



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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First regular session of 2026

Tokyo, 19 and 20 May 2026

Summary of deliberations

I. Introduction

1. The first regular session of 2026 of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), chaired by the Secretary-General, was held at the Chinzanso Hotel in Tokyo, on 19 and 20 May 2026.
2. The Secretary-General welcomed Khaled El-Enany, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; Shaikha Al Nuwais, Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization; Alexander De Croo, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Barham Salih, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; Monica Juma, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; Christian Saunders, Commissioner-General ad interim of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East; and Pedro Manuel Moreno, Acting Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of United Nations Trade and Development, who were attending a CEB session for the first time.
3. The session consisted of three segments, on the following themes: (a) state of the world; (b) megatrends transforming the world; and (c) UN80 Initiative. The Board also received a lunch presentation on the launch of the United Nations Human Rights Group.

II. Segment 1: state of the world

4. The Secretary-General presented an overview of the current state of the world and the challenges confronting the United Nations and the international community. Protracted conflicts, heightened instability and mounting disregard for international law had grave consequences for global security and the global economy. Peace and security challenges were already affecting energy and food prices, with potential risks for global food security, pointing to cascading effects on sustainable development and growing humanitarian needs in the medium term. A marked increase in inequality among and within countries, the growing impact of climate change, and fast-evolving and largely unregulated digital technologies also posed significant threats.



5. In the ensuing discussion, Board members reflected on the global trade and economic situation, as well as notable developments in the areas of peace and security, human rights, humanitarian affairs, sustainable development and technological advancement. The rise in global poverty and growing inequality due to higher food and energy prices were identified as major concerns, with potential consequences for global stability and prosperity. Demographic change, youth unemployment and challenges to the rights of women and girls and to gender equality presented additional obstacles to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The potential of digital technologies to serve as enablers of sustainable development, especially in the areas of education and health, was recognized alongside the security risks posed by technological advances, in particular artificial intelligence, highlighting the need for global governance of those technologies.

6. In conclusion, the Secretary-General underscored the need for the United Nations system to continue to stand united and speak with one clear and consistent voice in upholding the Charter of the United Nations, international law, humanitarian law and human rights. Despite the many challenges facing the United Nations, the system needed to seize opportunities by taking principled action, grounded in United Nations values, in order to improve peoples' lives.

III. Segment 2: megatrends transforming the world

7. Converging global megatrends, including a fractured geopolitical and economic landscape, swift technological advances, accelerating climate impacts, and large-scale demographic shifts, are reshaping the world in increasingly disruptive and interconnected ways. These forces are amplifying multifaceted risks and inequalities, straining social cohesion and challenging multilateralism. In this segment, the Board was invited to reflect on how, in the face of short-term crises and enduring structural transformations demanding coordinated responses, the United Nations system needs to effectively navigate these megatrends and the attendant pressures to advance its values and objectives.

8. Opening and moderating the segment, the Deputy Secretary-General, Amina J. Mohammed, highlighted that global megatrends were unfolding alongside multiple overlapping crises in a context of global turmoil. She emphasized that megatrends were interacting and reinforcing one another, making it increasingly difficult for countries to sustain development gains and deliver on global commitments, including the Sustainable Development Goals. She encouraged a focus on the compound effects of these transformations and their implications for priorities, cross-sectoral approaches and ways of working across the United Nations system.

9. The Board heard presentations from Manuel Muñiz, Rector of IE University, and Ian Bremmer, President of Eurasia Group. The presentations highlighted the accelerating pace of technological change, particularly in the area of artificial intelligence, and its impacts on labour markets, income distribution and inequality. Associated political and social consequences were underscored, including declining trust in institutions and growing societal tensions, alongside a shift towards a more fragmented and multipolar international order. The current geopolitical context was described as a geopolitical recession that was marked by weakening global leadership and had significant implications for multilateral cooperation. The growing role of technology companies as influential global actors was emphasized, as were the governance challenges associated with rapid and largely unregulated technological transformation.

10. In the ensuing discussion, Board members emphasized the interconnected and mutually reinforcing nature of global megatrends, noting that their interactions were

generating compound and systemic risks. These dynamics were considered to blur the distinction between short-term crises and longer-term structural transformations, requiring more integrated, anticipatory and system-wide responses.

11. Inequality was identified as a central, cross-cutting and amplifying factor, influencing and being reinforced by other megatrends, with the current context being described as an inequality emergency. Members highlighted widening gaps in income and wealth, unequal access to opportunities and the emergence of new forms of economic insecurity. The importance of strengthening pathways into the formal economy, expanding social protection systems, improving taxation frameworks and ensuring a more equitable distribution of productivity gains was emphasized. Reference was also made to ongoing international efforts to address inequality at a systemic level, such as the work of the G20 Extraordinary Committee of Independent Experts on Global Inequality.

12. Technological change and artificial intelligence featured prominently in the discussion. Members recognized technology's potential to serve as a powerful enabler of development, including by promoting productivity gains, job creation and the strengthening of key sectors and infrastructure. At the same time, significant risks were highlighted, including labour market disruption, threats to information and communications technology security, the spread of misinformation and disinformation and the growing concentration of technological and economic power. Concerns were raised about the erosion of trust and widening digital divides, as well as the risk of reinforcing existing inequalities, particularly for women and girls. Members emphasized the need to accelerate policy adaptation; strengthen capacity-building, skills development and education systems; and ensure more systematic engagement with the private sector, while maintaining alignment with public interest and sustainable development objectives.

13. Climate change was recognized as a central and compounding driver of systemic risk whose impacts were increasingly evident across economic and social systems. Members stressed the strong interlinkages among climate change, development and technological transformation, as demonstrated by phenomena such as rising resource and energy demands. These deeply interconnected dynamics were considered to contribute to broader trends of fragility in certain contexts. The discussion underscored the need for stronger political leadership and more decisive and accelerated collective action, given the gap between current responses and the scale of the challenges.

14. Demographic change was discussed as a key structural megatrend that presented both risks and opportunities. Members pointed to divergent demographic patterns across regions, including ageing populations and youth bulges, and their implications for employment, social protection and fiscal sustainability. Concerns were raised regarding alarmist narratives about demographic shifts that could undermine human rights and progress on gender equality. Migration was highlighted as an increasingly complex and multidimensional phenomenon linked to economic, environmental and conflict-related drivers and characterized by persistent governance gaps that left many people without adequate protection. At the same time, members emphasized that demographic change was a relatively predictable megatrend that could generate positive outcomes if supported by proactive, inclusive and forward-looking policies. The work of the timebound Task Team on Demographic Change of the High-level Committee on Programmes was highlighted, including the common messages on policy responses to demographic change endorsed by CEB in October 2025.

15. The discussion also encompassed the implications of megatrends for governance and multilateral cooperation. Members noted a growing mismatch between the complexity of global challenges and the capacity of existing governance

frameworks to respond effectively. The rise of non-State actors, particularly in the technological domain, and the increasing relevance of more flexible and plurilateral forms of cooperation were noted. Members stressed the importance of strengthening system-wide coherence, foresight and integrated approaches, while overcoming siloed responses and enhancing collaboration across mandates and sectors.

16. Concluding the segment, the Secretary-General emphasized the importance of strengthening engagement among a broad range of partners, underscoring that the future of multilateralism would depend on a more balanced and inclusive distribution of global influence, supported by stronger and more interconnected forms of multipolar cooperation. Stressing the need to avoid fragmentation and polarization, he called for renewed efforts to sustain an inclusive and networked multilateral system capable of responding to the complex megatrends and challenges facing the international community.

IV. Segment 3: UN80 Initiative

17. The Board's final agenda item focused on the UN80 Initiative of the Secretary-General. This was the third consecutive session at which CEB took up the topic, having discussed the Secretary-General's vision for the initiative in May 2025, at its first regular session, and having considered the draft UN80 Initiative action plan at its second regular session in October 2025. At the current session, the Board had before it a draft of the progress report of the Secretary-General on the UN80 Initiative ([A/80/732](#)), which set out the status of the work packages, the pathways and timelines towards their completion, and pending issues and challenges.

18. In his opening remarks, the Secretary-General recalled that the Board's first regular session of 2025 had taken place at a dramatic moment, a time of growing pressures on peace and security, development and human rights, coinciding with increasingly constrained resources. He expressed his gratitude to the membership for recognizing that that difficult situation required the United Nations to become more cost-effective and impactful, as he had stated when launching the UN80 Initiative two months earlier. The CEB discussion had fostered a collective understanding that had enabled progress under the workstream on structural and programmatic alignments. Citing the support that Member States had since consistently expressed for the Initiative, the Secretary-General pointed now to their expectation that the United Nations deliver tangible results by the end of 2026. He acknowledged that some of the work packages would be more complicated to conclude and asked entities to engage in a spirit of solidarity, unity and compromise. He expressed a deep belief that, with the United Nations system working together, the UN80 Initiative would produce a landmark outcome that would strengthen the United Nations for the future.

19. As moderator for the segment, the Under-Secretary-General for Policy and Chair of the UN80 Initiative Task Force, Guy Ryder, provided the context and set out the purpose of the discussion. He recalled key milestones in the UN80 process, starting with the launch of the Initiative in March 2025, and outlined the progress achieved to date under the three workstreams, relating to efficiency in the Secretariat, mandate implementation review and structural and programmatic alignments. Echoing the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Policy credited the first regular session of 2025 of CEB with playing a crucial role in transforming the UN80 Initiative from a concept into a process that spanned the entire United Nations system.

20. The workstream on structural and programmatic realignments was now at a decisive phase and was the focus of the Board's deliberations at the current session. The Under-Secretary-General for Policy recapped the scope of the workstream, which

was composed of 31 work packages encompassing development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarian activities, as well as efforts to strengthen cross-pillar integration. He highlighted three key enablers integral to the UN80 Initiative that underpinned the Organization's core work, namely shared services, technology and data. The draft progress report of the Secretary-General reiterated the rationale for and logic behind the UN80 Initiative, summarized the progress achieved, highlighted the vital role of Member States in providing guidance for and supporting proposed solutions and concluded by stressing the shared responsibility of Member States, the Secretariat and the wider United Nations system for delivery. CEB members were invited to comment on the draft and provide information so that the content could be updated before the report was published and presented to the General Assembly on 28 May 2026.

21. In the discussion, it was recognized that as the world was changing, the United Nations had to change with it and reform accordingly. A significant challenge identified was ensuring that the Organization kept pace with that change while meeting unprecedented operational demands and facing severe financial constraints. It was observed that the UN80 Initiative had challenged organizations to think more boldly about what the United Nations must be in order to strengthen its ability to deliver. The advancements made under the Initiative were acknowledged, with many members reporting on the deliberations held and progress made under the various work packages to which their organizations were contributing. The value of communicating what had been achieved so far and of the future potential of the reform was stressed. A number of speakers commended the Secretary-General on his draft progress report on the UN80 Initiative, with some offering suggestions for additions or other edits. The report was anticipated to be the basis for concrete outcomes, and it must meet expectations and chart the way towards implementation. It was observed that, at the current, vital stage, sustained stakeholder outreach was important, as Member States had a leading role to play in deciding on the way forward on the basis of the Secretary-General's recommendations, and civil society must be further engaged to secure their support for the proposed reforms.

22. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Management, the Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, Catherine Pollard, shared salient insights from the Committee's fifty-first session. She also provided an update on the status of work package 14, on the unified services road map, which she co-led, as Chair of the High-level Committee on Management, together with the co-chairs of the Business Innovations Group of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group and the Executive Director of the World Food Programme. With a framework now in place, she reported that the emphasis was shifting from design to implementation, with tangible progress evident already in several of the far-reaching efficiency initiatives¹ that had been developed under the High-level Committee on Management, including on artificial intelligence-powered language services, joint procurement in the area of information and communications technologies, and shared enabling services (the United Nations system services hub). A dashboard on the road map would soon be made publicly available online,² in order to support accountability and make progress visible.

23. The Chair of the High-level Committee on Programmes, the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, Inger Andersen, shared some strategic reflections from the programme and policy perspective. Specifically, she indicated that members of the High-level Committee on Programmes felt that, in the context of reform efforts, it was important to stand

¹ See unsceb.org/topics/hlcm-far-reaching-efficiency-initiatives.

² See data.unsystem.org/usr-progress-dashboard/.

together in defence of United Nations norms, values and principles; collectively protect the United Nations normative space and ensure that human rights remained at the centre of the work of the United Nations system; and strengthen internal unity and mutual support to safeguard the credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations and to maintain public trust. She observed that members of the High-level Committee on Programmes were supportive of enhanced programmatic collaboration to mitigate forces that negatively affected programme activities, including fostering strategic partnerships and pooling expertise to bridge gaps. They were also supportive of communication that more effectively demonstrated the concrete results delivered by the United Nations system and its positive impacts on people's lives.

24. In his conclusion, the Under-Secretary-General for Policy observed that the discussion had echoed the sense of collective responsibility expressed by members in 2025. He mentioned that the concrete engagement of principals had underpinned many of the results achieved under the UN80 Initiative so far. He indicated that the draft report of the Secretary-General would be refined to reflect suggestions and new information provided by members before being published.

25. The Secretary-General added that he appreciated the positive spirit that had prevailed during the meeting. He observed that members were committed to ensuring that the United Nations system was able to respond to expectations for reform and to taking a mission-oriented approach to maximize benefits for the people whom it served. He looked forward to presenting results from the third UN80 workstream to the General Assembly, both in order to seek approval in cases where a decision of an intergovernmental organ was envisaged and to inform Member States of action to be taken under his authority. The Secretary-General concluded by reiterating his aim for the United Nations system to come together in order to make the changes needed to achieve greater impact for the people whom it served and all those who saw the United Nations as essential to addressing the world's problems.

V. Other matters

A. Tributes to Board members

26. The Secretary-General paid tribute to the Executive Director of the World Food Programme, Cindy McCain, who was attending a CEB session for the last time.

B. Lunch presentation on the launch of the United Nations Human Rights Group

27. The Secretary-General launched the United Nations Human Rights Group, recalling that it was an initiative that had been proposed in his report on workstream 3 of the UN80 Initiative, entitled "Shifting paradigms: united to deliver" ([A/80/392](#)), and developed under that Initiative. The objective of the United Nations Human Rights Group was to bring together and leverage the knowledge and expertise from across the United Nations system to address sensitive issues through a common approach, grounded in human rights principles. He appealed to CEB members to take part in the Group, and emphasized the importance of addressing human rights challenges collectively, ensuring coordination and coherence across the United Nations system so that there would be no gaps in human rights protections. Underscoring the timeliness of the initiative, the Secretary-General noted that, under the leadership of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Human Rights Group would serve as the primary internal high-level strategic forum for addressing human rights issues.

28. Providing remarks on the origins and objectives of the United Nations Human Rights Group, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, outlined the evolution of the Secretary-General's initiatives, from his call to action for human rights to the United Nations Agenda for Protection, Our Common Agenda (culminating in the Pact for the Future) and the UN80 Initiative, which had led to the creation of a United Nations system-wide mechanism dedicated to human rights. He noted that all mandates of United Nations entities had some connection to human rights and that the Group provided an opportunity for the United Nations system to collectively identify issues, solutions and pathways for action, at a moment when human rights were under attack. Mr. Türk thanked the Secretary-General for his dedication to human rights and reiterated his call for CEB members to engage with the United Nations Human Rights Group, including by participating in its inaugural meeting, to be held the following day, on the margins of the current session of CEB.

C. Endorsement of documents

29. The report of the High-level Committee on Programmes on its fifty-first session ([CEB/2026/4](#)) and the report of the High-level Committee on Management on its fifty-first session ([CEB/2026/3](#)) were endorsed electronically outside the CEB session.

30. The United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy 2.0 (2026–2030) ([CEB/2026/1/Add.1](#)) was endorsed electronically outside the CEB session, following an extensive system-wide consultative process that culminated in review and approval through the High-level Committee on Programmes and the High-level Committee on Management, respectively, at their fifty-first sessions.

D. Date and venue of the forthcoming session

31. The Board members were informed that the second regular session of 2026 would be held in New York on 29 and 30 October.
