



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

21 March 2005

Report of the High-Level Committee on Programmes at its ninth session

Rome, 23-25 February 2005

1. The High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its ninth session at Castel Gandolfo in Rome from 23 to 25 February 2005. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are attached to the present report in annex I and annex II, respectively.

I. Review of recent developments

2. The Committee reviewed major developments since its last meeting in September 2004 in order to frame the context for its consideration of the report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and prepare for the spring session of CEB. Over the past few months, two important reports, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and the report of the Millennium Project, had been released. The magnitude and impact of the tsunami disaster of 26 December had resulted in an unprecedented global response. The investigation into the oil-for-food programme had resulted in a first key report, but two more reports were pending. New, significant reform initiatives had been announced in the United Nations and in different parts of the system. The system faced major challenges in the period ahead and a great deal was at stake for it in contributing to a positive outcome for the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly to be held in September 2005.

3. The Chairman noted the importance of the United Nations system coming together to assess how best to build on its strengths and to renew the confidence of the public, particularly of young people, in the values for which it stood. While much that had been accomplished by the system was not fully recognized, it was also important that the system should not promise more than it could deliver and should convey an openness to change and a readiness to continuously enhance performance.

4. The Chef de Cabinet of the Secretary-General, through videoconference, briefed the Committee on the current reform processes within the Organization, the impact of the oil-for-food programme investigation and the preparations for the report of the Secretary-General to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General



Assembly. He noted that the United Nations was facing a difficult time and that media reports, particularly in the United States of America, but increasingly in other countries as well, portrayed an Organization that was resistant to change and impervious to real accountability. He stressed that it was important for the United Nations system to use the crisis as an opportunity, drawing out the lessons to move reform forward in shaping a more modern international civil service and building an Organization and a system in which transparency and accountability for performance and for results are the guiding principles.

5. He outlined how he saw the response of the media evolving in the coming months, as two more reports arising from the investigation into the oil-for-food programme would be made public, on the role of Cotecna, in March, and on the role of United Nations agencies in Iraq, in June.

6. The sexual exploitation scandal in the United Nations mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo was a matter of the gravest concern, since it was unlikely that such problems were limited to that mission. He noted that all legal measures would be pursued to punish those found guilty. At the same time, longer-term solutions would be sought. The Deputy Secretary-General would be leaving shortly for a tour of the peacekeeping missions in order to drive home the seriousness of the issue and the United Nations policy of zero tolerance towards sexual abuse.

7. At present, there were six United States congressional committees investigating the United Nations; the leaders of one of them had addressed a letter to the Secretary-General, referring to investigations at the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and requesting that all internal and external audits of the United Nations and its affiliated organizations should be made available to Member States as a matter of routine.

8. The report of the Secretary-General to the September High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly should help the Organization break out of a defensive mode. It should change the storyline, aim at renewing commitment around a clear set of priorities in the areas of greatest concern to the international community, speak about what matters on the ground and lay out a credible vision as to how the system could become more accountable, transparent and focused as well as deliver more effectively. The report should draw on various inputs, including the Millennium Project, the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, the work of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) on simplification, the Blair Commission for Africa and other proposals on human rights and humanitarianism. Work under way in HLCP on preparing a system-wide implementation report should also be considered. Many positive developments mentioned in those reports should be highlighted and further promoted: progress in mainstreaming the Millennium Development Goals was remarkable and many signs existed of a major shift in the political salience of official development assistance (ODA) funding.

9. He added that between March, when the report of the Secretary-General would be issued, and September, when the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly would take place, there was a need for the system to campaign strongly in favour of its achievements. What mattered, ultimately, was the capacity of the United Nations system to deliver results for the people who required its assistance. In this connection, there was a need for greater coherence at the country level,

enhanced strategic collaboration behind the poverty reduction strategy paper/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process and strengthened authority of resident coordinators. The invitation to the Chairman of HLCP to participate in the work of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) Executive Committee was intended to strengthen the link between UNDG and HLCP and to make operational coherence mirror policy coherence.

II. Preparations for the spring 2005 session of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination

A. 2005 Comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration

10. The Committee reviewed progress in the elaboration of a CEB report on the response of the system to the Millennium Declaration. It had before it a revised draft, an updated annex on major collaborative initiatives to support the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and a summary of comments and suggestions by members of HLCP on the concluding chapter of the draft report on the way ahead following the videoconference of 7 February.

11. The Committee emphasized the importance of a clear and consistent storyline throughout the text. In describing the unprecedented way in which the United Nations system had come together as a result of the Millennium Declaration, the report should underscore the system's commitment to continue to cooperate in managing, and being accountable, for better results, tailoring its support to genuine country needs, sharing knowledge and deepening its understanding of issues and of the most effective responses. The concluding chapter should build on these key messages and spell out the future steps that the United Nations system intends to take, consistent with the report of the Secretary-General to the forthcoming High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly, to drive change and help countries manage global interdependence.

12. Regarding the concluding chapter of the draft report, which is to set out the way ahead, Committee members put forward the following suggestions:

(a) Emphasis should be placed on further improving the effectiveness and coherence of the system's activities at the country level through better integration of United Nations system support with national plans and priorities; adopting common assessment and programming tools; harmonizing and simplifying United Nations rules and procedures; strengthening the resident coordinator system; harnessing the full capacity of the United Nations system, including non-resident agencies, in support of nationally owned programmes; and increasing the focus of United Nations system support on capacity-building;

(b) The report of the Secretary-General on comprehensive statistical data on operational activities for development for 2002 (A/59/84-E/2004/53) and the provisions of General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities define the priority tasks for the system at the country level. They are in line with the outcome of the CEB retreat on field-level coherence and should feature prominently in the present report. The outcomes of the 2003 Rome Declaration on Harmonization and the March 2005 Paris meeting to

harmonize the operational policies, procedures and practices of multilateral and bilateral development institutions with those of partner country systems should also be drawn upon in finalizing this section;

(c) Strengthening linkages between the standard or norm-setting role of the United Nations system and its operational activities and the relationship between peace and development should be among the main objectives to be highlighted in this section. The capacity of the system to advance its peace and its development agendas in a mutually reinforcing way is key to progress;

(d) With brighter prospects for increased ODA and debt relief, greater cohesion and coordination are required of the United Nations system, especially at the country level. A main common concern should be to assist countries in making optimal use of additional resource flows;

(e) The recommendations should highlight the follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits as a continuing major rallying point for the system, and place the system's work in pursuing the Millennium Development Goals in this broader context;

(f) The comparative advantages of the system — analytical work, advocacy, awareness-raising, forging international consensus, setting norms and providing technical advice and assistance — should be presented in a comprehensive, holistic manner, pointing out how effectiveness requires that they all be adequately supported and deployed in a mutually supporting way;

(g) The need to assist countries in meeting the challenges of climate change should be particularly stressed;

(h) In spelling out how the system will proceed further, the last chapter should focus on measures to enhance the system's support where insufficient progress is being made, as well as respond to new and emerging challenges. The chapter should highlight the main requirements — coherence, adequate resources and the political support of Member States — for the system to continue making progress. The conclusion of this section should be the basis for the future work programme of HLCP.

13. Suggestions on what should be emphasized in the main body of the report included the following:

(a) Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the Millennium Declaration and, as such, they should take the lead in ensuring that efforts to achieve the goals and commitments contained in the Declaration, including policies governing the support provided by the United Nations system, are effectively coordinated;

(b) Country ownership of the development process should be a main principle guiding United Nations system support at the country level;

(c) The pivotal role of economic growth in achieving the Millennium Development Goals should be consistently emphasized;

(d) All of the different components of tracking progress on the Millennium Development Goals — “scorekeeping” at country and aggregate levels led by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), global monitoring of developed and developing country

policies by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and contributions of the agencies to such monitoring in their respective fields of competence — should be presented in the report in a comprehensive manner, as indications of a system-wide mobilization in assessing progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. The system-wide effort to advance dialogue between developed and developing countries on the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus should likewise be emphasized;

(e) Note should be made of the contribution of the Bretton Woods institutions at the country level through the PRSP process, the World Bank's country assistance strategies and in their sector work;

(f) The second chapter, on working together for poverty eradication and sustainable development, should be presented in the overall context of growing economic interdependence and how the United Nations system is supporting countries in managing it;

(g) An overview of economic and social trends as they appeared in 2000 and how they have evolved over the past five years should be highlighted;

(h) The section on conflict prevention should be better aligned with the analysis in the background note submitted by the Department of Political Affairs with respect to the conceptual, institutional and practical challenges facing the system in conflict prevention and peacebuilding (see para. 28 below);

(i) Consideration should be given to providing a more rigorous classification of examples of collaborative work to support the implementation of the Millennium Declaration in the annex or dispensing with the annex altogether;

(j) The text boxes should provide punctual information and messages complementing those presented in the body of the text.

14. It was stressed that the value of the report will depend on its capacity to introduce a truly system-wide perspective on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration: how the contribution of each part of the system fits into the larger picture and how results in advancing progress in achieving the goals and commitments in the Millennium Declaration can, through enhanced policy and operational coherence, become greater than the sum of their parts.

15. **HLCP members were invited to provide further comments and suggestions no later than 4 March. In that light, a revised draft, including an annotated outline of the final section of the report on the way ahead and an executive summary, will be prepared for the next session of CEB. The report will be finalized thereafter, so as to dovetail with the report of the Secretary-General for the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly (which will be available a few days before the CEB session), and to reflect, particularly in the section on the way ahead, the discussion and conclusions of CEB itself. HLCP recommends that a date for the launch of the report be set by CEB around mid-May, so that it may be drawn upon in the preparations for the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council session, as well as in the discussion leading to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly in September. The Committee expected that the report would also be brought to the attention of the relevant agency governing bodies.**

B. The New Partnership for Africa's Development

16. Under this item, HLCP followed up on the request of CEB, at its first regular session of 2004, for a further in-depth discussion on United Nations system support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). To that end, it considered a CEB secretariat paper on support of the United Nations system for enhancing the implementation of NEPAD as well as a note by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa outlining current policy and institutional contexts.

17. The Director of the CEB secretariat recalled that the NEPAD programme, which was developed in 2001, had incorporated the Millennium Development Goals as its own goals and targets. At subsequent CEB discussions, the system's commitment to pursue a strategy to extend and engender support for NEPAD were highlighted. The paper concluded that while progress had been achieved in engaging United Nations system support for NEPAD at the global, regional and national levels, greater coordination and collaboration were required in a number of areas.

18. The representative of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa noted that, given the current rate of progress, it was clear that many African countries would not reach the targets of the Millennium Development Goals. In order to replicate the success of the East Asian economies, it was necessary for there to be enhanced investment in the private sector and greater integration in the world's economy. Prerequisites for development included conflict prevention, democracy and sound economic, corporate and political governance.

19. International support initiatives for Africa's development could be classified into three categories: (a) those aimed at supporting NEPAD programmes (Group of Eight — Africa Action Plan, the Commission for Africa of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Secretary-General's Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD and the multi-donor Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility at the African Development Bank); (b) initiatives in place since before the creation of NEPAD (the work of the United Nations system in Africa, the Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development (TICAD), China-Africa cooperation, the Doha round of the World Trade Organization, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, the African Growth and Opportunity Act of the Government of the United States of America, and the European Union Everything but Arms initiative in support of the least developed countries); and (c) recent national initiatives and outcomes of international processes (the United States Millennium Challenge Account, the "Marshall Plan for Africa" proposed by the United Kingdom, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the report of the Millennium Project).

20. During the ensuing discussion, the importance of balancing support to NEPAD with sensitivity to African ownership of the programme was stressed. Indeed, the view was expressed that African ownership needed to be protected, even from organizations of the United Nations system itself. This meant that the most valuable contribution by the system would be to help build and strengthen indigenous institutional, managerial and technical capacities, particularly for further programme development and for mobilizing greater donor support for the implementation of NEPAD.

21. Against this background, the Committee concluded that:

(a) The integration of NEPAD priorities into the national development frameworks of African countries is vitally important to the long-term sustainability of NEPAD. It is also essential to enabling the system to align its development support activities, particularly its activities to assist countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, behind well-rooted, broadly owned national development strategies consistent with NEPAD;

(b) In continuing to support the implementation of commitments on NEPAD at regional, subregional and country levels, the United Nations system should make a deliberate effort to contribute to measures to enhance policy and operational coherence, including through more systematic communications and information sharing;

(c) The United Nations system should strengthen its technical support to the NEPAD secretariat, particularly in the performance of its roles of facilitation and resource mobilization for the implementation of NEPAD programmes;

(d) As implementation of NEPAD progresses, there is a need for the organizations of the United Nations system to channel more technical and financial resources for building institutional, managerial and technical capacity, both to promote domestic resource mobilization and to attract a higher level of foreign direct investments. The funding of joint projects in this and related areas of capacity-building will require a special effort by the system at resource mobilization.

22. The Committee decided to transmit its views to CEB for consideration in conjunction with its deliberations in preparation for the September High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. It further agreed to continue to pursue the implementation of NEPAD within its own programme of work.

C. Conflict prevention

23. The Chairman recalled the Committee's agreement at its previous meeting to revert to a discussion on conflict prevention in the light of the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, as well as the request of CEB to HLCP that it prepare recommendations on further strengthening the system's collective contribution in this area. A note prepared by the Department for Political Affairs outlined measures for consideration by the system and identified issues on which discussions at the April session of CEB could focus most productively.

24. In introducing the note, Mr. Danilo Türk, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, highlighted the fact that security systems worldwide, set up in response to the security threats of the cold war period, do not match current threats to peace. The report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change had significantly advanced the analysis of current threats and needs, including by recognizing development as an indispensable foundation for any collective security system that takes prevention seriously.

25. Mr. Türk identified three categories of challenges for strengthening the United Nations system's collective contribution to preventing conflict: (a) on conceptual

issues such as analytical capability, how could the diagnostic capacity of the United Nations system be strengthened? What kinds of investments were needed in this regard? What could be done to reinforce society's resilience to conflict? (b) on institutional capacity, what should be the functions, placement and composition of the peacebuilding commission proposed in the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change? (c) on practical issues, which are usually situation-specific, how does the United Nations use its existing tools and move forward incrementally?

26. Referring to the recommendation of the Panel to set up a peacebuilding commission reporting to the Security Council, he considered it important that such a commission should also establish an institutional link with the Economic and Social Council, particularly in relation to post-conflict situations that are not on the current agenda of the Security Council.

27. During the discussion, a number of issues were raised that are summarized below:

(a) In order to strengthen collective capacity for conflict prevention, the system's ability to diagnose and help resolve emerging conflicts would be enhanced by: (a) drawing more systematically on the diverse expertise in all parts of the United Nations system; (b) better utilizing the United Nations convening power and its capacity to bring together all actors who can contribute to conflict prevention; and (c) basing the system's interventions on a deeper analysis of its comparative advantages, rather than focusing on the availability of funds;

(b) The development and political sides of the United Nations should engage in more active dialogue and should seek to identify best practices in this respect. Stronger links need to be forged between UNDG, the Executive Committee for Peace and Security and the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs, as well as between them and universities and think-tanks engaged in conflict prevention;

(c) A set of instruments, similar to the tools that the United Nations has already developed to deal with post-conflict situations, needs to be developed in the area of conflict prevention. A survey of the system's capacities for conflict prevention should be conducted under the auspices of HLCP and be made available on the CEB website. The system's links with civil society on conflict prevention also need to be substantially strengthened;

(d) The relevant parts of the draft CEB report on the response of the United Nations system to the Millennium Declaration and the analysis in the draft of links between development support and conflict prevention should avoid giving the impression that the system pursues policies that filter development assistance solely through the lens of conflict prevention. Social and economic security, including security against disease transmission, should be highlighted in the draft. Disarmament, the issues of discrimination against women and intangible threats to peace such as prejudice, intolerance and ignorance should also feature more prominently in this section of the report;

(e) The current international focus on security threats should not obscure the many other important challenges that the world community needs to address. Important root causes of conflict are marginalization, social exclusion and differential access to natural resources. Interventions to redress imbalances in this regard might, however, become in themselves sources of conflict. It was moreover

observed that controlling or suppressing conflict may not always be possible or result in long-term stability;

(f) Development should continue to be addressed by the system in its own right as well as in its linkages with security. There are many poor countries that are not facing armed conflict but still require strong United Nations support. An overemphasis on the interdependence of issues should be avoided, since that might lead to an impasse in which the United Nations system's security is compromised and development efforts are stalled because the relationship between the two issues is not sufficiently understood;

(g) Several developing countries would need increased ODA to effectively engage in conflict prevention. In addition, insufficient attention is currently being given to conflict prevention as it relates to middle-income countries.

28. In concluding the discussion, the Chairman highlighted the progress being made in establishing an open and effective dialogue between the Committee and the Department of Political Affairs on conflict prevention and thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs for his important contribution and engagement in such a dialogue. He underscored, in this connection, the critical importance of a strengthened diagnostic capacity within the United Nations system to assess the likelihood of conflicts.

29. He requested that the note prepared by the Department of Political Affairs be reviewed in the light of the discussion and attached to the annotated agenda for CEB. Members of HLCP were invited to provide specific suggestions for strengthening the contribution to the section on conflict prevention contained in the draft CEB report on the response of the United Nations system to the Millennium Declaration. The Committee decided to revert to the consideration of this issue in the light of the conclusions emanating from the CEB discussion.

III. Follow-up to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination/High-Level Committee on Programmes decisions

A. Implementation of the development agenda at the country level

30. Under this item, the Committee had an exchange of views on the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development, on progress in the follow-up to the conclusions of the CEB retreat held in October 2004 and on the linkages between the two exercises.

31. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs noted that the resolution provided an overall framework with guiding principles to orient the country-level functioning of the United Nations system and its development cooperation activities and to enhance the effectiveness of the support that the system extends to development cooperation activities.

32. The overall messages contained in General Assembly resolution 59/250 were: (a) country-level activities of the United Nations development system should be

better integrated with national plans and priorities and be undertaken with the full participation of national Governments, under their leadership and coordination; (b) the United Nations system's development cooperation provides a crucial contribution to the country-level implementation of the international commitments of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and summits; (c) the United Nations system should enhance the developing countries' capacity to pursue poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development; (d) to these ends, the contribution of all organizations of the United Nations system needs to be mobilized and an inclusive approach to country-level development operations and corresponding coordination mechanisms should be adopted; (e) the reform processes under way should be vigorously pursued and the active involvement of the entire development system needs to be assured across the many different areas of action, including the simplification and harmonization of processes, the common country assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) process, the resident coordinator system, evaluation activities, capacity-building efforts, gender issues, regional dimensions and the transition from relief to development.

33. Most of the provisions of the resolution are addressed to the United Nations system as a whole. In addition, the General Assembly directly addressed governing bodies of United Nations organizations, requesting them to initiate appropriate actions in the areas of funding, transaction costs and efficiency, the country-level capacity of the United Nations system, regional dimensions, gender perspectives and follow-up requirements. The fundamental message was that developing countries should be able to draw fully on the entire system's accumulated experience in all pertinent economic, social and other domains, using the whole range of services available through the organizations of the system, on the basis of the comparative advantages and expertise of those organizations.

34. In paragraph 101 of its resolution 59/250, the General Assembly called for the Secretary-General to submit, after consultations with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, a report to the Economic and Social Council at its next session on an appropriate management process containing guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time frames for the full implementation of that resolution.

35. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs introduced the initial draft on the management process containing a summary of actions, targets, benchmarks and time frames for the implementation of the resolution, recalling that, as indicated in the letter of 9 February 2005 addressed by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs to all CEB members, a consultative process for the preparation of the report to the Economic and Social Council, involving all members of HLCP, was being set in motion.

36. The General Assembly, in its resolution 59/250, calls for an active response by the United Nations system, with provisions explicitly addressed to CEB, UNDG and the United Nations Evaluation Group. In particular, the General Assembly:

(a) Officially recognizes the role played by UNDG and CEB in enhancing coherence, effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system at the country level and calls for close collaboration between the two mechanisms (para. 12);

(b) Requests UNDG to consult with CEB on reform-related activities that affect efficiency and containment of transaction costs, including the area of simplification and harmonization of rules and procedures (para. 46), for which the Secretary-General, in consultation with UNDG, is requested to prepare a programme of work to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council in July (para. 37);

(c) Requests both UNDG and CEB to collaborate with the Secretary-General in developing, by the end of 2005, a comprehensive accountability framework for the resident coordinators and to exercise oversight to ensure that the design and implementation of UNDAF take place in a fully participatory manner (para. 58);

(d) Calls on CEB to make recommendations on measures necessary to enhance the effectiveness of the capacity development efforts of the United Nations development system (para. 29);

(e) Requests CEB to take the necessary steps, in collaboration with UNDG, to secure a more participatory involvement of the entire United Nations system in country-level operations and coordination mechanisms (para. 45) and calls for a number of actions in this domain in the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (para. 51);

(f) Gives a special role to CEB in the area of evaluation of operational activities for development, by encouraging UNEG, under the aegis of CEB, to make progress in system-wide collaboration on evaluation, particular in the harmonization and simplification of methodologies, norms, standards and cycles of evaluation (para. 60);

(g) Identifies other roles for CEB and, thus, for HLCP, including: the improvement of statistical data on operational activities; the review of the funding of development cooperation in the Economic and Social Council, starting in 2006; follow-up to the recommendations of the Assembly concerning the common country assessment and UNDAF processes; the resident coordinator system and the country-level capacity of the United Nations system, which addresses many of the broad themes taken up by CEB at its October retreat; the regional dimensions of operational activities for development; the intensification of system-wide cooperation at the regional level; and more systematic consideration of the regional and subregional dimensions of development cooperation.

37. In the ensuing discussion, members of the Committee raised a number of points, including:

(a) The challenge of making the UNDAF process more comprehensive, while ensuring that it is not too cumbersome;

(b) The tension between multidisciplinary and sector-based priorities among donors;

(c) The need for a culture change within the United Nations system on the issue of simplification and harmonization;

(d) The challenge to factor into country-level coordination mechanisms, including the UNDAF process and poverty reduction strategy papers, the contribution of organizations that do not have country-based multi-year programming;

(e) The importance of bringing the analytical skills of the United Nations system more systematically to bear on country-level work planning;

(f) The fact that it is imperative for the system to respond to the call of the General Assembly for truly nationally owned and led development frameworks and processes with which all United Nations mechanisms should increasingly be integrated as the paradigm within which to address and overcome the problems posed by the diversity and complexity of the processes adopted by the United Nations system, as well as their harmonization and simplification at the country level.

38. It was generally felt that the CEB system had an important role to play in mobilizing the United Nations family of organizations to respond in a concerted, proactive way to the challenges posed by the resolution of the General Assembly. Enhanced collaboration between UNDG and HLCP was essential in this regard, particularly as a means to ensure greater coherence between the operational and policy dimensions of the system's work.

39. The Committee welcomed the invitation addressed by the Chairman of UNDG to the Chairman of HLCP, in a letter dated 3 February 2005, to participate in the meetings of the UNDG Executive Committee as a means of strengthening interaction between them.

40. The Committee considered that General Assembly resolution 59/250 would have ongoing implications for its programme of work, which needed to be looked into in greater depth, with a particular focus on those areas for which CEB was requested to play a specific role and those for which closer collaborative relationship between HLCP and UNDG would be required.

41. **Recalling its mandate, the Committee decided to appoint a task group to review the practical implications of General Assembly resolution 59/250 vis-à-vis the work programme of HLCP and CEB and to identify concrete ways for HLCP and UNDG to complement each other's work in ways that best exploit their respective strengths in advancing the objectives of the resolution and related conclusions adopted by CEB at its fall 2004 retreat. Terms of reference would be prepared to enable the task group to commence its work. The task group would report back to HLCP at its next meeting.**

B. Proposal by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization

42. The Committee recalled that CEB, at its fall 2004 session, had invited HLCP to pursue discussion on the proposal of the Director-General of UNIDO to enhance the role of the United Nations system in the field of economic development as a means of advancing the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

43. Representatives of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) briefed the Committee on the background and purpose of the proposal and on the series of consultations that the Director-General of UNIDO had undertaken with other executive heads and senior officials of the United Nations. They underscored the importance of economic development for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the need for enhanced collaboration among United Nations organizations working in this field. To that end, they called for the establishment of

an open-ended task force of interested organizations as an important step towards a voluntary mechanism for enhanced dialogue and collaboration within the United Nations system on economic development.

44. The Committee welcomed the UNIDO initiative and shared its basic objective of strengthening the inter-agency cooperation on sustained economic growth as a key dimension of the system-wide effort to support the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. The Committee also expressed appreciation for the consultative and participatory manner in which UNIDO was pursuing its proposal.

45. HLCP noted that the proposal touched on many different dimensions of the ongoing activities of the system, including work on: economic growth and sustainable development; strengthening trade negotiation capacities in developing countries by addressing their supply constraints and enabling them to meet product and process standards; enhancing collaboration, including between UNDP and UNIDO, in developing and strengthening the private sector in developing countries; efforts aimed at helping bridge the transition from relief to development while also addressing the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons; measures to strengthen the link between economic growth and human development; support for productivity improvement and job creation; strengthening collaboration on capacity-building in science and technology; focusing on shelter as a means to achieving productive and inclusive cities; and activities related to crime prevention.

46. The Committee considered that, in identifying the priority areas for collaboration, the proposed task force should focus on a limited number of areas in which it could add value to ongoing work in the system and contribute to a better utilization of existing resources among the participating organizations, drawing on the menu of topics contained in the annex of the UNIDO note. While the proposed task force itself was not expected to engage directly in joint programming and resource mobilization, the outcome of its work might lead to the development of joint programmes and joint efforts to mobilize resources among the organizations concerned.

47. In the light of these considerations, the Committee decided to establish an open-ended task force to pursue the proposal of UNIDO and to agree on a well-defined, specific programme of work. It invited interested organizations to participate in the work of the task force and requested UNIDO to take the lead in convening and organizing the task force. The Committee requested the task force to report on the progress of its work at its meeting in September 2005 and to submit a final report to it in the spring of 2006.

C. Curbing transnational crime

48. The representative of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) updated the Committee on progress towards forging a strategic United Nations system-wide response to transnational crime. Members of the Committee were informed that the initial phase of raising awareness and building links between organizations of the United Nations system had now been completed and that the focus of the process had shifted towards joint programming. Eight specific areas for joint action by the United Nations system had been identified: (a) implementation of relevant international legal instruments; (b) system-wide information collection, analysis and reporting; (c) developing a preventive approach within the United

Nations system; (d) joint activities and projects; (e) enhanced cooperation with identified external agencies; (f) inclusion in United Nations country-level interventions; (g) promotion of best practices; and (h) raising awareness of the United Nations system's response. In addition, the Committee was also informed that the International Group for Anti-Corruption Coordination had held a meeting in Brussels from 30 September to 1 October 2004 to explore measures to prevent and control corruption in international organizations. The report from this meeting contained a series of recommendations that were brought to the Committee's attention at the request of the Group.

49. The Committee took note of the progress made and endorsed the proposed programme of action contained in the note on joint action to curb transnational crime as well as the suggestion that future progress reports be based on the joint activities identified. It was agreed that UNODC would report back to the Committee on further developments in one year's time.

IV. Other matters

50. The Committee agreed to hold a retreat in New York, on 14 and 15 July to: (a) take stock of the preparations by the United Nations system for the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly in September; (b) take stock of the achievements of HLCP over the previous two years; (c) undertake results-based work planning for the remainder of 2005 into 2006; and (d) review the work of the task group on the triennial comprehensive policy review.

51. Under this item, the Committee discussed a possible framework for an internal evaluation, based on an information note, and comments were requested in writing from those members who wished to provide them. It was decided, however, that the portion of the retreat devoted to the stock-taking of the work of the Committee would be led by an external facilitator.

52. It was also decided that the tenth session of HLCP would take place in Rome on 28 and 29 September.

Annex I

Agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Review of recent developments.
3. Preparations for the spring 2005 session of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination:
 - (a) 2005 comprehensive review of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration;
 - (b) New Partnership for Africa's Development;
 - (c) Conflict prevention.
4. Follow-up to CEB/HLCP decisions:
 - (a) Implementation of the development agenda at the country level;
 - (b) Proposal by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization;
 - (c) Curbing transnational crime.
5. Other matters:
 - (a) Future direction of the work of the High-Level Committee on Programmes;
 - (b) Date and venue of future sessions of the High-Level Committee on Programmes.

Annex II

List of participants

Chairman: Lennart Båge (International Fund for Agricultural Development)

Vice-Chairman: Mats Karlsson (World Bank)

Secretary: Phyllis Lee (CEB secretariat)

United Nations	Patrizio Civili
Executive Office of the Secretary-General	
Department of Political Affairs	Danilo Türk Karina Gerlach
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Massimo D'Angelo
Office of the Special Adviser on Africa	Mehdi Hamam
International Labour Organization	Maria Angelica Ducci Christophe Perrin
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Wendy Mann
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Jean-Yves Le Saux
International Civil Aviation Organization	Lise Boisvert
World Health Organization	Peter Mertens
World Bank	Eduardo Doryan
International Monetary Fund	Reinhard Munzberg
International Maritime Organization	David Edwards
World Intellectual Property Organization	Orobola Fasehun
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Uday Abhyankar
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Andrei Lazykin Francisco Serkovich Julio Camarena
International Atomic Energy Agency	Ramachandran Swaminathan
World Trade Organization	Patrick John Rata
* * *	
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Dan Deac

United Nations Development Programme Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Mourad Wahba Martin Loftus
United Nations Children's Fund	Ado Vaher
United Nations Population Fund	Mari Simonen
World Food Programme	Stanlake Samkange Allan Jury
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Ugi Zvekic
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)	Daniel Biau
* * *	
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization	Bernard Wrabetz
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	Eamon Murphy
United Nations System Staff College	Aung Tun Thet Svenja Korth
* * *	
United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination secretariat	Qazi Shaukat Fareed Agerico Lacanlale Mikael Rosengren

Annex III

The current policy and institutional contexts for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development: note by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa

1. Africa is on the cusp of change and renewal. This is reflected in several positive trends occurring in the region. These include the transition to or consolidation of democracy in many countries, the cessation of conflicts in some countries, the renewed commitment to sound socio-economic reforms, the growing activism of civil society and the dynamism of the private sector.
2. In the past four years, by far the two most important developments on a region-wide basis were the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in 2001 and the establishment of the African Union as the successor to the Organization of African Unity in 2002. NEPAD itself is not only a product of the positive changes but it is also designed to reinforce those beneficent trends.
3. Nevertheless, myriad problems persist. Economic growth remains too low to significantly reduce poverty on the scale envisaged in the Millennium Development Goals. Many countries remain severely burdened by debt. A great number also remain at the margins of the world economy. A few countries are mired in civil conflicts. Pandemic and preventable diseases continue to wreak havoc on the economic and social fabric of several countries. The chief aim of NEPAD, a programme for Africa's economic, social and political renewal, is to provide fresh impetus to national and regional efforts as well as to mobilize international support to sustain the salutary trends, while overcoming the current and emerging problems. This is a daunting challenge.
4. The successful implementation of NEPAD will depend on a range of factors. This note outlines some of the current policy and institutional contexts that will have a major influence on the implementation of the programme and concludes by suggesting a few ideas on what the United Nations system might do to further support its implementation.

Political trends and developments in Africa

5. Among various political developments with implications for NEPAD, Africa's efforts to strengthen its regional peace and security architecture are noteworthy. Particularly significant in this respect is the establishment of the Peace and Security Council as the decision-making organ of the African Union responsible for the prevention and management of conflicts and promotion of peace in the continent.
6. NEPAD recognizes that peace and security are necessary conditions for Africa's economic revival. Consequently, the strengthening of Africa's decision-making and operational capacity for managing conflicts in Africa will help create an environment conducive to political stability and economic growth.
7. The greater emphasis on transparency and accountability in public affairs, highlighted in the establishment of anti-corruption commissions or equivalent bodies in a growing number of African countries, is yet another promising trend.

The creation of the African Peer Review Mechanism — a process designed to foster, nurture and share sound governance practices among African countries — will contribute to prudent economic and fiscal management and enhance the bond of accountability between elected officials and the electorate.

Institutional links between the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development

8. NEPAD is a programme of the African Union and embodies the collective vision of African leaders for a peaceful and prosperous continent. As such, African Governments are agreed that NEPAD is functionally and institutionally a part of the African Union.

9. As the Secretary-General noted in his report^a to the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly, the integration of NEPAD into the African Union is therefore less a question of policy and functional integration, which has been settled, and more a matter of institutional arrangements for managing the NEPAD process within the existing structures of the African Union Commission. This assessment pertains to the functional and institutional integration of the NEPAD programme into the African Union and contains no judgment on the issue of the physical integration of the NEPAD secretariat into the Union.

10. One major change in institutional arrangement in the past six months is that the Steering Committee of NEPAD, composed of the personal representatives of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, is now presided over by the representative of the Chairman of the African Union Summit rather than the head of the NEPAD secretariat.

11. From the perspective of the United Nations system as well as African countries themselves, there are three advantages to the functional and institutional integration that is now taking place: there will be greater coherence in policy development and programme implementation; it will result in cost-efficiency and effectiveness; and it will reduce the potential dispersion of financial and technical support by partners.

Africa's ownership of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

12. NEPAD is distinguished by the principles of African ownership and leadership, as well as partnership. African ownership and leadership responds directly to the need for African Governments and peoples to chart the course of their development and be held accountable for progress or the lack thereof. Partnership reflects the recognition that development is a shared effort, both among various national stakeholders and between Africa and its development partners.

13. The design of the governance structure of NEPAD is based on the principles of African ownership, leadership and accountability. Each layer of the governance structure is accountable to the next and the leaders are accountable to each other and their own people through the African Peer Review Mechanism.

14. The highest authority of the NEPAD governance structure is the Heads of State and Government Summit of the African Union, which provides the overall policy guidance for NEPAD. Next to it is the Heads of State and Government

^a A/59/206, para. 31.

Implementation Committee, which reports to the African Union Summit on an annual basis. The Implementation Committee is comprised of four States for each of the five African Union regions and its functions are to define priorities, monitor progress in the implementation of the programmes of NEPAD and oversee the work of the Steering Committee.

15. The Steering Committee is composed of the personal representatives of the heads of State members of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee. The Steering Committee is in charge of following up on the implementation of the programme of action, overseeing the NEPAD secretariat and approving the terms of reference for specific projects and programmes. The NEPAD secretariat provides the liaison, coordination and administrative and logistical functions for NEPAD, in addition to serving as a facilitator of and mobilizer of resources for NEPAD programmes and projects.

16. As a practical expression of the principle of ownership, African countries have committed resources for financing the institutions and programmes of NEPAD. However, given the rather tight fiscal position of many African countries, international support for NEPAD remains important. There is no contradiction between the principles of ownership and partnership. Instead, both principles are mutually complementary, underlining the imperative for progress on both aspects.

International support for Africa's development since the adoption of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

17. A frequently encountered question is: how much international support has Africa garnered since the adoption of NEPAD? This question is based on the premise that since NEPAD appears to have attracted many promises and pledges of international support compared to previous African development initiatives, this should translate into more resources — more aid, debt relief, better trade terms and market access and more foreign direct investment. Important as additional resources are to its successful implementation, NEPAD's view of partnership extends beyond resource flows. It also encompasses a new approach on relations with Africa that takes into account the strongly felt desire for the continent to have a voice in international economic policymaking, especially relating to the decisions affecting the region.

18. International support for Africa's development since the adoption of NEPAD can be classified in three categories: those aimed specifically at supporting NEPAD programmes; those that were in place before NEPAD and still exist; and recent national initiatives and outcomes of international processes that hold considerable promise for benefiting Africa's development and NEPAD:

(a) The first category of efforts include the G-8 Africa Action Plan; the Commission for Africa of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; the Secretary-General's recently established Advisory Panel on International Support for NEPAD; and the multi-donor Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility of the African Development Bank. An African partnership that brings together 20 African countries of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee and 19 developed countries was established in November 2003 as a vehicle for policy dialogue on NEPAD;

(b) The United Nations system's work in Africa falls into the second category, even as it might be noted that several agencies have not only aligned their activities in Africa with NEPAD's priorities but have also created or designated focal points for NEPAD. Other international support efforts falling into this category are the Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development (TICAD), China-Africa cooperation, the Doha round of the World Trade Organization, the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative, the African Growth and Opportunity Act of the Government of the United States of America, the European Union Everything But Arms trade framework in support of the least developed countries, a vast majority of which are in Africa, and Least Developed Country Tariff of the Government of Canada;

(c) The third category includes the United States Millennium Challenge Account, the proposed international finance facility of the United Kingdom, the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the recent report of the Millennium Project entitled "Investing in development: a practical plan to achieve the Millennium Development Goals".

Whether inspired by the need to support NEPAD or otherwise, each of these efforts will potentially benefit Africa's development.

Progress in the implementation of NEPAD

19. NEPAD has evolved through three distinct stages, namely: the articulation of the policy framework for NEPAD; the drawing up of an initial plan of action; and implementation. Implementation is the stage at which the hopes and aspirations associated with NEPAD will have to be translated into reality in the lives of people. Implementation thus emerges as a decisive phase for NEPAD, strewn with many challenges.

20. In the implementation phase, work on NEPAD's programmes/projects can be divided into three categories: those where there is growing evidence of progress; those that are being moved from the drawing board to implementation; and those where projects are still being developed. The first category includes projects in the infrastructure, agriculture and environment sectors as well as the African Peer Review Mechanism, in which a few countries have completed the country support missions, in preparation for the country reviews. These examples constitute an illustrative rather than exhaustive list of areas of progress.

21. Many agencies of the United Nations system have made a significant contribution and are still assisting the work of NEPAD in each of these categories. The support of the United Nations system remains essential.

Looking ahead: next steps for the United Nations system

22. The organizations and the bodies of the United Nations system have shown much commitment to supporting NEPAD, as demonstrated by: aligning their priorities with NEPAD; using the existing coordination mechanisms, especially the regional consultation mechanism, as a forum for promoting dialogue and collaboration; and in offering technical and financial support for developing the various projects and programmes of NEPAD.

23. As NEPAD's implementation gathers momentum, African countries will place emphasis on mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of the

programmes of NEPAD, building their technical expertise for the development and management of NEPAD programmes and strengthening their institutions to better help them to achieve NEPAD goals. Making progress in these areas will be critical to the success of NEPAD.

24. There are, therefore, many opportunities to be seized by the United Nations system in helping Africa's development, in general, and in the implementation of NEPAD, in particular. Those opportunities lie neither in creating more forums for coordination nor in making more effort to share information among the agencies, important as these activities might be in their own right. Instead, they are to be found in: working together on the concrete programmes of NEPAD, guided by the principle that the whole can be greater than the sum of its parts; focusing the efforts of individual entities on areas where their contributions will advance national and regional efforts to help accelerate the implementation of NEPAD; and helping African countries to mobilize significant financial resources for NEPAD programmes/projects.

25. The United Nations system should organize itself to support Africa's efforts in these areas at the national and regional levels in a creative manner.
