustainable growth. There was a need to set the goals within a national policy framework and create the necessary internal policy coherence. Evidence showed that countries that had made greater progress had better national policies. Attention was drawn in this context to domestic resource mobilization, good governance, capacity-building, taxation and fiscal regimes.
- For humanitarian actors such as the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, there were particular challenges related to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. Concern was voiced with regard to donor retrenchment, as well as the cutback of

services by Governments to refugees in their countries. Efficiency needed to be reconciled with a rights-based approach.

- Although the Millennium Development Goals Summit was successful in bringing the international community together around a common set of objectives, there was a clear acknowledgement that “there is still a long way to go”. The United Nations system has an important role to play in identifying the obstacles that have prevented the goals being reached.
- Attention was drawn to the focus given in the outcome document to inequality. There were two aspects of inequality that run concurrently: the historical inequalities within specific societies, and the global economic system that has produced unfair and unequal results. It follows that the goals cannot be reached absent a comprehensive approach to the underlying structural issues.
- It was recalled that the Millennium Development Goals were not designed to look at the global context, including the impact of globalization. There were certain limitations in their design and coverage, which have become more apparent over time. For example, the relationship between the Goals and the productive sector, trade, the financial system, regional cooperation and other forms of international cooperation that are essential for the achievement of the goals is missing from the framework.
- Sectoral objectives had been set without delineating a means of connecting them with each other. This had led to a sectoral analysis of problems and sectoral thinking within the United Nations system as it tried to meet the challenges of an increasingly integrated world. The traditional aid model underpinning the Millennium Development Goals was also not relevant to the needs of middle-income and emerging economies.
- The failure to acknowledge and embrace the notion of the green economy in the outcome document has negative repercussions on the relevance of the universal body and for a coherent approach to the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals had faltered under the destructive impacts of climate change, and there was a need to move environmental needs to the centre of development thinking. A related concern is how to bring the externalized issues into the centre of decision-making.
- The United Nations system has particular strengths in normative and analytical work that it should pursue as a contribution to the intergovernmental processes ahead, both at the level of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as well as within the governing bodies of system organizations. An important policy objective is to drive a development paradigm that is fair, green and sustainable.
- The outcome document contained a number of elements that can be built upon in studying the contextual issues related to coherence in the development agenda. It was noted that paragraph 23 refers to lessons learned, successful policies and approaches in the implementation and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals that could benefit from increased political commitment and could be scaled up to accelerate progress. This included “adopting forward-looking macroeconomic policies that promote sustainable

development and lead to sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, increase productive employment opportunities and promote agricultural and industrial development”; “respecting, promoting and protecting all human rights, including the right to development”; and “working towards transparent and accountable systems of governance at the national and international levels”. The Committee’s leadership work on social protection floors was also highlighted.

- The close collaboration needed between the Committee and the United Nations Development Group in supporting Millennium Development Goals-acceleration was noted. The thematic papers prepared by the United Nations Development Group Millennium Development Goals Task Force contained a rich array of information to inform further work in that regard. Advocacy around the Goals was identified as an area for joint inter-agency work.

7. The Committee noted that its consideration of the outcome of the Millennium Development Goals Summit was linked to its deliberations on moving towards a fairer, greener, sustainable globalization. The United Nations system was challenged to provide intellectual leadership that would cut across and beyond the sectoral approach of the Millennium Development Goals to address the obstacles that have prevented and may continue to stymie further progress in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. An early discussion on the parameters of such work, which might involve external stakeholders, should be set within the context of the related agenda on the impact of globalization.

III. Moving towards a fairer, greener and sustainable globalization: next phase of the work of the High-level Committee on Programmes

8. The Committee’s discussion of the outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly set the context for its continued deliberations on moving towards a fairer, greener and sustainable globalization. The Vice-Chair of the Committee introduced his paper (CEB/2010/HLCP-XX/CRP.1), which was based on earlier discussions and further written contributions from members, and addressed possible policy and institutional responses to reinforcing the advantages and addressing the disadvantages of globalization. He held that there was no natural bridge between the global aspirations articulated and accepted by Member States and the national policies that they actually implement; this was due in part to the fact that such aspirations were formulated without a road map for implementation. In his view, the United Nations system was best placed to assist in creating the bridge; it had the expertise within the system and it had the necessary universality. Stumbling blocks were the lack of resources available to agencies, which curtailed their contribution to programmatic inventions, as well as structural problems in the system of governance.

9. The Vice-Chair noted that United Nations system agencies were fully aware of the challenges posed by globalization in their respective areas of mandate and activities, and most had already begun to adapt their policies and programmes to deal with those challenges. These measures sought primarily to deal with the

symptoms of the underlying problem, however, and would need to be complemented by efforts to achieve a change in the underlying, fundamental problems.

10. He suggested that ideally United Nations system agencies should both work upstream and downstream in tandem. They should provide policy advice to their governing bodies, and collaborate across sectors to offer coherent advice to the General Assembly. At the same time, agencies should be working downwards towards assisting national policy implementation. This implementation support at the country level would require a change in how United Nations system agencies are funded. If there were no prospect for achieving this, the role of the agencies would necessarily be more advisory. Such a dual-track, more active approach, should it be feasible, would have a strong impact on how the United Nations system could contribute to a fairer, greener, sustainable globalization. At present, however, it was clear that agencies were dealing more with the downside of globalization than working proactively to resolve the underlying imbalances and to redress its adverse effects, most notably on inequality.

11. He suggested that the Committee consider the policy content and the recommendations that the system may wish to propose to Member States on how to fix the system of globalization, acknowledging also that such work needed dedicated time and focus beyond the scope available at the Committee's current session.

12. Members had a thorough discussion of the Vice-Chair's paper. It was noted that globalization historically had a number of distinct phases. The dynamics of the current phase, marked by some three decades of increasingly deregulated capital flows, needed to feed into an appropriate assessment of the policy dialogue, and the interaction between the national and international had to be understood in a nuanced and sensitive way. In that connection, it was important to define what effective and good governance meant in the context of managing internal policy coherence and the links between the internal and external economies.

13. The United Nations, as the universal body, had a strong advocacy function vis-à-vis global normative advances that needed to be further developed and exercised in reinforcing national responsibilities. Its ability to look at the larger picture and provide coherent policy advice, which had been the hallmark of the Organization's earlier history, needed to be reinvigorated.

14. There was general agreement that the United Nations system could thus make a signal contribution to encouraging national Governments to formulate their policies with a view to the whole. For such advice to be heeded, it needed to be relevant. It was suggested that this approach could be tested in a pilot, through which a group of agencies would together support a coherent national policy that touches on several areas of importance to development. The contribution of the private sector and civil society to the implementation of national policies, given their resource base and capacities in certain areas, such as technology and technology transfer, was also highlighted. The Broadband Commission for Digital Development was highlighted as an effective model for partnership among government, the United Nations system and the private sector.

15. The Committee observed that its consideration of this agenda item was at the very core of its mandate for furthering policy and programme coherence and integration. It agreed that it would need to deepen and broaden this work

in the lead-up to the various intergovernmental processes ahead, including the Rio+20 Conference, the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the 2013 review of the Millennium Development Goals, among others. To that end, it accepted with appreciation the offer of the Committee Chair to hold a technical meeting, with the participation of external stakeholders, to explore the various policy options and approaches. The report of the technical meeting will be considered by the Committee at its next session.

IV. Climate change: preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Cancún, and related issues

16. The Chair noted that in the Millennium Development Goals Summit outcome, Member States had recognized the synergies between the Millennium Development Goals and the climate change agenda, and acknowledged that climate change presented a key obstacle to achieving the Goals. He also recalled that the Committee, at its nineteenth session, had agreed that the Working Group on Climate Change should continue its work with a short-term focus on preparations for the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancún, Mexico (29 November-10 December 2010) and a long-term focus on a coordination framework for discussing strategic issues related to the implementation agenda. The Committee had also asked for greater precision and operational perspectives in the focus and cross-cutting areas under the CEB Climate Change Action Framework, and had agreed to establish a separate cross-cutting area on the social dimensions of climate change.

17. The Director of the CEB secretariat, in his capacity as Chair of the Working Group on Climate Change, presented the report of the Group (CEB/2010/HLCP-XX/CRP.2). He noted that the Group had continued to focus on consistent modalities for conveying a joint message to parties on the United Nations system delivering as one within the CEB Climate Change Action Framework. It had developed a sense of complementarity and division of labour among agencies, and continued to align itself with the ongoing negotiating process of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the emerging agendas of the parties to the Convention. As part of that exercise — and in line with the Committee's recommendations — it analysed how the United Nations system could tailor its existing work on climate change to respond to the emerging implementation architecture by identifying a targeted approach for its further work. The focus on implementation would also inform preparations for the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Cancún. The Group had agreed on 18 joint United Nations system side events and one high-level side event, and planned to present a package of information to Member States. The Director reiterated the importance of the United Nations system agencies in Cancún consistently articulating the message of the United Nations delivering as one on implementation.

18. In his briefing on the status of intergovernmental negotiations, the representative of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat highlighted the priority of setting the right expectations and aiming for the right outcomes for the United Nations Climate Change Conference. This would

be pursued by building on the general agreement among Member States that Cancún had to be successful, by rebuilding confidence in the climate change process, and showing more broadly how the United Nations would deliver on this process. The focus for the forthcoming Conference therefore would be to work on the fundamental issues, taking the agreements reached in Copenhagen under the two-tracked negotiations to the next level. There were seven such issues: adaptation; technology; finance and the establishment of a new fund; capacity-building; the REDD-plus agenda; mitigation; and measuring, reporting and verification. He also noted that the parties' expectations of the United Nations system to deliver on capacity-building were very high, and suggested that efforts in that regard should be scaled up. He felt that the focus of the Working Group on the operational implementation architecture and on positioning the United Nations system's readiness to support such implementation were very much in line with the current priorities.

19. The Director of the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Change Support Team informed the Committee that the Secretary-General had focused his continued engagement in the climate change negotiation process on advocating for a realistic approach to the outcome of Cancún, supporting negotiations, connecting climate change with the broader development agenda, and supporting the United Nations system in its implementation work. The Director also highlighted the Secretary-General's related efforts with regard to the Advisory Group on Energy and Climate Change, the High-level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing, the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability; and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

20. The Committee took note of the briefings, and proposed that the Working Group build on the momentum created in Copenhagen, while refraining from further expanding the scope of its work. Committee members also highlighted a number of key issues that were important to the system's further work on climate change. These included supporting local and domestic resource mobilization, linking climate change with human rights, increasing focus on the green economy, technology transfer and access to energy, agriculture for mitigation and adaptation, the central role of cities as well as local-level inclusion in adaptation and mitigation strategies.

21. The representative of the World Meteorological Organization informed the Committee that the High-level Task Force on the Global Framework for Climate Services was working on its draft report, which covered current capabilities, needs and opportunities for climate services, and a proposal on how the Framework should be implemented. The Task Force report was expected to be available for review shortly, and finalized in the beginning of 2011.

22. The Committee noted with appreciation the progress made in its Working Group on Climate Change. It endorsed the Group's recommendations, including with respect to its continued work with a focus on responding to the emerging implementation architecture leading up to Cancún.

V. Review of current developments: implications for the policy coherence role of the High-level Committee on Programmes

23. Pursuant to the terms of reference it adopted in 2008, the Committee served two key functions: (a) system-wide follow-up of intergovernmental decisions; and (b) scanning and identification of emerging programme issues requiring a system-wide response. Its twentieth session took place at a particularly important time, as intergovernmental decisions taken in the previous few months presented new opportunities and challenges to the Committee charged under CEB with promoting policy coherence within the United Nations system and furthering coordinated efforts with respect to global policy and programme issues and global public goods.

24. The Committee took particular note, in that regard, of the outcome of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, as well as of General Assembly resolution 64/289 on system-wide coherence.

A. Gender

25. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, introduced a briefing note on the establishment by the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/289, of UN Women and its expected interaction with the United Nations system (CEB/2006/HLCP-XX/CRP.4). She noted that the creation of UN Women provided an opportunity to address women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment in a coherent and coordinated manner. The newly appointed Under-Secretary-General, Michelle Bachelet, had articulated three immediate priorities: the operationalization of UN Women by 1 January 2011; engaging with United Nations system organizations to ensure coherence and collaboration; and resource mobilization.

26. Gülden Türköz-Cosslett, the Deputy Secretary-General's Senior Adviser on System-wide Coherence, briefed the Committee on the transition process. The transition team, which she headed, was composed of staff seconded from the four gender entities. It supported the work of the Senior Management Team and Steering Committee, which met regularly. Dedicated task teams had been established to work on human resources, the budget proposal for 2011, communications, common premises, partnerships and resource mobilization and information technology. Efforts were also under way to conclude arrangements for the physical location of UN Women, and the phased move was expected to be completed by May 2011. She also noted that the Deputy Secretary-General had recently held a town hall meeting for the staff of UN Women to discuss and answer their concerns about the transition process.

27. Ms. Türköz-Cosslett noted that nominations for the Executive Board would be made shortly, and informed the Committee that elections would be held by early November. The first organizational meeting of the Board in December would elect the Bureau and set dates for the sessions in 2011. She added that the next steps for the newly established entity, for which the ideas of the Committee were being sought, would be: (a) collaborating with the United Nations system to operationalize the lead role of UN Women in coordinating the Organization's work on gender equality and women's empowerment through existing mechanisms; (b) focusing on country-level capacities to ensure that UN Women has the ability to respond to demands from the national level with catalytic programmes; and (c) pursuing the

interim plan and vision of the Under-Secretary-General, which would be the first 100 days of 2011.

28. The Committee thanked Ms. Mayanja and Ms. Türköz-Cosslett for their briefings, and pledged its support to UN Women and Ms. Bachelet. It was noted that the expectations of Member States, United Nations system organizations and civil society for the new entity were extremely high, and that there was an opportunity for UN Women to exercise innovative and strategic leadership in addressing issues across sectors. The Committee agreed that CEB and its three pillars could play an important supportive role to UN Women in its further elaboration and implementation of its strategic priorities from 2011 to 2013.

B. High-level Panel on Global Sustainability

29. Janos Pasztor, Head of the secretariat for the High-level Panel on Global Sustainability, briefed the Committee on the terms of reference and general orientation of the Panel, which was launched by the United Nations Secretary-General on 9 August 2010, and held its first meeting on 19 September. The Panel aimed to formulate a new vision and modalities to achieve sustainable growth and prosperity, and thus contribute towards the Rio+20 Conference, the annual Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and to a post-2015 framework for development. While it would maintain a special focus on climate change as well as food, water and energy security and poverty reduction, and look at bridging the gap between decision-making and implementation as it addressed the three pillars of sustainable development, the focus of the Panel will be the development of a new growth paradigm. He added that the Panel's workplan would be shared with the United Nations system once it was finalized, and that the Panel would submit its final report to the Secretary-General at the end of 2011.

30. He introduced a note that put forth proposals for coordinated contributions from the United Nations system to the Panel (CEB/2010/HLCP-XX/CRP.5). These included a joint United Nations system pre-report for the Panel's consideration, specialized input from organizations upon request by the Panel, submissions of existing United Nations system reports relevant to work of the Panel, dialogue between the Panel with the United Nations system, including interaction with CEB principals, and secondment of staff to the Panel secretariat. It was particularly important for the Panel to have good case studies from the United Nations system.

31. The members of the Committee thanked Mr. Pasztor for the briefing, recognizing the challenging task ahead. They welcomed the opportunity to interact with the Panel, including through technical inputs. Responding to the proposed modalities for interaction, members indicated that embarking on a consensus-based pre-report by the United Nations system would be ambitious within the given time frame and scope. It was suggested, however, that individual inputs from agencies as well as the Committee's considerations on moving towards a fairer, greener, sustainable globalization might be of use to the Panel. There was general support for the proposed joint session of the Panel and members of CEB at its spring session 2011, as well as for flexible and short-term arrangements for the secondment of staff to the Panel secretariat. Organizations looked forward to receiving more information on the Panel's workplan in order to determine the best approaches for feeding into its work.

32. It was suggested as well that the Panel may wish to frame its discussion in the context of prevailing policies, looking at what changes were required to achieve a sustainable development approach. It was also proposed that the Panel may wish to contribute to discussions on financing for development.

C. Programme criticality

33. The Committee was briefed on the progress of the Working Group on Programme Criticality by its Chair, Hilde Johnson, Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund. The establishment of the Working Group was endorsed by the Committee and CEB earlier in 2010 to: (a) define the four levels of programme criticality within the guidelines for acceptable risk (extreme, critical, essential and all other); and (b) develop a framework for determining programme criticality for decision-making.

34. The Working Group had held two meetings. On 31 August, members were briefed on the Security Levels System as adopted by CEB, and had agreed on the terms of reference of the Working Group and its work ahead. A subgroup on technical matters had also been established. The second meeting, on 17 September 2010, discussed the main definitions of programme criticality. The Working Group had also started a discussion on the framework, deciding to move away from definitions that used value-terms such as "extreme", "critical" and "essential" to a new system based on four levels.

35. The decision-making process would be defined at a forthcoming meeting of the Working Group. A number of pilots would also be launched by mid-November in selected countries yet to be confirmed. An inter-agency mission would participate together with the country teams in the pilot testing phase of the methodology and of the programme criticality framework. The Working Group had decided that this process would be led by programme staff with limited intervention of security staff.

36. In line with the proposed recommendations of the United Nations Security Management System Project Group report, the Working Group would therefore be focusing further its work on: (a) defining the levels of programme criticality and developing a common framework for decision-making within the guidelines for acceptable risk; and (b) presenting its recommendations on definitions and framework for decision-making to the High-level Committee on Management and the High-level Committee on Programmes at their 2011 spring sessions, for endorsement and subsequent approval by CEB.

37. The Committee thanked the Chair of the Working Group on Programme Criticality and expressed its appreciation for the work of the Working Group. It agreed to reconsider the issue at its twenty-first session, in spring 2011, on the basis of the Working Group's final recommendations.

VI. Developments ahead: role of the High-level Committee on Programmes

A. Cybersecurity

38. The Chair recalled that at the CEB spring 2010 session, the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) had briefed his colleagues on the growing risk of cybercrime and cyberthreats to modern communications and networks and their impact on the United Nations system. The Board had requested the High-level Committee on Programmes and the High-level Committee on Management to take up the relevant dimensions of the issue. In his letter of 21 July 2010 to CEB members, the ITU Secretary-General proposed that the High-level Committee on Programmes contribute to a detailed identification of the links between cybersecurity and the broad United Nations agenda and to work towards the elaboration of a common framework.

39. The representative of ITU introduced an issues paper on cybersecurity and the threat to critical infrastructure (CEB/2010/HLCP-XX/CRP.7), which proposed the creation of an inter-agency working group of the Committee. In his briefing, he highlighted the impact of cybercrime and cyberthreats on trade, national public and private infrastructure, education, humanitarian assistance and emergency services, economic infrastructure, health services, protection of the vulnerable, intellectual property, and human resources and administration.

40. Member States were themselves deeply concerned with the issue, and were focusing on it through their work in the First, Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly. The ITU representative also informed the Committee that the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference, which would shortly take place in Guadalajara, Mexico, would consider a number of proposals by Member States to deal with the issue of cybersecurity at the global level.

41. The representative of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime noted that the Twelfth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice had recommended to the General Assembly that it set up, under the auspices of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, an open-ended intergovernmental expert group to conduct a comprehensive study of the problem of cybercrime and responses to it by Member States, the international community and the private sector. The first meeting of the working group was scheduled to take place in Vienna from 17 to 21 January 2011.

42. In the ensuing discussion, Committee members agreed on the seriousness of the issue and its multidimensional nature. With respect to the United Nations system's role, they stressed the need for the policy, operational and management dimensions of the matter equally to be pursued.

43. The Committee requested ITU, in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to organize a meeting of focal points to be designated by Committee members to examine the policy and technology issues together. In light of the meeting's expected conclusions, the Committee would consider either the establishment of one stream of work under CEB, or a dedicated working group on the policy issues.

B. Preparations for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, 2011

44. Lakshmi Puri, the representative of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, introduced a background note on the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, to be held in Istanbul from 30 May to 3 June 2011 (CEB/2010/HLCP-XX/CRP.8). She noted that in many respects, the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals and its outcome was a “dress rehearsal” and a microcosm of what the Conference was to be in substantive and political scale and scope. Expectations were high that the Conference would play an extremely important role in setting the development agenda, through the new programme of action, for the next 10 years and beyond. She noted that the United Nations Secretary-General attached highest priority to a successful Conference, and he hoped that the Conference would be a force multiplier for lifting the poorest and most vulnerable countries out of their continuous state of development emergency.

45. Ms. Puri highlighted the preparations under way at the national, regional and global levels to prepare a focused, actionable and ambitious programme of action with specific goals and targets in a number of priority areas identified by the least developed countries and their development partners. They included productive capacity-building and infrastructure; agricultural development and food security; enhanced mobilization of financial resources; universal access to essential services; leap-frogging into green economy and climate change adaptation; good governance; and peace and security. She detailed the ongoing inter-agency process in that regard, and called upon the United Nations system to support a successful Conference by: (a) mobilizing participation of the relevant organizations, their intergovernmental bodies, and substantive stakeholders in the preparatory process and the Conference itself; (b) launching institutional and thematic initiatives at the Conference as concrete deliverables; and (c) participating in effective follow-up and monitoring mechanisms.

46. In addition, Ms. Puri proposed that CEB support the Conference through a global initiative and partnership for building productive capacity in the least developed countries, which was a critical priority area for these countries. She stressed that the proposed joint CEB initiative would not be a new mechanism but would rather redirect, bring together, target and synergize the productive sector-based, ongoing work within the United Nations system. She also welcomed additional, specially targeted efforts within this scope.

47. During the discussion, Committee members voiced their strong support for the Conference, noting the efforts being made by their agencies in specific sectors, including tourism, industrial development, trade, agriculture, infrastructure, intellectual property, health, education, employment and labour, and so on. It was also noted that, although there had been overall growth in the least developed countries over the last decade, this growth had been uneven and had led to increased inequalities within countries. Given declines in remittances and decreases in external capital flows, there was a need to look at new financing modalities, including innovative sources of finance, and to expand the donor base, as well as to have effective follow-up and monitoring mechanisms for the implementation of commitments.

48. Some members felt that insufficient attention had been given to the social sectors, including education, as well as to gender mainstreaming. It was also stressed that, in order to build productive capacity, it was important to focus on the strengthening of infrastructure and institutional capacities. In addition, special attention was required with respect to the particular needs of post-conflict and fragile States.

49. Several members noted that various programmes and mechanisms were in place to assist least developed countries in building their productive capacities, and that to avoid any possible duplication with a proposed new initiative, these should first be mapped out and existing gaps identified.

50. Committee members agreed to provide the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States information in writing on their mandates, programmes and perspectives with regard to the Conference, as well as to a global initiative and partnership for building productive capacity. The Committee would lay the ground at its next session for a possible CEB statement of support in the lead-up to the Conference.

C. South-South and triangular cooperation

51. In introducing the item, the Vice-Chair noted that South-South and triangular cooperation could provide significant contributions to meeting transnational challenges and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. The Committee might therefore wish to launch an initial discussion on how the United Nations system could delineate a common approach in that area.

52. The representative of the International Labour Organization (ILO) briefed the Committee on preparations for the third Global South-South Development Expo, which it would jointly host with the Special Unit of the United Nations for South-South Cooperation, from 22 to 26 November 2010. She noted that South-South cooperation had been a strategic partnership development tool for more than 30 years that was capable of promoting sustainable growth and contributing to social development. The past decade had seen a revival of the concept of South-South cooperation. It was highlighted in the Accra Agenda for Action and frequently referenced in intergovernmental consultations, as a complement to the traditional North-South dynamic. In introducing the Aide-Mémoire on the Expo (CEB/2010/HLCP-XX/INF.2), she noted that this year's Expo aimed at presenting and discussing critical issues faced in the light of the challenges presented by globalization and the financial crisis.

53. Building on the objective of sharing and exchanging South-South development solutions and experiences with the international community, the Expo had five main components: (a) the high-level segment, including leadership round tables and a meeting of the development cooperation agencies; (b) six solutions forums on social protection and decent work, food security, climate change and environment, HIV-AIDS, global health and education; (c) awards for South-South cooperation good practices; (d) an exhibition featuring good practices on South-South cooperation in the United Nations system; and (e) a space where new agreements could be signed. Interaction among countries from the global South, the sharing of

good practices and the promotion of triangular cooperation would be addressed during the Expo. The representative of ILO called upon the Committee to continue to follow up on South-South cooperation and to include in its agenda a discussion on modalities for the United Nations system to strengthen this type of cooperation.

54. In the discussion that followed, members expressed their support for the Expo and welcomed the proposal to increase focus on this issue. The policy implications of the rise of the South and of emerging economies should be taken into account in the discussions on South-South cooperation. United Nations system organizations should also continue to give particular attention to challenges faced by middle-income countries. It was suggested that the United Nations system increase its efforts to provide an enabling platform for South-South cooperation. The Director of the CEB secretariat informed the Committee that the Joint Inspection Unit was initiating a major study of existing capacity, within the United Nations system, on South-South cooperation. In that regard, Joint Inspection Unit Inspectors would be contacting United Nations system focal points for information. This study would provide a useful survey of United Nations capacity, and current strengths and weaknesses.

55. The Committee took note of the briefing and agreed to revert to a further discussion on the policy coherence dimensions of South-South and triangular cooperation at a later session.

D. Towards universal access to energy

56. The representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) introduced a background note entitled “Towards universal access to energy” (CEB/2010/HLCP-XX/CRP.9). He recalled that the United Nations Secretary-General had established an Advisory Group on Energy and Climate Change in June 2009 to address the interlinked problems of improved access to energy and the potential consequences for climate change of increased energy consumption, and to provide clear recommendations on energy issues in the context of climate change and sustainable development. The Advisory Group was chaired by Kandeh Yumkella, UNIDO Director-General, who also led UN-Energy, with representation from the United Nations system, the private sector and research institutions. He noted that the Advisory Group and UN-Energy had worked closely together, maximizing synergies for greater impact and effectiveness.

57. In April 2010, the Advisory Group had released a report entitled “Energy for a sustainable future”, in which it proposed two global energy goals: (a) to ensure universal access to modern energy services by 2030; and (b) to reduce global energy intensity — the quantity of energy per unit of economic activity or output (gross domestic product) — by 40 per cent by 2030. The UNIDO representative stressed that achieving these goals was key to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, improving the quality and sustainability of macroeconomic growth, and helping to reduce carbon emissions. Furthermore, these ambitious goals were achievable, owing to technology innovations and emerging business models, as well as to an ongoing shift in international funding priorities towards clean energy and other energy issues. He noted, however, that commitment from national Governments and the international community, as well as private sector collaboration, would be necessary conditions.

58. He suggested that the United Nations system, through UN-Energy, could catalyse this action by establishing a mechanism to track progress towards the goals and by providing the requisite support to strengthen national capacities. Additionally, “embedding” the energy-related goals in the work of the United Nations system would help to sustain efforts towards the achievement of the goals over the long term. A joint meeting of UN-Energy and the Advisory Group, held in Mexico City in July 2010, had defined the implementation agenda and operational modalities. Specifically it agreed to: launch a global campaign on “Energy for all”; seek the designation of 2012 as an international year of energy access; launch two or three public-private partnerships; create a new global fund for energy access; provide energy planning support to developing countries for the preparation of nationally appropriate mitigation actions and national low-carbon-growth strategies; establish a knowledge network; advance energy efficiency in new climate agreements; and set up a Vienna-based energy planning group to work with the UN-Energy secretariat in support of the implementation of these activities. A number of concrete actions were already under way, which he further detailed.

59. The Committee thanked the UNIDO representative for his briefing and asked him to convey the Committee’s deep appreciation to Mr. Yumkella for his commitment and leadership. Committee members expressed their support for the implementation of the proposed activities to achieve the goals set by the Advisory Group in its report, and for the leading role of UN-Energy in this process.

VII. Other matters

60. The Director of the CEB secretariat briefed the Committee on the ongoing work on the harmonization of business practices under the High-level Committee on Management and the joint High-level Committee on Management/United Nations Development Group session on 27 September 2010. Within the system-wide coherence framework, the objective of the programme was to harmonize and simplify the management structure at the global level to ensure less cost-intensive and more responsive operations. The harmonization of business practices had gained sound support from Member States in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and the commitment of \$12 million for the implementation of the action plan. Current activities included common treasury services, the streamlining of financial statistics, a new global market place for procurement, as well as common policies for the suspect vendors programme.

61. To ensure that this harmonization process was integrated and coherent between headquarters and country teams, a joint mission was carried out by members of the High-level Committee on Management and the United Nations Development Group to identify and address remaining country-level bottlenecks in business practices. An implementation plan had been developed as an outcome of the mission. It included promoting a culture of analysis and monitoring, strengthening people management, ensuring implementation of delivering as one on information and communications technology, creating new local area networks, harmonized procurement guidelines, financing common practices and clearance of legal agreements.

62. **The Committee welcomed the briefing and all the work being done as part of the initiative. Some members highlighted the ambitious scope of the programme, suggesting the importance of initially prioritizing the “low hanging fruits”. Some members also noted the importance of ensuring a flow of information among the three high-level committees under CEB, and suggested that informal means of information-sharing be considered in addition to the already existing reporting mechanism.**

63. Mr. Somavía announced to the Committee that he would not be seeking re-election as its Chair following the end of his two-year term (2009-2010). In so doing, he wished to provide an opportunity for rotation in the chairmanship and thus an enhanced United Nations-system perspective among its leadership. The Committee took the opportunity to express its profound gratitude to Mr. Somavía, who had shown great commitment and exercised outstanding leadership in driving the United Nations system towards greater policy coherence. With his visionary chairmanship of the work of the High-level Committee on Programmes, the Committee had achieved a significant number of joint, action-oriented accomplishments, including in response to the global financial and economic crisis. Members wished Mr. Somavía every success for the future.

Annex I

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals: implications for inter-agency policy coherence and the work of the High-level Committee on Programmes
3. Moving towards a fairer, greener and sustainable globalization: next phase of work of the High-level Committee on Programmes
4. Climate change: preparations for the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Cancún, and related issues
5. Review of current developments: implications for the policy coherence role of the High-level Committee on Programmes:
 - (a) Gender;
 - (b) High-level Panel on Global Sustainability;
 - (c) Programme criticality
6. Developments ahead: role of the High-level Committee on Programmes:
 - (a) Cybersecurity;
 - (b) Preparations for the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, 2011;
 - (c) South-South and triangular cooperation;
 - (d) Towards universal access to energy
7. Other matters

Annex II

List of participants

Chair: Juan Somavía (International Labour Organization)

Vice-Chair: Elliot Harris (International Monetary Fund)

Secretary: Phyllis Lee (CEB secretariat)

United Nations

Executive Office of the Secretary-General	Janos Pasztor
Office of the Deputy Secretary-General	Gülden Türköz-Cosslett (via videoconference)
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Thomas Stelzer Nikhil Seth
Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, part of UN Women	Rachel Mayanja (via videoconference)
Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States	Lakshmi Puri
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights	Marcia V. J. Kran Thomas Pollan
Regional commissions	Patrice Robineau Srinivas Tata
International Labour Organization	Maria Ducci Jane Stewart
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Annika Söder Sandra Aviles
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Hans D'Orville Jean-Yves Le Saux
World Health Organization	Namita Pradhan Peter J. Mertens
World Bank	Dominique Bichara
International Monetary Fund	Elliott Harris
Universal Postal Union	Olivier Boussard
International Telecommunication Union	Gary Fowlie Beatrice Pluchon
World Meteorological Organization	Elena Manaenkova Christian Blondin

International Maritime Organization	Jianxin Zhu
World Intellectual Property Organization	Christian Wichard Naresh Prasad Rama Rao Sankurathripat
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Luis Jimenez-McInnis
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Sarwar Hobohm Qazi Shaukat Fareed
International Atomic Energy Agency	Margit Bruck-Friedrich
World Trade Organization	Emmanuelle Ganne
World Tourism Organization	Marcio Favilla Lucca de Paula
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Richard Kozul-Wright
United Nations Development Programme	Sigrid Kaag Alison Drayton
United Nations Environment Programme	Juanita Castaño Hossein Fadeai Benjamin Simmons
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Jean-François Durieux
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Robert Stryk
United Nations Children's Fund	Hilde Johnson (via videoconference) Gunilla Olsson Michele Ferenz
United Nations Population Fund	Mabingue Ngom Kwabena Osei-Danquah Mari Simonen
World Food Programme	Charles Vincent Darlene Tymu
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Sandeep Chawla
United Nations Human Settlements Programme	Yamina Djacta
Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	Khaled Abdelhamid
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Henning Wuester

Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

Emelia Timpo

United Nations System Staff College

Mariama Daramy-
Lewis

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Margareta Wahlstrom

Development Operations Coordination Office

Lubna Baqi

Secretariat of the United Nations System Chief
Executives Board for Coordination

Adnan Amin (Director)
Katja Gregers Brock
Laura Casinelli
