



1 December 2006

Excellency,

I would like to update you on our work in the General Assembly and outline the way forward over the coming months.

Since my letter of 5 October 2006, we have made significant progress in many areas of our common agenda. The plenary has completed a major part of its regular programme of work, including the elections to the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. Four of the six Main Committees have already concluded their work and will soon present their reports to the plenary. I am aware of the heavy workloads of the Second and Fifth Committees and would encourage them to conclude as quickly as possible.

On 27 November, we held an informal thematic debate of the General Assembly, on “Partnerships towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals: Taking Stock, Moving Forward”. This was a unique opportunity to accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs through closer partnerships. I commend the generous announcement made by the Islamic Development Bank to establish a US\$10 billion Poverty Alleviation Fund and am grateful to the government of Qatar for the kind offer to host a follow-up event in Doha during the first half of 2007.

I would like to thank all Member States for their support and active participation at this event, particularly those ministers and senior officials who took time from their busy schedules to attend. I also wish to express special appreciation to the Secretary-General and the President of ECOSOC for their respective contributions. I appreciate the technical support provided by UNDP to help organise the event. And, I would also like to thank business leaders and civil society representatives whose participation enriched our discussions. I shall shortly circulate a summary of the debate to all Members States.

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

In my letter of 5 October, I mentioned that it was my intention to hold two additional multi-stakeholder informal thematic debates next year **on gender issues** and **dialogue among civilizations**. I will revert to you with further details on these events in due course.

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At an informal meeting on 9 November, the Secretary-General made a presentation of the report of the High-level Panel on **System-wide Coherence** to all Member States. Once the report has been formally transmitted by the Secretary-General, I shall begin informal consultations on how to proceed with its consideration.

On 20 November, we achieved another significant step on the UN reform agenda when the General Assembly adopted by consensus the resolution on the **Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council**. It was the culmination of a long process of negotiations that stretched over a period of more than 14 months. This agreement will enable ECOSOC to implement new functions as mandated by our leaders at the 2005 World Summit. I would again like to thank all delegations for their active and constructive participation in the consultations process. In particular, I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Ambassador Verbeke of Belgium and Ambassador Diarra of Mali for their strong and dedicated leadership in conducting the consultations, and to commend Mr. Ruiz of Mexico for his tireless facilitation.

On the **Environmental Governance**, in a letter of 22 November to all Member States the two Co-Chairs, Ambassador Berruga of Mexico and Ambassador Maurer of Switzerland, outlined their plans to resume consultations in mid-January 2007. In preparation, an information meeting will take place on Wednesday 6 December, from 10:00am to 12:00pm, in Conference Room 6.

On **Mandate Review**, I would like to thank the two Co-Chairs, Ambassador Akram of Pakistan and Ambassador Cooney of Ireland for the leadership they have shown in moving this process forward. As outlined in their letter of 17 November, we have now begun the second phase of this process in accordance with the thematic clustering approach.

On **Secretariat and Management Reform**, the Fifth Committee continues to consider the outstanding issues from the 60th session, namely Human Resources Management, Procurement and Governance and Oversight reform. I have urged the Chairman the ACABQ to conclude the report on

Governance and Oversight to allow the Fifth Committee to make progress on these important issues.

I have been listening closely to Member States' oral comments, both on the current state of affairs and the way forward on **Security Council Reform**. I urge Member States to continue to look at this matter with a fresh and open mind. We have a duty to fulfill our leaders' commitment to complete Security Council reform as an essential element of our overall effort to reform the United Nations. I therefore look forward to hearing your views and proposals on how best we can proceed during the debate scheduled to take place on 11 December 2006.

On **Counter-terrorism**, we have yet to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. I would encourage all delegations to use the time available productively to bridge the differences on outstanding issues before the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee, scheduled for February 2007. In parallel, implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy should continue. I will follow these issues closely over the coming months.

The draft **Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities** is expected to be completed by the Ad Hoc Committee in early December. In view of the importance of this issue I look forward to its adoption in the General Assembly as soon as possible. I also welcome the adoption of the **International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearances** that was part of the recommendations of the Human Rights Council. In the meantime, while I note the wish of Member States to continue consultations on the **Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples**, I welcome the commitment to complete this important matter as quickly as possible within this session.

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I would also like to draw your attention to the revised version of the **Programme of work of the General Assembly (A/INF/61/4/Rev.2)** issued on 21 November. As indicated, the reports of the Sixth Committee will be taken up on 4 December and the reports of the First Committee on 6 December. Among other changes, please note that the consideration of agenda item 110 "**Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly**" has been moved to 12 December.

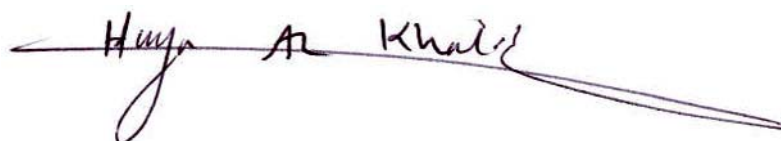
I would also like to inform you that a plenary meeting has been scheduled for 14 December to complete the **selection process for the next Secretary-General**. The Secretary-General-Designate, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, will take the oath of office on this occasion.

Furthermore, in the context of the resumed **10th Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly**, I would like to inform you that a meeting is scheduled to take place on 15 December, to consider the report of the Secretary-General (A/ES-10/361) concerning the register of damages caused by Israel's construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

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Only one month remains before the end of the main part of the 61st session. We have already made significant progress on our work programme. I count on your continued support to keep agreed time-tables so that we will be able to finalize our work in good time for a well-deserved rest over the holidays.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Haya Rashed Al Khalifa". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Haya Rashed Al Khalifa