



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

5 December 2005

Excellency,

I am pleased to attach a chart indicating the schedule of planned informal consultations of the plenary on the Peacebuilding Commission, Human Rights Council, Development Follow-up and ECOSOC reform, Secretariat and management reform and HIV/AIDS from Monday 5 December until the end of the year. I trust that this will help you in organizing your Mission's representation at these consultations.

The chart, which will be kept updated, has been posted at:

<http://www.un.org/ga/president/60/summitfollowup/schedule.pdf>

In circulating this chart, I want to express my gratitude to you for all the contributions made so far to the work of these consultations. The Co-Chairs and I appreciate the willingness of all Member States to support them and to work through the negotiation processes we have established. I also know that the Co-Chairs will continue to work with you in the open, transparent and inclusive manner which has characterized the consultations to date.

I am keenly aware of the burden of this intensity of meetings, particularly for small and medium sized Missions. I know that some Missions are working together to share the workload.

I have endeavoured to avoid consultations running in parallel, though in one or two cases this has not been possible. I am also conscious that there are important meetings of the Plenary and some of the Committees continuing over the next few weeks. Wherever possible, we will ensure that informal consultations do not run in parallel to Plenary and Committee meetings dealing with issues in related fields.

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

I want to take this opportunity to reiterate why the Co-Chairs and I are planning such an intensive schedule. I have summarised below some of the considerations which have a bearing on the pace at which we must complete the various strands of our work.

Peacebuilding Commission

We are in the final stage of negotiations on the Peacebuilding Commission. I do not believe that we need more than one or two more meetings to reach a final agreement. We have a clear deadline given by our leaders in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. We need to come to closure very soon as we are approaching 31 December, when the Commission is to be operational. I call on all of you to assist in the process of reaching final agreement, so that we can meet the expectations of those countries and peoples eagerly waiting for the Commission to start its work.

Human Rights Council

On the Human Rights Council, I was requested in the Outcome Document to conduct negotiations and to complete them as soon as possible during the 60th Session of the General Assembly. In my letter of 30 September I noted that there are budgetary and practical reasons to strive for an agreement on the Human Rights Council by the end of the year. As the Human Rights Council will be established in place of the Commission on Human Rights, there are many transitional issues which need to be addressed. The sooner a decision is taken, the easier it will be to prepare for a smooth transition. My useful visit to Geneva with the Co-Chairs confirmed this view.

As you may recall, when I presented a timetable on 11 October I stated that intensive negotiations would begin at the end of November and that as many meetings per week as necessary would be convened thereafter. I noted that by that time the Third Committee would have finished its session and the experts would be available to assist their Ambassadors.

We are now in the midst of these intensive negotiations. Meetings have been scheduled from now until 23 December with the intention to continue as long as necessary to reach a conclusion before the end of the year.

Development and ECOSOC reform

I am determined that work on Development Follow-up and ECOSOC reform should be taken forward quickly. It is important that a resolution on Development Follow-up be finalized soon so that we are all clear of our responsibilities in this regard. The resolution on ECOSOC reform will also need to be ready in good time for ECOSOC to take the necessary steps to implement the reforms in 2006.

I am grateful to the Co-Chairs for getting these consultations underway so promptly, and for scheduling regular sessions between now and the end of the year. They and I share the view that it will be important to bring the consultations to closure as early as possible in the New Year, when the Second Committee has concluded its work and delegations will have greater capacity to engage in the process.

Secretariat and management reform

The Co-Chairs have recently written to Member States outlining their plan of work. They foresee that there are elements of the Outcome Document that can be considered immediately. They have accordingly scheduled some meetings for the remaining part of the year.

There are other decisions and recommendations in the Outcome Document that will need more time. Background material will be needed from the Secretariat and some of these issues by their nature require a longer period of discussion and deliberation. Further work on these issues will be taken forward early next year.

HIV/AIDS

Work continues to reach agreement on the organizational resolution for the important event we will hold in the General Assembly at the end of May and beginning of June 2006. I would encourage delegations to help bring these negotiations to closure as soon as possible so that the work of preparing for the event can get underway.

Finally, standing back from the detail of specific negotiations, I believe we must remind ourselves what is at stake. I said when I opened the General Debate in September that I believed the Outcome Document to be a strong and substantial foundation for our work on development, security and human rights as well as the organization of the UN. I noted that many saw it as a solid basis for the most ambitious reform agenda in the history of the UN, while others argued it would make little difference in the outside world. And I said at the time that I believed it was up to us to determine who was right.

We are now rapidly approaching the time for completing the first of our tasks. The extent to which we are able to reach agreements in the next few weeks will determine the way the 2005 World Summit is judged. Also, let us not forget that many outside the UN are expecting rapid progress. The results of our labours will strongly affect the standing of the General Assembly, the United Nations and multilateralism.

So I hope that, as we enter this decisive phase of our work, we can all respond with a renewed spirit of creativity, flexibility and compromise. The Co-Chairs and I will do all we can to bring our negotiations to a conclusion. But your considerations and your actions are of fundamental importance if we are to be successful. I appeal to you to consider where you can play a role in building bridges and forging agreements over the remaining days and weeks.

I plan to write to you again before the end of the year reviewing our progress to date in implementing the decisions in the Outcome Document.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Jan Eliasson